Osho Dhamma
and the
Flowers of Awarefulness

A Course in Witnessing

144 Programs in 7 Modules

Module Book

Osho Dhamma and the Flowers of Awarefulness

This book is a collection of all the discourses which are part of the Listening Meditations in the module *Osho Dhamma and the Flowers of Awarefulness* which is the seventh module in *A Course in Witnessing*.

A Course in Witnessing is a collection of 144 Meditation Programs which are grouped into seven modules. The Osho discourses in in this module are from discourses in which Osho gave from 1974 to 1988. Throughout all of these discourses is a common thread and that is Osho's teaching of witnessing.

Osho spent his whole life working to awaken as many individuals as possible through the practice of meditation. In addition to teaching the 112 ancient meditation techniques of the *Vigyan Bhairava Tantra*, Osho also devised new "active" meditation techniques designed specifically to overcome the complexities and busyness of the modern mind. Osho, however, also says that the very core of meditation is witnessing.

"Watch your mind. Don't do anything – no repetition of mantra, no repetition of the name of God – just watch whatever the mind is doing. Don't disturb it, don't prevent it, don't repress it; don't do anything at all on your part. You just be a watcher, and the miracle of watching is meditation. As you watch, slowly mind becomes empty of thoughts; but you are not falling asleep, you are becoming more alert, more aware. "As the mind becomes completely empty, your whole energy becomes a flame of awakening. This flame is the result of meditation. So you can say meditation is another name of watching, witnessing, observing – without any judgment, without any evaluation. Just by watching, you immediately get out of the mind."

-Osho, from The Invitation, Discourse #21

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01 The Way of the White Clouds

The Way of the White Clouds

Why is your way called The Way of the White Clouds?

Just before Buddha died somebody asked him: When a buddha dies where does he go? Does he survive or simply disappear into nothingness? This is not a new question, it is one of the oldest, many times repeated and asked. Buddha is reported to have said: Just like a white cloud disappearing . . .

This very morning there were white clouds in the sky. Now they are there no more. Where have they gone? From where do they come? How do they evolve, and how do they dissolve again? A white cloud is a mystery, the coming, the going, the very being of it. That's the first reason why I call my way The Way of the White Clouds.

But there are many reasons, and it is good to ponder, to meditate upon them. A white cloud exists without any roots. It is an unrooted phenomenon, grounded nowhere or grounded in the nowhere. But still it exists. The whole of existence is like a white cloud: without any roots, without any causality, without any ultimate cause, it exists. It exists as a mystery.

A white cloud really has no way of its own. It drifts. It has nowhere to reach, no destination, no destiny to be fulfilled, no end. You cannot frustrate a white cloud because wherever it reaches is the goal.

If you have a goal you are bound to get frustrated. The more goal-oriented a mind is, the more anguish, anxiety and frustration there will be, because once you have a goal you are moving with a fixed destination. And the whole exists without any destiny. The whole is not moving anywhere; there is no goal to it, no purpose.

And once you have a purpose, you are against the whole – remember this – then you will get frustrated. You cannot win against the whole. Your existence is so tiny – you cannot fight, you cannot conquer. It is impossible to conceive how an individual unit can conquer the whole. And if the whole is purposeless and you are with purpose you are going to be defeated.

A white cloud drifts wherever the wind leads – it doesn't resist, it doesn't fight. A white cloud is not a conqueror, and still it hovers over everything. You cannot conquer it, you cannot defeat it. It has no mind to conquer – that's why you cannot defeat it.

Once you are fixed to a goal, purpose, destiny, meaning, once you have got that madness of reaching somewhere, then problems will arise. And you will be defeated, that is certain. Your defeat is in the very nature of existence itself.

A white cloud has nowhere to go. It moves, it moves everywhere. All dimensions belong to it, all directions belong to it. Nothing is rejected. Everything is, exists, in a total acceptability. Hence I call my way The Way of the White Clouds.

The white clouds have no way of their own – they drift. A way means reaching somewhere. The White Clouds' Way means a pathless path, a wayless way. Moving, but not with a fixed mind – moving without a mind.

This has to be understood, because purpose is synonymous with mind. That's why you cannot conceive how to live without purpose, because the mind cannot exist without purpose.

And people are so absurd – they even come to me and ask: What is the purpose of meditation?

Meditation cannot have any purpose because meditation basically means a state of no-mind: it is where you are, not going anywhere; where just being, just to be, is the goal.

The goal is here and now. Once the goal is somewhere else mind starts its journey. Then the mind starts thinking, then the mind starts a process. If future is there then mind can flow, then mind can have its course, then mind has space to move. With purpose comes future, with future comes time.

A white cloud hovers in the sky, timeless – because there is no future and no mind to it. It is here and now. Each moment is total eternity.

But the mind cannot exist without purpose, so mind goes on creating purposes. If the so-called worldly purposes are lost, then the mind creates religious purposes, otherworldly purposes. If money has become useless, then meditation becomes useful. If the so-called world of competition, politics, has become useless, then another world of new competition, of religion, achievement, becomes meaningful. But mind always hankers for some meaning, some purpose.

And to me, only that mind is religious which is purposeless. But that means that mind is no more a mind at all. Think of yourself just like a white cloud, with no mind.

In Tibet they have a meditation: monks sitting on the hills, lonely, absolutely in aloneness, just meditating on white clouds drifting in the sky, continuously contemplating, and by and by being merged. Then they become white clouds – just perching on a hill like a white cloud. No mind, just being there. No resistance, no fight, nothing to be achieved, nothing to be lost, just enjoying the very existence, celebrating the moment – the joy, the ecstasy of it.

Hence I call my way The Way of the White Clouds. And I would like you also to become white clouds drifting in the sky. I say drifting, not moving, not moving to a point – just drifting wheresoever the winds lead you. Wheresoever you happen to be, that is the goal. So the goal is not something ending somewhere, the end of the line. The goal is every moment.

Here you are *siddhas* to me, enlightened ones. Here you have achieved. Here you are as perfect as you can be, just like a Buddha, a Mahavira, or a Krishna. There is nothing else to be achieved.

Right this very moment everything is there, only you are not alert. And you are not alert because your mind is in the future. You are not here. You are not aware of what has happened to you this very moment.

And this has been happening always and always. For many, many millions of lives this has been happening. Every moment you have been a buddha. Not for a single moment has it been missed. It cannot be missed, that is how nature itself is, how things are. You cannot miss it!

But you are not alert, and you cannot be alert because of a goal somewhere, something that has to be achieved. Because of that a barrier is created and that which you are already is missed.

Once this is revealed, once this is realized, once you become aware of this, the greatest mystery of being is revealed, that everyone is perfect. That's what we mean when we say everyone is Brahma – everyone is the soul, the ultimate soul, the divine. That's what we mean when we say *tattwamasi* – you are that. Not that you have to become that, because if you have to become that, then you are *not* that. And if you are not that already, how can you become? The seed becomes the tree because the seed is already that. A stone cannot become a tree. The seed becomes the tree because the seed is already that! So the question is not of becoming, the question is only of revelation. The seed is revealed this moment as a seed, next moment as a tree. So this is only a question of revelation. And if you can penetrate deeply, the seed is the tree this very moment.

Tibetan mystics, or Zen masters or Sufi dervishes, they have all talked about the white clouds. The white clouds have been catching many people's inner being. A rapport is achieved; it seems, with the white clouds. Make it a meditation and then many things will come to you.

Life should not be taken as a problem. Once you start that way you are lost. Once you think life is a problem it can never be solved. That's how philosophy moves – and that's how philosophy always moves wrongly. There are no right philosophies: there cannot be. All philosophies are wrong. Philosophizing is wrong, because philosophy takes the wrong basic step of thinking of life as a problem. Once life is a problem there is no solution to it. Life is not a problem but a mystery, which is how religion takes it.

A white cloud is the most mysterious thing, suddenly appearing, suddenly disappearing. Have you ever thought at any time that clouds have no *nam-roop* – no name, no form? Even for a single moment the form is not the same. It is changing, it is becoming, it is a river like flow.

You can give a form to the cloud, but that is your projection. A cloud has no form; it is formless or continuously being formed, it is a flux. And that's how life is. All forms are projected.

This life you call yourself a man and just one life before you could have been a woman. This life you are white and the next life you can be black. This moment you are intelligent and the next moment you behave in a stupid way. This moment you are silent and the next moment you become mad, fiery, aggressive.

Have you got a form? Or are you continuously changing? You are a flux, a cloud. Have you got a name, any identity? Can you call yourself this or that? The moment you say you are this, that very moment you become aware that you are the contrary also.

You say to someone: I love you – and that very moment hate is there. You say you are a friend to someone and that very moment the enemy is laughing inside you, waiting for its moment. Some moment you say you are happy and that very moment happiness is lost and you have become unhappy. You have no identity. If you realize this you become a cloud with no form, with no name. And then drifting starts.

To me, the life of a white cloud is the life of a sannyasin, of a man who has renounced. The life of a householder is a fixed routine. It is a dead thing, it is a pattern. It has a name, it has a form. It moves on a particular track like railway lines. On the track trains are moving; they have a goal, they have to reach somewhere. But a sannyasin is like a cloud drifting in the sky – no iron tracks for him, no routes, no identities. He is no one and lives the life of a non-being, lives as if he is not.

If you can live a life as if you are not, you are on my way. And the more YOU are, the more disease will be there. The less you are, the more healthy you will be. The less you are, the more weightless you will be. The less you are, the more you will be divine and blissful.

When I say life is not a problem but a mystery, I mean you cannot solve it, you can become it. A problem is something to be solved intellectually; but even if you solve it, nothing is achieved. You have gathered a little more knowledge, but no ecstasy out of it. A mystery is something you can become. You can be one with it, merged. Then ecstasy arises, then bliss – then the ultimate that can happen to a being, the ultimate joy.

Religion takes life as a mystery. What can you do about a mystery? You cannot do anything about the mystery, but you can do something about you. You can become more mysterious. And then the similar can meet with the similar, the same can meet with the same.

Look for the mysterious in life. Wherever you look – in the white clouds, in the stars in the night, in the flowers, in a flowing river – wherever you look, look for the mystery. And whenever you find that a mystery is there, meditate on it.

Meditation means: dissolve yourself before that mystery, annihilate yourself before that mystery, disperse yourself before that mystery. Be no more, and let the mystery be so total that you are absorbed in it. And suddenly a new door opens, a new perception is achieved. Suddenly the mundane world of division, of separation has disappeared, and a different, totally different world of oneness comes before you. Everything loses its boundary; everything is with others, is not divided but one.

This can be done only if you do something with you. If you have to solve a problem, you have to do something with the problem. You have to find a key, a clue. You have to work on the problem. You have to move in a laboratory – you have to do something. If you have to encounter a mystery, you have to do something with you; with the mystery nothing can be done.

We are impotent before a mystery. That's why we go on changing mysteries into problems, because with problems we are potent, with problems we feel we are in control. With mysteries we are impotent, we cannot do anything. With mysteries we face death, and we cannot manipulate.

That's why the more human intellect grows mathematical, logical, the less and less possibility of ecstasy is open before the human mind, less and less poetry is possible. Romance is lost; life becomes factual, not symbolic.

So when I say my way is The Way of the White Clouds, it is just a symbol. The white cloud is not being used as a fact; it is used as a symbol, as a poetic symbol; as an indication of a deep merger into the mysterious and the miraculous.

From ***My Way: The Way of the White Clouds***, Discourse #1

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You Have Never Been In

We hear what you say, but we in the West keep the information in our heads. How can we get out of our heads? What methods can we use, and can will-power help us?

No. Will-power will not help you. Will-power is not a power at all, because will depends on the ego – a very tiny phenomenon, it cannot create much power. When you are will-less, then you are powerful – because then you are one with the whole.

Deep down, will-power is a sort of impotency. To hide the fact that we are impotent, we create will. We create the opposite to deceive ourselves and others.

Persons who feel they are foolish try to show that they are wise. They are constantly aware that they are foolish, so they do everything to look wise. Persons who are ugly or feel they are ugly always try to beautify themselves – even a painted beauty, just a face, a mask. People who are weak always try to look strong. The opposite is created; that is the only way to hide the reality within.

A Hitler is a weakling. That's why he creates so much will-power around him, just to hide the fact. A person who is really strong will be unaware that he is strong. Strength will be flowing, it will be there, but he will not even be conscious of it.

Says Lao Tzu: A man of real virtue never knows that he is virtuous. A man who is really moral is never aware that he is moral. But a man who is aware that he is moral has immorality hidden deep down. A man who thinks he is good, saintly, a sage, is a sinner – and he knows it! And just to hide the fact he creates the opposite.

Will-power is not really power but weakness. A really powerful man has no will of his own – the whole is his will. He floats like a white cloud, one with existence, in tune with it. Your will will always create conflict. It will shrink you, make you an island, and then the struggle starts.

A will-less person will be naturally headless. And remember, you cannot get out of your head. You can cut it – and that is easier. Getting out of it is almost impossible, because even this concept of getting out is part of it. The head is a mess, it is a chaos. You think, and you also think against thinking. The thinking that is against thinking is also thinking. You are not moving out of it. You can condemn your thoughts, but this condemning is again a thought. Nothing has been achieved, you are moving in a vicious circle. You can go on moving, but you will not be out.

So, what to do? How to get out of the head?

Only one thing is possible: don't create any fight inside and don't create any effort to come out, because every effort will be self-suicidal. What can be done then? Simply watch. Be in and watch.

Don't try to get out – be in and watch.

If you can watch, in those moments of watchfulness, there will be no head. Suddenly you will be beyond. Not out – beyond. Suddenly you will be hovering beyond yourself.

There is one Zen story – very absurd, as all Zen stories are. But they have to be absurd because life is such; they depict life as it is.

One Zen master used to ask his disciples: Some time ago, I put a goose in a bottle. Now the goose has grown, and the neck of the bottle is very small so the goose cannot come out. The bottle is very precious, and I don't want to break it, so now there is a crisis. If the goose is not allowed out, she will die. I can break the bottle and the goose will be out, but I don't want to break the bottle – the bottle is precious. I don't want to kill the goose either. So what would you do?

This is the problem! The goose is in the head and the neck is very narrow. You can break the head, but it is precious. Or you can let the goose die, but that too cannot be allowed – because you are the goose.

That old Zen master continued asking his disciples, and beating them, and saying to them: Find out a way because there is no time. And only once did he allow an answer. One disciple said: The goose is out! Many answers were tried, but he would always beat the person and say no. Someone would suggest doing something with the bottle, but again the master would say: The bottle will be broken, or something will go wrong, and that cannot be allowed. Or somebody would say: Let the goose die if the bottle is so precious. These were the only two ways; there was no other way. and the master wouldn't give any other clue. But to this disciple he bowed down and touched his feet and said: He is right – the goose is out! It has never been in.

You are out! You have *never* been in. The feeling that you are in is just a false conception.

So there is no real problem of how to bring you out of your head. Just watch. When you watch, what happens? Just close your eyes and watch the thoughts. What happens? Thoughts are there, in, but you are not in. The watcher is always beyond. The watcher is always standing on the hill. Everything moves around and around, and the watcher is beyond.

The watcher can never be the in, can never be the insider – he is always out. Watching means to be out. You may call it witnessing, awareness, mindfulness, or whatsoever you choose to call it, but the secret is – watch!

So whenever you feel the head is too much, just sit under a tree and watch, and don't try to come out. Who will come out? No one has been in. The whole effort is futile, because if you have never been in then how can you come out? You may go on trying and trying and getting involved in it, you may get mad, but you will never be out.

Once you know that in a moment of watchfulness you are beyond, transcending – you are out. And from that moment you will be headless. The head belongs to the body, not to *you*.

The head is part of the body, it belongs to the body, it has a function in the body, it is beautiful, it is good. The bottle is precious, and if you know the way, the secrets of it, it can be used. When I am talking to you, what am I doing? Using the bottle. When Buddha is preaching, what is he doing? – using the bottle. The bottle is really precious, worth preserving. But this is no way to preserve it – to get into it and get caught into it, and then make efforts to come out. The whole life becomes chaos.

Once you know that watching you are out, you become headless. Then you move on this earth without any head. What a beautiful phenomenon, a man moving without a head! That's what I mean when I say become a white cloud – a headless phenomenon.

You cannot even imagine how much silence can descend upon you when the head is not there. Your physical head will be there, but the involvement, the obsession, is not there.

The head is not a problem! It is beautiful, a wonderful device, the greatest computer yet invented, such a complex, such an efficient mechanism. It is beautiful. It can be used; you can enjoy using it.

But from where have you got the idea that you are in it? It seems to be just a false teaching. You may not be aware that in old Japan, and still old people in Japan, if you ask them: Where do you think from? they will point to their belly, because in Japan it was taught that the belly is the center of thinking. So when for the first time Europeans reached Japan, they couldn't believe that a whole country thinks that the head is in the belly not in the head.

This is just a Western attitude that you are in the head. In old Japan thinking from the belly really worked, but now they are shifting from the belly to the head. There have been other traditions that have thought from other parts of the body. Lao Tzu says you think from the soles of your feet. So there are techniques in Taoist yoga to get out of the soles of your feet – because there the thinking is going on.

What is the reality? The reality is: you are beyond. But you can get attached to any part of the body – the head is a Western obsession; the belly was the Eastern obsession. You must have heard about D.H. Lawrence. He used to think that one thinks from the sex center, that that is the real thinking center, nowhere else.

And all are equal – equally wrong or equally right. There is nothing to choose because the witness is beyond. It is all around the body and beyond the body. You can get attached to any part of the body and start thinking that this is the part.

There is no need to come out because you have never been in. The goose is out – already out!

Watch . . . and when you watch you have to remember that while watching, don't judge. If you judge, watching is lost. While watching, don't evaluate. If you evaluate, watching is lost. While watching, don't comment. If you comment, you have missed the point.

While watching just watch . . . a river flowing, the stream of consciousness flowing, atomic thoughts floating like bubbles, and you sitting on the bank watching. The stream goes on and on and on. You don't say this is good, you don't say this is bad, and you don't say this should not have been, and you don't say this should have been. You don't say anything – you simply watch. You are not asked to comment. You are not a judge – just a watcher.

Then see what happens. Watching the river, suddenly you will be beyond . . . and the goose will be out. And once you know this, that you are out, you can remain out. And then you can move on this earth without a head.

So, this is the way to cut the head. Everybody is interested in cutting others' heads – that won't help. You have already done that too much. Cut your own. To be headless is to be in deep meditation.

From ***My Way: The Way of the White Clouds***, Discourse #3

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Consciousness is the Bridge

Would you talk to us about using sexual energy for growth, as it seems to be one of our main preoccupations in the West.

Sex is the energy. So I will not say sexual energy – because there is no other energy. Sex is the only energy you have got. The energy can be transformed – it can become a higher energy. The higher it moves, the less and less sexuality remains in it. And there is an end peak where it becomes simply love and compassion. The ultimate flowering we can call divine energy, but the base, the seat, remains sex. So sex is the first, bottom layer of energy – and God is the top layer. But the same energy moves.

The first thing to be understood is that I don't divide energies. Once you divide, then a dualism is created. Once you divide, then conflict and struggle are created. Once you divide energies, *you* are divided – then you will be for or against sex. I am neither for nor against, because I don't divide. I say sex is the energy, the name of the energy; call that energy X. Sex is the name of that X energy, the unknown energy, when you are using it only as a biological reproduction force. It becomes divine once it is freed from biological bondage, once it becomes non-physical – then it is the love of Jesus or the compassion of Buddha.

The West is much obsessed today because of Christianity. Two thousand years of Christian suppression of sex energy has made the Western mind too much obsessed with it. First, for two thousand years the obsession was how to kill it. You cannot kill it. No energy can be killed – energy can only be transformed. There is no way to destroy energy. Nothing can be destroyed in this world, it can only be transformed, changed, moved into a new realm and dimension. Destruction is impossible. You cannot create a new energy, and you cannot destroy an old energy. Creation and destruction are both beyond you. They cannot be done. Now, scientists agree to this – not even a single atom can be destroyed.

For two thousand years, Christianity was trying to destroy sex energy. Religion consisted of becoming absolutely without sex. That created a madness. The more you fight, the more you suppress, the more sexual you become. And then sex moves deeper into the unconscious. It poisons your whole being. So if you read the lives of Christian saints, you will see they are obsessed with sex. They cannot pray, they cannot meditate. Whatsoever they do, sex comes in. And they think that the devil is playing tricks. Nobody is playing tricks. If you suppress, *you* are the devil.

After two thousand years of continuous sex-repression, the West became fed up with it. It was too much. The whole wheel turned. Now, instead of repression, indulgence, to indulge in it became the new obsession. From one pole the mind moved to the other pole. The disease remained the same. Once it was repression. Now it is how to indulge more and more in it. Both are sick attitudes.

Sex has to be transformed – neither repressed nor madly indulged. And the only possible way to transform sex is to be sexual with deep meditative awareness. It is just the same as I was saying about anger. Move into sex, but with an alert, conscious, mindful being. Don't allow it to become an unconscious force. Don't be pulled and pushed by it. Move knowingly, understandingly, lovingly. But make sexual experience a meditative experience. Meditate in it. This is what the East has done through Tantra.

And once you are meditative in sexual experience, the quality of it starts changing. The same energy which is moving into sexual experience starts moving towards consciousness. You can become so alert in a peak sexual orgasm, as you can otherwise never become – because no other experience is so deep, no other experience is so absorbing, no other experience is so total. In a sexual orgasm, you are *totally* absorbed, root and all – your whole being vibrating, your whole being in it. Body, mind – both are in it. And thinking stops completely. Even for a single second, when the orgasm reaches its peak, thinking stops completely, because you are so total you cannot think.

In a sexual orgasm you *are*. Being is there without any thinking. In this moment, if you can become alert, conscious, then sex can become the door towards the divine. And if in this moment you can become alert, that alertness can be carried in other moments also, in other experiences also. It can become a part of you. Then eating, walking, doing some work, you can carry that alertness. Through sex, the alertness has touched your deepest core. It has penetrated you. Now you can carry it. And, if you become meditative, you will come to realize a new fact. That fact is that it is not sex that gives you bliss, it is not sex that gives you the ecstasy. Rather, it is a thoughtless state of the mind and total involvement in the act that gives you a blissful feeling.

Once you understand this then sex will be needed less and less, because that thoughtless state of mind can be created without it – that's what meditation means. And that totality of being can be created without sex. Once you know that the same phenomenon can happen without sex, sex will be needed less and less. A moment will come when sex will not be needed at all.

Remember, sex is always dependent on the other. So in sex, a bondage, a slavery remains. Once you can create this total orgasmic phenomenon without any dependence on anybody else, when it has become an inner source, you are independent, you are free. That's what is meant when, in India, we say only a *brahmachari*, an absolutely celibate person, can be free – because now he is not dependent on anybody else, his ecstasy is his own.

Sex disappears through meditation, but this is not destroying the energy. Energy is never destroyed; only the form of the energy changes. Now it is no longer sexual, and when the form is no longer sexual, then you become loving.

So, really, a person who is sexual cannot love. His love can only be a show. His love is just a means towards sex. A person who is sexual uses love just as a technique towards sex. It is a means. A sexual person cannot really love, he can only exploit the other; and love becomes just a way to approach the other.

A person who has become non-sexual, and the energy is moving within, has become auto-ecstatic. His ecstasy is his own. Such a person will be loving for the first time. His love will be a constant showering, a constant sharing, a constant giving. But to achieve this, you are not required to be anti-sex. To achieve this, you have to accept sex as part of life, of natural life. Move with it – only move with more consciousness. Consciousness is the bridge, the golden bridge, from this world to the other, from hell to heaven, from the ego to the divine.

From ***My Way: The Way of the White Clouds***, Discourse #5, Q2

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02 The Root Problem

The Root Problem

The root problem of all problems is mind itself. The first thing to be understood is what this mind is, of what stuff it is made; whether it is an entity or just a process; whether it is substantial, or just dreamlike. And unless you know the nature of the mind, you will not be able to solve any problems of your life.

You may try hard, but if you try to solve single, individual problems, you are bound to be a failure – that is absolutely certain – because in fact no individual problem exists: mind is the problem. If you solve this problem or that, it won't help because the root remains untouched.

It is just like cutting branches of a tree, pruning the leaves, and not uprooting it. New leaves will come, new branches will sprout – even more than before; pruning helps a tree to become thicker.

Unless you know how to uproot it, your fight is baseless, it is foolish. You will destroy yourself, not the tree.

In fighting you will waste your energy, time, life, and the tree will go on becoming more and more strong, far thicker and dense. And you will be surprised what is happening: you are doing so much hard work, trying to solve this problem and that, and they go on growing, increasing. Even if one problem is solved, suddenly ten problems take its place.

Don't try to solve individual, single problems – there are none: *Mind itself is the problem*. But mind is hidden underground; that's why I call it the root, it is not apparent. Whenever you come across a problem the problem is above ground, you can see it – that's why you are deceived by it.

Always remember, the visible is never the root; the root always remains invisible, the root is always hidden. Never fight with the visible; otherwise you will fight with shadows. You may waste yourself, but there cannot be any transformation in your life, the same problems will crop up again and again and again. You can observe your own life and you will see what I mean. I am not talking about any theory about the mind, just the "facticity" of it. This is the fact: mind has to be solved.

People come to me and they ask, "How to attain a peaceful mind?" I say to them, "There exists nothing like that: peaceful mind. Never heard of it."

Mind is never peaceful – no-mind is peace. Mind itself can never be peaceful, silent. The very nature of the mind is to be tense, to be in confusion. Mind can never be clear; it cannot have clarity because mind is by nature confusion, cloudiness. Clarity is possible without mind, peace is possible without mind, silence is possible without mind – so never try to attain a silent mind. If you do, from the very beginning you are moving in an impossible dimension.

So the first thing is to understand the nature of the mind, only then can something be done.

If you watch, you will never come across any entity like mind. It is not a thing, it is just a process; it is not a thing, it is like a crowd. Individual thoughts exist, but they move so fast that you cannot see the gaps in between. The intervals cannot be seen because you are not very aware and alert, you need a deeper insight. When your eyes can look deep, you will suddenly see one thought, another thought, another thought – but *no mind.*

Thoughts together, millions of thoughts, give you the illusion as if mind exists. It is just like a crowd, millions of people standing in a crowd: is there anything like a crowd? Can you find the crowd other than the individuals standing there? But they are standing together, their togetherness gives you the feeling as if something like a crowd exists – only individuals exist.

This is the first insight into the mind. Watch, and you will find thoughts; you will never come across the mind. And if it becomes your own experience – not because I say it, not because Tilopa sings about it, no, that won't be of much help – if it becomes *your* experience, if it becomes a fact of your own knowing, then suddenly many things start changing. Because you have understood such a deep thing about mind, then many things can follow.

Watch the mind and see where it is, what it is. You will feel thoughts floating and there will be intervals. And if you watch long, you will see that intervals are more than the thoughts, because each thought has to be separate from another thought; in fact, each word has to be separate from another word. The deeper you go, you will find more and more gaps, bigger and bigger gaps. A thought floats, then comes a gap where no thought exists; then another thought comes, another gap follows.

If you are unconscious, you cannot see the gaps; you jump from one thought to another, you never see the gap. If you become aware, you will see more and more gaps. If you become perfectly aware, then miles of gaps will be revealed to you. And in those gaps, *satoris* happen. In those gaps the truth knocks at your door. In those gaps the guest comes. In those gaps God is realized, or whatsoever way you like to express it. And when awareness is absolute, then there is only a vast gap of nothingness.

It is just like clouds: clouds move. They can be so thick that you cannot see the sky hidden behind. The vast blueness of the sky is lost, you are covered with clouds. Then you go on watching: one cloud moves and another has not come into the vision yet – and suddenly a peek into the blueness of the vast sky.

The same happens inside: you are the vast blueness of the sky, and thoughts are just like clouds hovering around you, filling you. But the gaps exist, the sky exists. To have a glimpse of the sky is *satori*, and to become the sky is *samadhi*. From satori to samadhi, the whole process is a deep insight into the mind, nothing else.

Mind doesn't exist as an entity – the first thing. Only thoughts exist.

The second thing: the thoughts exist separate from you, they are not one with your nature, they come and go – you remain, you persist. You are like the sky: never comes, never goes, it is always there. Clouds come and go, they are momentary phenomena, they are not eternal. Even if you try to cling to a thought, you cannot retain it for long; it has to go, it has its own birth and death. Thoughts are not yours; they don't belong to you. They come as visitors, guests, but they are not the host.

Watch deeply, then you will become the host and thoughts will be the guests. And as guests they are beautiful, but if you forget completely that you are the host and they become the hosts, then you are in a mess. This is what hell is. You are the master of the house, the house belongs to you, and guests have become the masters. Receive them, take care of them, but don't get identified with them; otherwise, they will become the masters.

The mind becomes the problem because you have taken thoughts so deeply inside you that you have forgotten completely the distance; that they are visitors, they come and go. Always remember that which abides: that is your nature, your *Tao*. Always be attentive to that which never comes and never goes, just like the sky. Change the gestalt: don't be focused on the visitors, remain rooted in the host; the visitors will come and go.

Of course, there are bad visitors and good visitors, but you need not be worried about them. A good host treats all the guests in the same way, without making any distinctions. A good host is just a good host: a bad thought comes and he treats the bad thought also in the same way as he treats a good thought. It is not his concern that the thought is good or bad.

Because once you make the distinction that this thought is good and that thought is bad, what are you doing? You are bringing the good thought nearer to yourself and pushing the bad thought further away. Sooner or later, with the good thought you will get identified; the good thought will become the host. And any thought,, when it becomes the host, creates misery – because this is not the truth. The thought is a pretender and you get identified with it. Identification is the disease.

Gurdjieff used to say that only one thing is needed: not to be identified with that which comes and goes. The morning comes, the noon comes, the evening comes, and they go; the night comes and again the morning. You abide: not as you, because that too is a thought – as pure consciousness; not your name, because that too is a thought; not your form, because that too is a thought; not your body, because one day you will realize that too is a thought. Just pure consciousness, with no name, no form; just the purity, just the formlessness and namelessness, just the very phenomenon of being aware – only that abides.

If you get identified, you become the mind. If you get identified, you become the body. If you get identified, you become the name and the form – what Hindus call *nama*, *rupa*, name and form – then the host is lost. Then you forget the eternal and the momentary becomes significant. The momentary is the world; the eternal is divine.

This is the second insight to be attained, that you are the host and thoughts are guests.

The third thing, if you go on watching, will be realized soon. The third thing is that thoughts are foreign, intruders, outsiders. *No thought is yours*. They always come from without, you are just a passage. A bird comes into the house from one door, and flies out from another: just like that a thought comes into you and goes out of you.

You go on thinking that thoughts are yours. Not only that, you fight for your thoughts, you say, "This is my thought, this is true." You discuss, you debate, you argue about it, you try to prove that, "This is my thought." No thought is yours, no thought is original – all thoughts are borrowed, and not secondhand, because millions of people have claimed those same thoughts before you. Thought is just as outside as a thing.

Somewhere, the great physicist, Eddington, has said that the deeper science goes into matter, the more it becomes a realization that things are thoughts. That may be so, I am not a physicist, but from the other end, I would like to tell you that Eddington may be true, that things look more and more like thoughts if you go deeper; if you go deeper into yourself, thoughts will look more and more like things. In fact, these are two aspects of the same phenomenon: a thing is a thought, a thought is a thing.

When I say a thought is a thing, what do I mean? I mean that you can throw your thought just like a thing. You can hit somebody's head with a thought just like a thing. You can kill a person through a thought just as you can throw a dagger. You can give your thought as a gift, or as an infection. Thoughts are things, they are forces, but they don't belong to you. They come to you; they abide for a while in you and then they leave you. The whole universe is filled with thoughts and things. Things are just the physical part of thoughts, and thoughts are the mental part of things.

Because of this fact, many miracles happen – because thoughts are things. If a person continuously thinks about you and your welfare, it will happen – because he is throwing a continuous force at you. That's why blessings are useful, helpful. If you can be blessed by someone who has attained no-mind, the blessing is going to be true – because a man who never uses thought accumulates thought energy, so whatsoever he says is going to be true.

In all the Eastern traditions, before a person starts learning no-mind, there are techniques and much emphasis that he should stop being negative, because if you once attain to no-mind and your trend remains negative, you can become a dangerous force. Before the no-mind is attained, one should become absolutely positive. That is the whole difference between white and black magic.

Black magic is nothing but when a man has accumulated thought energy without throwing out his negativity beforehand. And white magic is nothing but when a man has attained too much thought energy, and has based his total being on a positive attitude. The same energy with negativity becomes black; the same energy with positivity becomes white. A thought is a great force, it is a thing.

This will be the third insight. It has to be understood and watched within yourself.

Sometimes it happens that you see your thought functioning as a thing, but just because of too much conditioning of materialism, you think this may be just a coincidence. You neglect the fact, you simply don't give any attention to it; you remain indifferent, you forget about it. But many times, you know that sometimes you were thinking about the death of a certain person – and he is dead. You think it is just a coincidence. Sometime you were thinking about a friend and a desire arose in you that it would be good if he comes – and he is on the door, knocking. You think it is a coincidence. It is not coincidence. In fact, there is nothing like coincidence, everything has its causality. Your thoughts go on creating a world around you.

Your thoughts are things, so be careful about them. Handle them carefully! If you are not very conscious, you can create misery for yourself and for others – and you have done that. And remember, when you create misery for somebody, unconsciously, at the same time, you are creating misery for yourself – because a thought is a two-edged sword. It cuts you also simultaneously when it cuts somebody else.

Just two or three years ago, one Israeli, Uri Geller, who has been working on thought energy, displayed his experiment on BBC television in England. He can bend anything just by thinking: somebody else keeps a spoon in his hand ten feet away from Uri Geller, and he just thinks about it – and the spoon bends immediately. You cannot bend it by your hand, and he bends it by his thought. But a very rare phenomenon happened on the BBC television; even Uri Geller was not aware that this is possible.

Thousands of people in their homes were seeing the experiment. And when he did his experiment, bent things, in many people's houses many things fell and became distorted – thousands of things all over England. It was as if the energy was being broadcast. And he was doing the experiment at a ten-foot distance, then from the television screen in people's homes, around the area of ten feet, many things happened: things got bent, fell down, became distorted. It was weird!

Thoughts are things, and very, very forceful things. There is one woman in Soviet Russia, Mikhailovana. She can do many things to things from far away, she can pull anything toward herself – just by thought. Soviet Russia is not a believer in occult things – a communist country, atheistic – so they have been working on Mikhailovana, on what is happening, in a scientific way. But when she does it, she loses almost two pounds of weight; in a half-hour experiment she loses two pounds. What does it mean?

It means that through thoughts you are throwing energy – and you are continuously doing it. Your mind is a chatterbox. You are broadcasting things unnecessarily. You are destroying people around you; you are destroying yourself.

You are a dangerous thing – and continuously broadcasting. And many things are happening because of you. And it is a great network. The whole world goes on becoming every day more and more miserable because more and more people are on the earth and they are broadcasting more and more thoughts.

The further back you go, you find the earth the more and more peaceful – fewer and fewer broadcasters. In the days of Buddha, or in the days of Lao Tzu, the world was very, very peaceful, natural; it was a heaven. Why? The population was very, very small, one thing. People were not thinkers too much; they were more and more prone to feeling rather than thinking. And people were praying. In the morning, they would do the first thing and that would be a prayer. In the night they would do the last thing – the prayer. And throughout the whole day also, whenever they would find a moment, they would be praying inside.

What is a prayer? Prayer is sending blessings to all. Prayer is sending your compassion to all. Prayer is creating an antidote of negative thoughts – it is a positivity.

This will be the third insight about thoughts, that they are things, forces, and you have to handle them very carefully.

Ordinarily, not aware, you go on thinking anything. It is difficult to find a person who has not committed many murders in thought; difficult to find a person who has not been doing all sorts of sins and crimes inside the mind – and then these things happen. And remember, you may not murder, but your continuous thinking of murdering somebody may create the situation in which the person is murdered. Somebody may take your thought, because there are weaker persons all

around and thoughts flow like water: downwards. If you think something continuously, someone who is a weakling may take your thought and go and kill a person.

That's why those who have known the inner reality of man, they say that whatsoever happens on the earth, everybody is responsible, everybody. Whatsoever happens in Vietnam, not only are Nixons responsible, everybody who thinks is also responsible. Only one person cannot be held responsible, and that is the person who has no mind; otherwise, everybody is responsible for everything that goes on. If the earth is a hell, you are a creator, you participate.

Don't go on throwing responsibility on others – you are also responsible; it is a collective phenomenon. The disease may bubble up anywhere, the explosion may happen millions, thousands of miles away from you – that doesn't make any difference, because thought is a non-spatial phenomenon, it needs no space.

That's why it travels fastest. Even light cannot travel so fast, because even for light space is needed. Thought travels fastest. In fact, it takes no time in traveling, space doesn't exist for it. You may be here, thinking of something, and it happens in America. How can you be held responsible? No court can punish you, but in the ultimate court of existence you will be punished – you are already punished. That's why you are so miserable.

People come to me and they say, "We never do anything wrong to anybody, and still we are so miserable." You may not be doing, you may be thinking – and thinking is more subtle than doing. A person can protect himself from doing, but he cannot protect himself from thinking. For thinking everybody is vulnerable.

No-thinking is a must if you want to be completely freed from sin, freed from crime, freed from all that goes around you – and that is the meaning of a buddha. A buddha is a person who lives without the mind; then he's not responsible. That's why in the East we say that he never accumulates karma; he never accumulates any entanglements for the future. He lives, he walks, he moves, he eats, he talks, he is doing many things, so he must accumulate karma, because karma means activity. But in the East, it is said even if a buddha kills, he will not accumulate karma. Why? And you, even if you don't kill, you will accumulate karma. Why?

It is simple: whatsoever Buddha is doing, he is doing without any mind in it. He is spontaneous, it is not activity. He is not thinking about it, it happens. He is not the doer. He moves like an emptiness. He has no mind for it, he was not thinking to do it. But if the existence allows it to happen, he allows it to happen. He has no more the ego to resist; no more the ego to do.

That is the meaning of being empty and a no-self: just being a non-being, *anatta*, no-selfness. Then you accumulate nothing; then you are not responsible for anything that goes on around you; then you transcend.

Each single thought is creating something for you and for others. Be alert!

But when I say be alert, I don't mean that think good thoughts, no, because whenever you think good thoughts, by the side you are also thinking of bad thoughts. How can good exist without bad? If you think of love, just by the side, behind it, is hidden hate. How can you think about love without thinking about hate? You may not think consciously, love may be in the conscious layer of the mind, but hate is hidden in the unconscious – they move together.

Whenever you think of compassion, you think of cruelty. Can you think of compassion without thinking of cruelty? Can you think of nonviolence without thinking of violence? In the very word "nonviolence," violence enters; in the very concept it is there. Can you think of *brahmacharya*, celibacy, without thinking of sex? It is impossible, because what will celibacy mean if there is no thought of sex? And if brahmacharya is based on the thought of sex, what type of *brahmacharya* is this?

No, there is a totally different quality of being which comes by not thinking: not good, not bad, simply a state of no-thinking. You simply watch, you simply remain conscious, but you don't think. And if some thought enters . . . it *will* enter, because thoughts are not yours; they are just floating in the air.

All around there is a noosphere, a thought-sphere, all around. Just as there is air, there is thought all around you, and it goes on entering on its own accord. It stops only when you become more and more aware. There is something in it: if you become more aware, a thought simply disappears, it melts, because awareness is a greater energy than thought.

Awareness is like fire to thought. It is just like you burn a lamp in the house and the darkness cannot enter; you put the light off – from everywhere darkness has entered; without taking a single minute, a single moment, it is there. When the light burns in the house, the darkness cannot enter. Thoughts are like darkness: they enter only if there is no light within. Awareness is fire: you become more aware, fewer and fewer thoughts enter.

If you become really integrated in your awareness, thoughts don't enter you; you have become an impenetrable citadel, nothing can penetrate you. Not that you are closed, remember – you are absolutely open; but just the very energy of awareness becomes your citadel. And when no thoughts can enter you, they will come and they will bypass you. You will see them coming, and simply, by the time they reach near you they turn. Then you can move anywhere, then you can go to the very hell – nothing can affect you. This is what we mean by enlightenment.

From ***Tantra: The Supreme Understanding***, Discourse #2

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If One Sees Nought

Now try to understand Tilopa's sutra:

If one sees nought when staring into space, if with the mind one then observes the mind, one destroys distinctions and reaches buddhahood.

If one sees nought when staring into space . . . This is a method, a tantra method: to look into space, into the sky, *without seeing*; to look with an empty eye. Looking, yet not looking for something: just an empty look.

Sometimes you see in a madman's eyes an empty look – and madmen and sages are alike in certain things. A madman looks at your face, but you can see he is not looking at you. He just looks through you as if you are a glass thing, transparent; you are just in the way, he is not looking at you. And you are transparent for him: he looks beyond you, through you. He looks without looking *at* you; the "at" is not present, he simply looks.

Look in the sky without looking for something, because if you look for something a cloud is bound to come: "something" means a cloud; "nothing" means the vast expanse of the blue sky. Don't look for any object. If you look for an object, the *very look* creates the object: a cloud comes, and then you are looking at a cloud. Don't look at the clouds. Even if there are clouds, you don't look *at* them – simply look, let them float, they are there. Suddenly a moment comes when you are attuned to this look of not-looking – clouds disappear for you, only the vast sky remains. It is difficult because eyes are focused, and your eyes are tuned to look at things.

Look at a small child the first day born. He has the same eyes as a sage – or like a madman: his eyes are loose and floating. He can bring both his eyes to meet at the center; he can allow them to float to the far corners – they are not yet fixed. His system is liquid, his nervous system is not yet a structure, everything is floating. So a child looks without looking at things; it is a mad look. Watch a child: the same look is needed from you, because again you have to attain a second childhood.

Watch a madman, because the madman has fallen out of the society. Society means the fixed world of roles, games. A madman is mad because he has no fixed role now, he has fallen out: he is the perfect drop-out. A sage is also a perfect drop-out in a different dimension. He is not mad; in fact, he is the only sanest possibility. But the whole world is mad, fixed – that's why a sage also looks mad. Watch a madman: that is the look which is needed.

In old schools of Tibet, they always had a madman, just for the seekers to watch his eyes. A madman was very much valued. He was searched after because a monastery could not exist without a madman. He becomes an object to observe. The seekers will observe the madman, his eyes, and then they will try to look at the world like the madman. Those days were beautiful.

In the East, madmen have never suffered like they are suffering in the West. In the East they were valued, a madman was something special. The society took care of him, he was respected, because he has certain elements of the sage, certain elements of the child. He is different from the so-called society, culture, civilization; he has fallen out of it. Of course, he has fallen down; a

sage falls up, a madman falls down – that's the difference – but both have fallen out. And they have similarities. Watch a madman, and then try to let your eyes become unfocused.

In Harvard, they were doing one experiment a few months ago, and they were surprised, they couldn't believe it. They were trying to find out whether the world, as *we* see it, is so or not – because many things have surfaced within the few last years.

We see the world not as it is; we see it as we expect it to be, we project something onto it.

It happened that a great ship reached a small island in the Pacific for the first time. The people of the island didn't see it, nobody! And the ship was so vast – but the people were attuned, their eyes were attuned to small boats. They had never known such a big ship; they had never seen such a thing. Simply their eyes would not catch the glimpse, their eyes simply refused.

In Harvard, they tried [experimented] on a young man: they gave him spectacles with distorting glass, and he had to wear them for seven days. For the first three days he was in a miserable state, because everything distorted, the whole world around distorted . . . It gave him such a severe headache, he couldn't sleep. Even with closed eyes those distorted figures would . . . the faces distorted, the trees distorted, the roads distorted. He couldn't even walk because he couldn't believe what is true and what is given by the projection of distorting glasses.

But a miracle happened! After the third day he became attuned to them; the distortion disappeared. The glasses remained the same, distorting, but he started looking at the world in the same old way. Within a week everything was okay: there was no headache, no problem, and the scientists were simply surprised; they couldn't believe it was happening. The eyes had completely dropped, as if the glasses were no longer there. The glasses were there, and they were distorting – but the eyes had come to see the world for which they were trained.

Nobody knows whether what you are seeing is there or not. It may not be there; it may be there in a totally different way. The colors you see, the forms you see, everything is projected by the eyes. And whenever you look fixedly, focused with your old patterns, you see things according to your own conditioning. That's why a madman has a liquid look, an absent look, looking and not looking together.

This look is beautiful. It is one of the greatest tantra techniques:

If one sees nought when staring into space . . .

Don't see, just look. For the beginning few days, again and again you will see something, just because of old habit. We hear things because of old habit. We see things because of old habit. We understand things because of old habit.

One of the greatest disciples of Gurdjieff, P.D. Ouspensky, used to insist on a certain thing to his disciples – and everybody resented it, and many people left simply because of that insistence. If somebody said, "Yesterday you told . . .," he immediately would stop him and say, "Don't say it like that. Say, 'I understood that you said this thing yesterday. I understood . . ..' Don't say what I said, you cannot know that. Talk about what you heard." And he would insist so much because we are habitual.

Again, you might say, “In the Bible, it is said . . .,” and he would say, “Don’t say that! Simply say that you understand that this is said in the Bible.” With *each* sentence he insisted, “Always remember that this is *your* understanding.”

We go on forgetting. His disciples went on forgetting again and again, and every day, and he was stubborn about it. He would not allow you to go on. He would say, “Go back. Say first that, ‘I understand you said this, this is my understanding,’ . . . because you hear according to yourself, you see according to yourself – because you have a fixed pattern of seeing and hearing.”

This has to be dropped. To know existence, all fixed attitudes have to be dropped. Your eyes should be just windows, not projectors. Your ears should be just doors, not projectors.

It happened: One psychoanalyst who was studying with Gurdjieff tried to do this experiment. In a wedding ceremony, he tried a very simple but beautiful experiment. He stood by the side, people passing, and he watched them, and he felt that nobody at the receiving end was hearing what they were saying – so many people, some rich man’s wedding ceremony. So he also joined in, and he said very quietly to the first person in the receiving line, “My grandmother died today.” The man said, “So good of you, so beautiful.” Then to another he said it and the man said, “How nice of you.” And to the groom, when he said this, he said, “Old man, it is time you also followed.”

Nobody is listening to anybody. You hear whatsoever you expect. Expectation is your specs – that is the glasses. Your eyes should be windows – this is the technique.

Nothing should go out of the eyes, because if something goes [out] a cloud is created. Then you see things which are not there, then a subtle hallucination . . . Let pure clarity be in the eyes, in the ears; all your senses should be clear, perception pure – only then existence can be revealed to you. And when you know existence, then you know that you are a buddha, a god because in existence everything is divine.

If one sees nought when staring into space, if with the mind one then observes the mind . . .

First stare into the sky; lie down on the ground and just stare at the sky. Only one thing has to be tried: don’t look at anything. In the beginning you will fall again and again, you will forget again and again. You will not be able to remember continuously. Don’t be frustrated, it is natural because of so long a habit. Whenever you remember again, unfocus your eyes, make them loose, just look at the sky – not doing anything, just looking. Soon a time comes when you can see into the sky without trying to see anything there.

Then try it with your inner sky:

. . . if with the mind one then observes the mind . . .

Then close your eyes and look inside, not looking for anything, just the same absent look. Thoughts floating but you are not looking for them, or at them – you are simply looking. If they come it is good, if they don’t come it is good also. Then you will be able to see the gaps: one thought passes, another comes – and the gap. And then, by and by, you will be able to see that the thought becomes transparent, even when the thought is passing you continue to see the gap, you continue to see the hidden sky behind the cloud.

And the more you get attuned to this vision, thoughts will drop by and by, they will come less and less, less and less. The gaps will become wider. For minutes together no thought coming, everything is so quiet and silent inside – you are for the first time together. Everything feels absolutely blissful, no disturbance. And if this look becomes natural to you – it becomes, it is one of the most natural things; one just has to unfocus, decondition:

. . . *one destroys distinctions* . . . then there is nothing good, nothing bad; nothing ugly, nothing beautiful . . . *and reaches Buddhahood.*

Buddhahood means the highest awakening. When there are no distinctions, all divisions are lost, unity is attained, only one remains. You cannot even call it "one," because that too is part of duality.

One remains, but you cannot call it "one," because how can you call it "one" without deep down saying "two." No, you don't say that "one" remains, simply that "two" has disappeared, the many has disappeared. Now it is a vast oneness, there are no boundaries to anything.

One tree merging into another tree, earth merging into the trees, trees merging into the sky, the sky merging into the beyond . . . you merging in me, I merging in you . . . everything merging . . . distinctions lost, melting and merging like waves into other waves . . . a vast oneness vibrating, alive, without boundaries, without definitions, without distinctions . . . the sage merging into the sinner, the sinner merging into the sage . . . good becoming bad, bad becoming good . . . night turning into the day, the day turning into the night . . . life melting into death, death molding again into life – then everything has become one.

Only at this moment buddhahood is attained […]

When Buddha attained to the ultimate, the utterly ultimate enlightenment, he was asked, "What have you attained?" And he laughed and said, "Nothing – because whatsoever I have attained was already there inside me. It is not something new that I have achieved. It has always been there from eternity; it is my very nature. But I was not mindful about it, I was not aware of it. The treasure was always there, but I had forgotten about it."

You have forgotten, that's all – that's your ignorance. Between a buddha and you there is *no* distinction as far as your nature is concerned, but only one distinction, and that distinction is that you don't remember who you are – and he remembers. You are the same, but he remembers, and you don't remember. He is awake, you are fast asleep, but your nature is the same.

Try to live it out in this way – Tilopa is talking about techniques – live in the world as if you are the sky, make it your very style of being. Somebody is angry at you, insulting – watch. If anger arises in you, watch; be a watcher on the hills, go on looking and looking and looking. And just by looking, without looking at anything, without getting obsessed by anything, when your perception becomes clear, suddenly, in a moment, in fact no time happens, suddenly, without time, you are fully awake; you are a buddha, you become the enlightened, the awakened one.

What does a buddha gain out of it? He gains nothing. Rather, on the contrary, he loses many things: the misery, the pain, the anguish, the anxiety, the ambition, the jealousy, the hatred, the possessiveness, the violence – he loses all. As far as what he attains, nothing. He attains that which was already there, he remembers.

From ***Tantra: The Supreme Understanding***, Discourse #2

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03 How to Start the Journey

This No Thing is What God Is

There is no more searching and seeking. That has all stopped. I have found nothing in in particular, but I feel free, freed. I go about my business without anxiety. This for me is bliss, and I feel such a flood of gratitude for your presence here.

Girisha there is nothing to be found in particular. The search for the particular is illusory, utterly illusory. The mind seeks something in particular; that is the problem with the mind. God is not a particular thing or a particular being; God is sheer existence. All that is, is God. God is the greatest generality. You cannot find Him somewhere because He is everywhere. You cannot find Him in any place because He is the whole, the total. You cannot indicate Him; whatsoever the indication, it will be wrong: He is in all directions, within and without.

Mind is narrow; it goes on seeking in a very concentrated way. Concentration is not the approach towards God. Concentration is a mind approach. God is everywhere, so you have to relax, you have to be meditative. That's the difference between concentration and meditation. Concentration is a focusing of the mind exclusively on something. That's what desire is: a concentrated mind, a mind intent to reach somewhere, to reach something, a great seeking — but it has to be narrow. And God is the infinite.

You have to relax, and you have to drop all searching — only then you'll find Him. Seek, and you will never find Him. Just be, and He has always been there surrounding you. He has never left you for a single moment, because you cannot exist without Him. It is impossible to be without Him for a single split moment. He is your life. He is your being. You can exist without food for months, you can exist without water for a few days, you can exist without air for a few seconds, but you cannot exist without God even for a split second. It is impossible.

This is my whole effort here: to help you to relax. I am not here to make you tense, ambitious, desiring to find God. One who is searching is still in the world. The searcher is part of the world. One day he was seeking money, power, prestige; now he is seeking God, bliss, heaven, but the search continues. He has only changed the objects of the search, but he remains the same. I am here to help you to see the point that God is already the case. You are just like a fish already in the ocean. Maybe the ocean is so obvious that you can't see: you are born in it, you are made of it, you will dissolve in it. It is a question of recognition, not of search.

A searching mind becomes concentrated. Relax and just recognize.

So I don't say to you to seek God, I say to you to live Him right now. There is no need to seek — enjoy Him right now, celebrate! Let it be a festival. He has already happened. He is just waiting for you to dance with Him, to delight with Him.

Good. Girisha is perfectly right: "I have found nothing in particular" . . . right, precisely. That is the point; nothing is to be found in particular . . . "but I feel free, freed" . . . exactly, that is the

point to be understood. A great freedom is needed — freedom from desire, freedom from search, freedom from seeking, freedom from the narrow mind. One simply relaxes in all directions. When you relax, you are all-dimensional; when you seek, you are one-dimensional. When you relax you become part of the whole; when you seek you remain an ego.

This 'nothing' is what God is; and this freedom, this tremendous freedom — that there is no longer any desire to bind you, no bondage exists — this is what *moksha*, liberation is. *Mosksha* or liberation is not a geographical thing. It is not somewhere: it is not after you die, it is a recognition, a recognition of here and now. Be free of all seeking. There are only two types of people in the world: one, who are continuously seeking. They seek and they never find, because seeking is not the way to find. They seek one thing, then another thing, then another thing; they continuously change their objects, but they continue seeking. They are one-dimensional people. They miss God because God is all-dimensional.

They are linear people; they move in a line — and God is all. You cannot find Him through linear logic.

Then there is another type of person — very rare — who doesn't seek, who enjoys, who delights in whatsoever is available, who dances, who sings. These are the Bauls, these are the really authentically religious people.

God is not somewhere in the future. If you delight, He is here. If you celebrate, you will find Him just by your side, beating in your heart. But if you seek Him you will never find Him anywhere. The seeking mind never reaches to reality. And one becomes too much of a seeker, by and by: too much practice, conditions, so you go on seeking. Today you will seek, yesterday you were seeking, tomorrow also you will seek; past lives you were seeking, this life you are seeking, in the future lives also you will seek. Seeking has become habitual. It has become a structure. Drop that structure! This is my message: He is here, right *this* very moment. Don't miss Him. There is no point in seeking; you just also be here, as He is here, and the meeting, and the communion, and the orgasm . . . you become one.

"I go about my business without anxiety" — beautiful! Because then everything is His, business also. Ordinary day to day activity becomes religious, because all is His. When you are taking a bath, you are giving Him a bath. When you are standing under a shower, He is showering on you. When you are eating, He is eating, and when you feel satisfied, He feels satisfied. When you are singing, He is singing within you, and He is the audience also; He is listening to you. Every moment and every act becomes luminous with His presence. When the whole life becomes luminous — waking, He wakes in you; sleeping, He goes to sleep and takes a rest — then there is no distraction. Then you are continuously in tune with Him. Then the harmony has happened. This is what a religious life is all about.

Religious life is not something separate from life. It is not the life of the temple or of the monastery; it is the life offered to God — totally, unconditionally, utterly. And now one lives because He wants you to live. And one lives happily, because He has chosen you, because He has chosen you to be an instrument to Him. Then you become a flute on His Lips . . . then everything is tremendously beautiful. This is what the Bauls want to say . . . “. . . and I feel such a flood of gratitude for your presence here."

Gratitude arises whenever you start feeling God's presence around you; then only gratitude is left. Then your whole energy becomes gratitude, then your whole being becomes a thanksgiving, it becomes a prayer — because nothing is missing, and the world is so perfect, and everything is as it should be. Gratitude is natural. Gratitude is not something that can be practiced. You have been taught to be grateful; you cannot be. Gratefulness is a consequence: when you feel God close by, gratitude arises. It is a byproduct. Respect arises. This respect is not something that you manage, it is something beyond you. You have been taught to be grateful to your parents, taught to be grateful to your teachers, taught to be grateful to your elders, but those are all just conditionings. When real gratitude arises, then you see what a tremendous difference there is. The gratitude that was taught was just a concept, a dead ritual. You were following it like a mechanism. When the real gratitude upsurges in your being, you feel for the first time what prayer is, what love is.

Good, Girisha. Continue to remember, continue to relax, continue not to lose this experience that is happening to you, because this experience is the only experience that makes life meaningful, which gives life a glow, a benediction. You are blessed, Girisha, but don't lose track of it. It is very difficult to get, and it is very easy to lose – because mind has a long history, and it is very strong, and this new experience is just a small sprout, very soft, fragile. The mind's heavy rock can crush it at any moment, so be very alert.

People who have not known anything like a spiritual experience of ecstasy, elation, who have never felt any presence of God, need not be very alert, because they have nothing to lose. But a person who has had an experience, a glimpse, a mini-*satori*, has much to lose. He'll have to be more cautious. Be more cautious. Allow what has happened to you to happen more and more. Go deeper into it so that that which is fragile becomes strong, that which is new becomes deeply rooted in your being.

In fact, people who are searching and seeking and making much fuss about it are completely unaware that finally, when they reach, they will find there is nothing.

One day, when you arrive, you simply are amazed that for so many lives you were seeking something which had never been there, and that which has been there was so close to you, and there was no need to seek it.

Delight, enjoy. God is not a thing, it is an attitude, an attitude of celebration and festivity. Drop sadness. He is so close by, dance! Drop long faces, it is sacrilege — because He is so close by. Forget your childish miseries and worries; He is so close by. Don't go on brooding about immaterial things; He is so close by. Allow Him to hold your hand. He has been waiting for you for long.

From ***The Beloved, V.2*** #10, Q1

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Without Hope

At darshan, from the way you talked to me it seems clear, my meditation is to live totally in the here and now. You made it clear I was not to live in hope.

T.S. Eliot said, "I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope, for hope would be hope for the wrong thing. Wait without love, for love would be love of the wrong thing. There is yet faith, but faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting."

Anything to say Osho?

The question is from Pradeepa.

She understood perfectly what I was trying to show her. Maturity happens when you start living without hope. Hope is childish. You become mature when you don't project hope into the future. In fact, you are mature when you don't have any future; you just live in the moment — because that is the only reality there is. In the past, religion used to talk about the hereafter. Those were the childish, immature days of religion. Now religion talks about here-now; religion has come of age.

In the Vedas, in the Koran, in the Bible, hereafter is the basic goal. But now man is no longer that childish. That sort of God and that sort of religion is dead. It was a religion of hope, it was a religion of future.

Now another sort of religion is asserting itself all over the world, and this religion is about here-now, the present. There is nowhere else to go and there is no other space and no other time to live, only this space and this time, here and now. Life has to become very intense in this moment. A man who lives in hope dissipates life. He spreads life; it becomes too thin. And when it becomes too thin, it is never happy. Happiness means intensity, tremendous depth. If you spread your hope into the future, life will become very thin. It will lose depth.

When I say drop all hope, I mean be so intense in the moment that there is no need for the future. Then there is a turning, a transformation. The very quality of time changes for you it becomes eternal. What can you do with hope? In fact, what can you hope? You cannot hope for the new. You can only hope for the old, that which has happened before — maybe with a little modification here and there, a little more decorated. But hope is nothing but past: you have lived something, you have experienced something, and you again and again hope for it. It is a repetition; it is circular.

Hope means simply projecting the past into the future again: you loved a man yesterday, you want to love the man tomorrow also. And you know that yesterday was not a fulfillment, hence the hope. Yesterday was not enough, hence the hope. You missed something yesterday. Now that missed gap is torturing you; it is creating agony. You hope that again tomorrow that man will be available to love you, and tomorrow you will really love.

But between yesterday and tomorrow is today. If you really want to love, then why not be here-now, today? Otherwise, when today will have become yesterday you will again start projecting it. Incomplete experiences are projected. Uncompleted desires are projected. If you really love

totally this moment, you will never think about this moment again. It is finished, it is complete, it is perfect. It disappears, it leaves no trace on you. This is what Krishnamurti calls 'total act'. Total act creates no *karma*: it creates no chain; it creates no bondage. If it is total, you never remember it again; there is no point. We remember only something which has remained incomplete. Mind tends to complete things. And you have so many incomplete experiences; they go on being projected into the future. The past is gone — now there is no way to complete them in the past; and the present is going out of your hands fast, slipping, so you don't see any point, any possibility to complete them in the present. The future is long: you can project — this life, another life, this world, another world — you can project eternity. Then you are at ease. You say, "I am not at a loss; tomorrow is there. There will be another life." But by and by, you are getting trapped in a wrong pattern.

No, hope is not the right thing. Live in the present so deeply, so completely, that nothing is left. Then there will be no projection. You will move very smoothly into the tomorrow without carrying any load from today. And when there is no yesterday haunting you, then there is no tomorrow. When the past is not hanging around you, there is no future.

Pradeepa has understood rightly. That's what I was trying to show her: hope is an illness, a disease of the mind. It is hope that is not allowing you to live. Hope is not the friend, remember; it is the foe. It is because of hope that you go on postponing. But you will remain the same tomorrow also, and tomorrow also you will hope for some future. And this way it can go on for eternity, and you can go on missing. Stop postponing. And who knows what the future is going to reveal to you? There is no way to know about it. It is an opening; all alternatives are open. What is really going to happen, nobody can predict.

People have tried.

That's why people go to astrologers, to *I Ching*, and to other sorts of things. *I Ching* goes on fascinating people; astrologers go on influencing people. Astrology still seems to be a great force. Why? — because people are missing and they are hoping for the future. They want some clue to know what is going to happen so they can arrange it that way. These things will persist, even if scientifically it is proved that it is all nonsense. They will persist because it is not a question of science, it is a question of human hope. Unless hope is dropped, *I Ching* cannot be dropped. Unless hope is dropped, astrology cannot be dropped. It will have great power over man's mind because hope is gripping you. You would like to know little clues about the future so you can move more confidently, you can project more confidently, and you can postpone many more things.

If you know something about tomorrow, I think you will not live today. You will say, "What is the need? Tomorrow we will live." Even without knowing anything about tomorrow you are doing that. And tomorrow never comes . . . and when it comes, it is always today. And you don't know how to live today.

So you are in a great trap. Drop that whole structure. Hope is the bondage of man, hope is *samsar*, hope is the world. Once you drop hope you become a *sannyasin*; then there is nowhere to go. […]

God is your surround, and you are always missing Him because you are missing the present. God has only one tense — that is present. The past and future don't exist. Man exists in the past and

future, not in the present; God exists in the present, not in the past and future. So how is the meeting going to happen? We live in different dimensions. Either God starts living in the past and future — then there can be a meeting, but then He will not be a God, He will be just as ordinary a man as you are; or you start living in the present — then the meeting happens. But then too you will not be human, you will become divine. Only the divine can meet with the divine; only the same can meet the same.

Drop hope.

Hope is the cause of why you are missing God. And the problem is, the vicious circle is: the more you miss God, the more you hope; the more you hope, the more you miss. Once you look deep down into hope, its structure, its grip on you — the very vision, and the hope drops on its own accord. Suddenly you are here and now, and you will see as if a curtain had dropped from your eyes, a curtain has dropped from your senses. You will become *tremendously* fresh and young, and you will see a totally luminous world all around you. The trees will be green but in a different way: tremendously green — and the green will be luminous. The world will immediately turn into a psychedelic world. It is — your eyes are just so covered with dust that you cannot see the psychedelic that is surrounding you from everywhere.

Drop hope.

But whenever I say to somebody to drop hope, he thinks that I am telling him to become hopeless. No, I'm not doing that. When you drop hope there is no possibility of becoming hopeless, because hopelessness exists only because of hope. You hope and it is not fulfilled; hopelessness arises. You hope, and you hope again and again in vain; hopelessness arises. Hopelessness is frustrated hope. The moment you drop hope, hopelessness is also dropped. You are simply without hope and without hopelessness. And that is the most beautiful moment that can happen to a man, because in that very moment one enters into the shrine of God.

From ***The Beloved, V.2*** #8, Q3

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Without Ripples

Anything I see happening in myself is false, illusory, and a mind trip, right? And my recognition of the mind trip is a mind trip too?

Right. As far as thoughts go, everything is a mind trip. When thoughts cease and you see without any thoughts crowding in your mind, when you see clearly with no smoke of the thoughts surrounding you, when your look is simple, innocent, uncorrupted by thoughts, then it is not a mind trip. Only meditation is not a mind trip; everything else is a mind trip. Or, love is not a mind trip; everything else is a mind trip. If love or meditation has happened to you, you will know what I am indicating towards. In a deep moment of love, thinking stops. The moment is so intriguing, the moment is so tremendously powerful, the moment is so intensely alive, that thinking stops. You are simply in awe, a great wonder surrounds you. Or in deep meditation, when the moment of silence has come and you are absolutely silent, still—no flickering, no wavering, no trembling, the flame of your consciousness is straight—then thinking stops. Then you are outside the grip of the mind. Otherwise, everything is a mind trip.

Remember it: one has to go beyond the mind because the mind is *samsar*, the mind is the world. It is because of your thinking that you are missing the truth. Once thinking is stopped you are face to face with the reality. It is the continuous screen of thinking that is distorting reality. It is as if you are looking in a lake full of ripples. It is a full moon night, and the lake is reflecting the beautiful moon—but it is full of ripples. You cannot gather it together; the moon goes on splitting into a thousand fragments. The whole lake seems to be spread over by the moon, silvery, many fragments of the moon all around. Then the wind stops, the ripples disappear: those fragments start falling into one moon. The silver that was spread all over the lake becomes more concentrated in one place. When the lake is completely without ripples, the moon is reflected perfectly.

When the mind is with thoughts, the lake is with ripples; when the mind is without thoughts, the lake is without ripples. God is reflected perfectly when there is no ripple in you. Forget all about God—the only thing to be done is how to become ripple-less, how to become thoughtless, how to drop this constant obsession with thinking. It can be dropped—it is because of your cooperation that it continues. It is your energy that you go on giving to it that keeps it alive. It is just like a man on a bicycle: he goes on pedaling—it is his energy that keeps the cycle going on. Once he stops pedaling, the cycle may go a little further because of the past momentum, but then it has to stop.

Don't give energy to your thoughts. Become a witness—indifferent, aloof, distant. Just see the thoughts, and don't be in any way involved in them. Note the fact: the thoughts are there; but don't choose this way or that, don't be for or against, don't be pro or con. Just be a watcher. Let the mind-traffic move, just stand by the side and look at it, unaffected by it, as if it has nothing to do with you.

Sometimes try it: go on the busiest street where the traffic rush is too much. Stand by the side of the road and see the traffic—so many people going hither and thither, and cars and bicycles and trucks and buses. You just stand by the side and look, and do the same inside: close your eyes and see—the mind is a traffic of thoughts, thoughts rushing here and there. You watch, you just be a watcher. By and by, you will see that the traffic is becoming less and less. By and by, you

will see that the road is empty, nobody is passing. In those rare moments, first glimpses of *samadhi* will enter in you.

There are three stages of *samadhi*. First, when you achieve glimpses through gaps—one thought comes, then it has gone and another has not come for the time being. There may even be a gap for a few seconds; in that interval reality penetrates you—the moon becomes one. The reflection is there only for a single moment, but you will see the first glimpse.

This is what in Zen they call *satori*. By and by, the gaps will become bigger, and when the gaps become bigger and you can see reality more clearly, that vision of reality changes you. Then you cannot be the same because your vision becomes your reality also. Whatsoever you are seeing affects your being. Your vision, by and by, is absorbed, digested. That is the second stage of samadhi.

And then comes the last stage: when suddenly the whole traffic disappears, as if you were fast asleep and dreaming and somebody has shaken you and awakened you, and the whole traffic of dreaming has stopped. In that third stage you become one with reality, because there is nothing to divide. The fence that was dividing you has disappeared. The wall is no more there. The wall is made of the bricks of thoughts, desires, feelings, emotions; once it disappears—it is a China wall, very ancient, and every strong—but once it disappears, there is no fence between you and God. When for the first time the third stage happens, that is where the Upanishads announced, "*Aham Brahamasi*"—I am God, I am the Brahma. It is where the Sufi mystic, Mansur, declares, "*Ana'l Haq*"—I am the truth. It is there when Jesus declares, "I and my God are one, I and my Father are one."

From **The Beloved**, **V.2**, Discourse #10

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Freedom is Responsibility

On the one hand you are giving ultimate freedom to do whatsoever we want to do, and on the other hand you are giving responsibility. With responsibility, I cannot use the word "freedom" as I want, hence I have to wait for the right meaning of freedom. The moment I get it, I get it with responsibility. Osho, when I understand, I feel "thank you." Otherwise, I would like to use, and I have already used it, as a license.

It is one of the perennial questions of humanity: the question of freedom and responsibility. If you are free, you interpret it as if now there is no responsibility. Just a hundred years ago Friedrich Nietzsche declared, "God is dead, and man is free." And the next sentence he wrote is, "Now you can do whatsoever you want to do. There is no responsibility. God is dead, man is free, and there is no responsibility." There he was absolutely wrong; when there is no God, there is *tremendous* responsibility on your shoulders. If there is a God, he can share your responsibility. You can throw your responsibility on Him: you can say, "It is *you* who has made the world; it is *you* who has made me in this way; it is *you* who is finally, ultimately, responsible, not me. How can I be ultimately responsible? I am just a creature, and you are the creator. Why have you put seeds of corruption in me and seeds of sin in me from the beginning? You are responsible. I am free." In fact, if there is no God, then man is *absolutely* responsible for his acts, because there is no way to throw responsibility on anybody else.

When I say to you that you are free, I mean that you are responsible. You cannot throw responsibility on anybody else; you are alone. And whatsoever you do, it is your doing. You cannot say that somebody else forced you to do it — because you are free; nobody can force you! Because you are free, it is your decision to do something or not to do something. With freedom comes responsibility. Freedom *is* responsibility. But the mind is very cunning, the mind interprets in its own way: it always goes on listening to that which it wants to listen to. It goes on interpreting things in its own way. The mind never tries to understand what really is the truth. It has taken that decision already.

I have heard . . .

"I am a respectable man, doctor, but lately life has become intolerable because of my feelings of guilt and self-recrimination." The patient gulped miserably before continuing.

"You see, I have recently fallen victim to an uncontrollable urge to pinch and fondle girls in the underground."

"Dearie me," tutted the psychiatrist consolingly, "we must certainly help you to rid yourself of this unfortunate urge. I can quite see how distressing . . ."

The patient broke in anxiously, "It is not so much the urge I wanted you get rid of for me, doctor, it is the guilt."

People go on talking about freedom, but they don't want freedom exactly, they want irresponsibility. They ask for freedom, but deep down, unconsciously, they ask for irresponsibility, license.

Freedom is maturity; license is very childish. Freedom is possible only when you are so integrated that you can take the responsibility of being free. The world is not free because people are not mature. Revolutionaries have been doing many things down through the centuries, but everything fails. Utopians have been continuously thinking of how to make man free, but nobody bothers — because man cannot be free unless he is integrated. Only a Buddha can be free, a Mahavira can be free, a Christ, a Mohammed can be free, a Zarathustra can be free, because freedom means the man is now aware. If you are not aware then the state is needed, the government is needed, the police are needed, the court is needed. Then freedom has to be cut from everywhere. Then freedom exists only in name; in fact, it doesn't exist. How can freedom exist when governments exist? — it is impossible. But what to do?

If governments disappear, there will simply be anarchy. Freedom will not come in if governments disappear, there will simply be anarchy. It will be a worse state than it is now. It will be sheer madness. The police are needed because you are not alert. Otherwise, what is the point of having a policeman standing on the crossroad? If people are alert, the policeman can be removed, will have to be removed, because it is unnecessary. But people are not conscious.

So when I say “freedom,” I mean be responsible. The more responsible you become, the more free you become; or the more free you become, the more responsibility comes on you. Then you have to be very alert to what you are doing, what you are saying. Even about your small unconscious gestures, you have to be very alert — because there is nobody else to control you, it is only you. When I say to you that you are free, I mean that you are a God. It is not license; it is tremendous discipline.

-From ***The Beloved, V.2*** #10, Q5

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Don’t Waste Time in Dreaming

I am desperate. I feel more and more energy and a deep let-go wanting to happen. In the last while I often have a feeling of letting myself fall into something like into the sea, or into the incredible beautiful vast clouds of the sky. But the stronger this becomes, the stronger another part, my ego, is trying to keep me down, to put me to sleep again, to tell me that everything is just bullshit and fantasy. This is so incredibly strong and there does not seem to be anything like willpower. I feel totally powerless; that makes me feel desperate, helpless and sometimes frustrated. Please help me.

The question is from Anand Maria. Maria, there seems to be some misunderstanding in your mind. It is not the ego that is trying to give you a message that you are moving in fantasies; you are moving in fantasies. But fantasies are beautiful. You are dreaming sweet dreams. It is not the ego that is pulling you down, it is the ego that is dreaming and that is going into fantasies. The part that wants to pull you down is your awareness. You are in a total confusion about it.

Awareness always brings you back to reality. Ego is, in fact, a dream; it is a false entity. Ego never stops anybody from going into fantasies because ego feeds on fantasy. Ego is the greatest fantasy. How can it prevent you from going into fantasies? It wants you to dream, it wants you to dream great dreams of the other world.

It is not the ego that is pulling you down to the earth. The part that is pulling you down to reality is awareness, but you are condemning awareness, and you would like to go into the fantasies more and more. No, you are in a complete mess, Maria.

“I feel more and more energy and a deep let-go wanting to happen. In the last while I often have a feeling of letting myself fall into something, like the sea, or into the incredible beautiful vast clouds of the sky . . .”

They are nowhere; they are just in your imagination.

“But the stronger this becomes, the stronger another part, my ego, is trying to keep me down, to put me to sleep again, to tell me that everything is just bullshit and fantasy . . .” It is; it is bullshit. It will be hard for you.

Let me tell you one anecdote.

A schoolteacher in London had a mixed class containing children of all religions, of all nationalities. One day she asked her class who was the greatest man who ever lived, and said that the child who gave the correct answer would receive a shilling.

The first child was American and answered, “George Washington.” Patrick O'Kelly was next and he said that St. Patrick was the greatest man who ever lived. Then there was an Indian child who said Gautam Buddha, and a Chinese who said Lao Tzu. Then little Abe was next in line and without hesitation he answered, “Jesus.”

The teacher promptly gave him the shilling and said, “Now tell me how it is that you, being a little Jew, and not believing in Jesus as the Christ, mention his name as the greatest man who ever lived?”

“Well,” replied Abe, “deep in my heart I know it was Moses, but business is business.”

Deep in your heart you also know it is bullshit. That’s why you are pulled back to the earth again and again. Come back to the earth; imagination won’t help.

There is a poetry, a different type of poetry – which arises out of reality. Yes, there are beautiful clouds and there are vast oceans of beatitude, but that arises by being rooted in the earth. There is no conflict between that beauty and reality. That beauty is nothing but reality itself manifested in its total grandeur. But right now, whatsoever you are doing is just a fantasy. So change your emphasis. It is the ego which is fantasizing, and it is awareness which is pulling you down.

Allow awareness to work more and more, and don't waste time in dreams. [...]

One wants to have sweet experiences; one desires to have beautiful experiences. But just by desiring you cannot have them; you can only dream about them. You can have them not by desiring, but by working hard on your being. Tremendous effort is needed. Then one day reality comes, is revealed.

And then it has a splendor which no dream can ever have. Because dream is just a dream, a thought in the mind – a colorful thought, but still a thought. When reality is revealed, it is totally different; it is millions of times more beautiful than any dream. Don’t waste time in dreaming. Walk on earth, be in the body, come back to your senses.

From ***The Beloved, V.2***, Discourse #8, Q6

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How to Start the Journey?

How to start the journey?

The journey has already started; you are not to start it. We have found ourselves in the middle of it. There is no beginning to it and no end to it. Life is journey. The first thing to be understood is that it doesn't need to be started now. It has always been going on. You are in the journey. This has to be recognized. Unconsciously, you are in the journey: that's why it feels as if you have to start it. Recognize it, become conscious about it; the very recognition becomes the beginning. The moment you recognize that you are always moving going somewhere — knowingly, unknowingly, willingly, unwillingly — but you are going . . . some great force is constantly working within you: God is evolving. He is constantly creating something within you, so it is not how to start it. The right question will be, how to recognize it. It is there, but recognition is not there.

For example, trees die, but they don't know; birds and animals die, but they don't know. Only man knows that he has to die. That knowledge is also very cloudy, not clear — and the same is so with life. The birds are alive, but they don't know that they are alive — because how can you know life if you don't know death? How can you know that you are alive if you don't know that you are going to die? Both recognitions come together. They are alive, but they don't recognize that they are alive. Man recognizes, a little, that he is going to die, but that recognition remains very cloudy, hidden in deep smoke. And the same is true about life: you are alive, but you don't know exactly what being alive means. That too is cloudy, not clear. When I say recognition, I mean becoming alert to what this life energy is that is already on the way. To become aware of one's own being is the beginning of the journey. To come to a point where you are so absolutely alert that not even a fragment of darkness exists around you is the end of the journey. But in fact, the journey never starts and never ends. You will continue even after that, but then the journey will have a totally different meaning, a totally different quality to it — it will be sheer delight. Right now, it is near misery.

"How to start the journey?" — become more alert about your actions, about your relationships, about your movements. Whatsoever you do — even an ordinary thing like walking on the street — try to become alert, try to take steps with full awareness. Buddha used to say to his disciples, "When you take a step with the right foot, remember, now this is the right foot; when you take a step with the left, remember; now this is the left. When you breathe in, remember, 'Now I am breathing in'; when you breathe out, remember; 'Now I am breathing out.'" Not that you have to verbalize it. Not that you have to say in words "I am breathing in," but just becoming alert that now the breath is going in. I am saying it to you, so I have to use words, but when you are becoming alert, you need not use words because words are like smoke. Don't use words – just feel the breath going in and filling your lungs then being emptied. Just watch, and soon you will come to a recognition, a great recognition, that it is not simply breathing that goes in and out, it is life itself. Each breath in is life infusing its energy into you. Each breath out is a short death. With each breath you die and you are reborn. Each breath is a crucifixion and a resurrection.

And when you watch it, you will come to know a beautiful feeling of trust. When you breathe out, there is no certainty that you will ever be able to breathe in again. What is the certainty? Who has guaranteed it? Who *can* guarantee that you will be able to breathe in again? But somehow, a deep trust; you know that "I will breathe again." Otherwise breathing would become impossible. If you become so afraid that, "Who knows if I let my breath out, and if I go through

this small death, what is the certainty that I will be able to breathe in again? If I can't breathe, then it is better not to breathe out," then you will die immediately. If you stop breathing out, you will die. But a deep trust exists — that trust is part of life. Nobody has taught you.

When a child starts walking for the first time, tremendous trust exists in him that he will be able to walk. Nobody has taught him. He has just seen other people walk, that's all. But how can he come to a conclusion that "I will be able to walk"? He is so tiny. People are so big, giants compared to him, and he knows that whenever he stands, he falls down — but still he tries. Trust is in-built. It is in your every cell of life. He tries, many times he will fall; he will try again and again and again. And one day, trust wins over and he starts walking.

If you watch your breath, you will become aware of a deep layer of trust, a subtle trust in life — no doubt, no hesitation. If you walk, and walk alertly, by and by you will become aware that you are not walking, you are "being walked by." That's a very subtle feeling: that life is moving through you, not that you are moving. When you feel hungry, if you are aware, you will see life is feeling hungry within you, not you.

Becoming more alert will make you conscious of the fact that there is only one thing you have got that you can call yours and that is witnessing. Everything else belongs to the universe; only witnessing belongs to you. But when you become aware of witnessing, even the idea of being "I" is dissolved. That too does not belong to you. That was part of darkness, part of the clouds that had gathered around you. In the clear light, when the sky is open and the clouds have disappeared and the sun is bright, there is no possibility of any idea of being "I." Then simply witnessing is; nothing belongs to you. That witnessing is the goal of the journey.

How to start the journey? — start becoming more and more a witness. Whatsoever you do, do it with deep alertness; then even small things become sacred. Then cooking or cleaning become sacred; they become worship. It is not a question of what you are doing, the question is how you are doing it. You can clean the floor like a robot, a mechanical thing; you have to clean it, so you clean it. Then you miss something beautiful. Then you waste those moments in only cleaning the floor. Cleaning the floor could have been a great experience; you missed it. The floor is cleaned but something that could have happened within you has not happened. If you were aware, not only the floor but *you* would have felt a deep cleansing.

Clean the floor full of awareness, luminous with awareness. Work or sit or walk, but one thing has to be a continuous thread: make more and more moments of your life luminous with awareness. Let the candle of awareness burn in each moment, in each act. The cumulative effect is what enlightenment is. The cumulative effect, all the moments together, all small candles together, become a great source of light.

Excerpt from ***The Beloved, V.1***, Discourse #4, Q1

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04 Witnessing is a Revolution

Witnessing is a Revolution

You spoke in several recent discourses on the no-problem, the nonexistence of our problems.

Having been brought up in a repressive Catholic family, and having spent twenty-one years in an equally crazy educational system – are you saying that all the coats of armor, all the conditionings and all the repressions do not exist, can be dropped immediately – now?

What about all the imprints left on the brain, on the musculature of the body?

This is a very significant question – it is from Jayananda. The question is significant because it shows two different approaches concerning the inner reality of man.

The Western approach is to think about the problem, to find the causes of the problem, to go into the history of the problem, into the past of the problem, to uproot the problem from the very beginning, to uncondition the mind, or to recondition the mind, to recondition the body, to take out all those imprints that have been left on the brain – this is the Western approach. Psychoanalysis goes into the memory; it works there. It goes into your childhood, into your past; it moves backwards. It finds out from where the problem has arisen – maybe fifty years before, when you were a child, the problem arose in your relationship with your mother, then psychoanalysis will go back.

Fifty years of history! It is a very long, dragging affair. And even then, it doesn't help much – because there are *millions* of problems. It is not only a question of one problem. You can go into one problem's history; you can look into your autobiography and find out the causes. Maybe you can eliminate one problem, but there are millions of problems. If you start going into each problem to solve one life's problems, you will need millions of lives. Let me repeat it: to solve *one* life's problems you will have to be born again and again, millions of times. This is most impractical. This cannot be done. And all those millions of lives when you will be solving the problems of this life, those lives will create their own problems . . . and so on and so forth. You will be dragged more and more into the problems. This is absurd!

Now, the same psychoanalytical approach has gone into the body: Rolfing, bioenergetics, and other methods are there which try to eliminate imprints on the body, in the musculature. Again, you have to go into the history of the body. But one thing is certain about both the approaches – which are on the same logical pattern – that the problem comes from the past, so somehow it has to be tackled in the past.

Man's mind has always been trying to do two impossible things. One is: to reform the past – which cannot be done. The past has happened. You cannot *really* go into the past. When you think of going into the past, at the most you go into the memory of it; it is not the real past, it is just the memory. The past is no more there, so you cannot reform it. This is one of the impossible goals of humanity; man has suffered very much because of it. You want to undo the past – how can you undo it? The past is absolute. The past means: all potentiality of it is finished; it has

become actual. Now there is no longer any potentiality to reform it, to undo it, to redo it. You cannot do *any* thing with the past.

And the second impossible idea that has always dominated the human mind is: to establish the future – which again cannot be done. Future means that which is not yet; you cannot establish it. Future remains unestablished. Future remains open. Future is pure potentiality! Unless it happens, you cannot be certain about it.

Past is pure actuality – it has happened. Now nothing can be done about it.

Between these two, man stands in the present always thinking of the impossibles. He wants to make everything certain about the future, about tomorrow – which can *not* be done. Let it sink as deeply in your heart as possible: it cannot be done. Don't waste your present moment for making the future certain. The future is uncertainty; that is the very quality of the future. And don't waste your time looking back. The past has happened, it is a dead phenomenon. Nothing can be done about it. What, at the most, you can do is you can reinterpret it. That's all. That's what psychoanalysis is doing: reinterpreting it. Reinterpretation can be done – but the past remains the same.

Psychoanalysis and astrology: astrology tries somehow to make the future certain, and psychoanalysis tries to redo the past. Neither is a science. Both things are impossible, but both have millions of followers – because man *likes* it that way. He wants to be certain about the future, so he goes to the astrologer, he consults the *I Ching*, he goes to a Tarot reader, and there are a thousand and one ways to fool oneself, to deceive oneself.

And then there are people who say they can change the past – he consults them also.

Once these two things are dropped, you become free of all sorts of foolishnesses. Then you don't go to the psychoanalyst and you don't go to the astrologer. Then you know the past is finished . . . you also be finished with it. And the future has not happened; whenever it happens, we will see – nothing can be done about it right now. You can only destroy the present moment, which is the only moment available, real.

The West has been continuously looking into the problems, how to solve them. The West takes the problems very seriously. And when you are going in a certain logic, given the premises, that logic looks perfect.

I was just reading one anecdote:

A great philosopher, and world-renowned mathematician, is aboard an airplane. He is sitting in his seat and thinking great mathematical problems, when suddenly an announcement comes from the captain: "I am sorry, there will be a slight delay. Engine number one has cut out and we are now flying on three engines."

About ten minutes later another announcement: "I am afraid there will be further delay – engines two and three have cut out and there is only number four left."

So the philosopher turns to the fellow sitting next to him and says, "Good golly! If the other one cuts out, we will be up here all night!"

When you are thinking in a certain line, the very direction of it makes certain things possible, absurd things also possible. Once you have taken human problems very seriously, once you start thinking about man as a problem, you have accepted some premise, you have taken the first step wrongly. Now you can go into the direction, and you can go on and on. Now such great literature has come up in this century about mind phenomena, psychoanalysis; millions of papers are written and treatises and books. Once Freud opened the doors of a certain logic, it dominated the whole century.

The East has a totally different outlook. First, it says no problem is serious. The moment you say no problem is serious, the problem is almost ninety-nine percent dead. Your whole vision changes about it. The second thing the East says is: the problem is there because you are identified with it. It has nothing to do with the past, nothing to do with its history. You are identified with it – that is the *real* thing. And that is the key to solve all problems.

For example: you are an angry person. If you go to the psychoanalyst, he will say, "Go into the past . . . how did this anger arise? In what situations did it become more and more conditioned and imprinted on your mind? We will have to wash out all those imprints; we will have to wipe them off. We will have to clean your past completely."

If you go to an Eastern mystic, he will say, "You think that you are anger, you feel identified with the anger – that is where things are going wrong. Next time anger happens, you just be a watcher, you just be a witness. You don't get identified with the anger. Don't say, 'I am anger.' Don't say, 'I am angry.' Just see it happening as if it is happening on a TV screen. Look at yourself as if you are looking at somebody else."

You are pure consciousness. When the cloud of anger comes around you, just watch it, *and* remain alert so that you don't get identified. The whole thing is how not to become identified with the problem. Once you have learnt it . . . and then there is no question of "so many problems" – because the key, the same key will open all the locks. It is so with anger, it is so with greed, it is so with sex: it is so with everything else that the mind is capable of.

The East says: just remain unidentified. Remember – that's what Gurdjieff means when he says "self-remembering." Remember that you are a witness! Be mindful! – that's what Buddha says. Be alert that a cloud is passing by! Maybe the cloud comes from the past, but that is meaningless. It must have a certain past; it cannot come just out of the blue; it must be coming from a certain sequence of events – but that is irrelevant. Why be bothered about it? *Right now*, this very moment, you can become detached from it, you can cut yourself away from it. The bridge can be broken right now – and it can be broken *only* in the now.

Going into the past won't help. Thirty years before, the anger arose, and you got identified with it that day. Now you cannot get unidentified from that past; it is no more there. But you can get unidentified this moment, this very moment. And then the *whole* series of angers of your past is no more part of you.

The question is relevant. Jayananda has asked: "You spoke in several recent discourses on the no-problem, the non-existence of our problems. Having been brought up in a repressive Catholic family . . ."

You can, right now, become a non-Catholic. "*Now!"* I say. You will not have to go back and undo whatsoever your parents and your society and the priest and the church have done. That will be a sheer wastage of precious present time. In the first place it has destroyed many years; now, again, it will be destroying your present moments. You can simply drop out of it, just as a snake slips out of the old skin.

"Having been brought up in a repressive Catholic family, and having spent twenty-one years in an equally crazy educational system – are you saying that all the coats of armor, all the conditionings and all the repressions do not exist . . .?"

No, they exist. But they exist either in the body or in the brain; they don't exist in your consciousness because the consciousness cannot be conditioned. Consciousness *remains* free! Freedom is its innermost quality; freedom is its nature. In fact, even asking it, you are showing that freedom.

When you say "twenty-one years in a crazy educational system"; when you say "having been brought up in a repressive Catholic family" – in *this* moment you are not identified. You can look: so many years of Catholic repression, so many years of a certain education. In this moment when you are looking at it, this consciousness is no longer Catholic; otherwise, who will be aware? If you had really *become* Catholic, then who would be aware? Then there would be no possibility of becoming aware.

If you can say "twenty-one years in an equally crazy educational system," one thing is certain: you are not yet crazy. The system has failed; it didn't work. Jayananda, you are not crazy, hence you can see the whole system as crazy. A madman cannot see that he is mad. Only a sane person can see that this is madness. To see madness as madness, sanity is needed. Those twenty-one years of a crazy system have failed; all that repressive conditioning has failed. It *cannot* really succeed. It succeeds only in the proportion that you get identified with it. Any moment you can stand aloof . . . it is there, I am not saying it is not there: but it is no more part of your consciousness.

This is the beauty of consciousness: consciousness can slip out of anything. There is no barrier to it, no boundary to it. Just a moment before you were an Englishman – understanding the nonsense of nationalism, a second later you are no longer an Englishman. I am not saying that your white skin will change; it will remain white – but you are no more identified with the whiteness; you are no more against the black. You see the stupidity of it. I am not saying that just by seeing that you are no more an Englishman you will forget the English language, no. It will still be there in your memory, but your consciousness has slipped out, your consciousness is standing on a hillock looking at the valley. Now, the Englishman is dead in the valley, and you are standing on the hills, far away, unattached, untouched.

The whole Eastern methodology can be reduced to one word: witnessing. And the whole Western methodology can be reduced to one thing: analyzing. Analyzing, you go round and round. Witnessing, you simply get out of the circle.

Analysis is a vicious circle. If you *really* go into analysis, you will be simply puzzled – how is it possible? If, for example, you try to go into the past, where will you end? Where exactly? If you go into the past, where did your sexuality start? When you were fourteen years of age? But then it came out of the blue? It must have been getting ready in the body. So when? When you were

born? But then when you were in the mother's womb wasn't it getting ready? Then when? The moment you were conceived? But before that? Half of your sexuality was mature in your mother's egg and half of the sexuality was maturing in your father's sperm. Now go on. Where will you end? You will have to go to Adam and Eve. And even then, it does not end: you will have to go to Father God Himself. Why in the first place did He create Adam? . . .

Analysis will always remain half, so analysis never helps anybody really. It cannot help. It makes you a little more adjusted to your reality, that's all. It is a sort of adjustment. It helps you to attain a little bit of understanding about your problems, their genesis, how they have arisen. And that little intellectual understanding helps you to adjust to the society better, but you remain the same person. There is no transformation through it, there is no radical change through it.

Witnessing is a revolution. It is a radical change – from the *very* roots! It brings a totally new man into existence because it takes your consciousness out of all the conditionings. Conditionings are there in the body and in the mind, but consciousness remains unconditioned. It is pure, always pure. It is virgin. Its virginity cannot be violated.

The Eastern approach is to make you mindful of this virgin consciousness, of this purity, of this innocence. That's what Saraha is saying to the king again and again. Our emphasis is on the sky and the Western emphasis is on the clouds. Clouds have a genesis; if you find out from where they come, you will have to go to the ocean, then to the sunrays and the evaporation of the water and the clouds forming . . . and you can go on, but it will be moving in a circle. The clouds form, then again, they come, fall in love with the trees, start pouring again into the earth, become rivers, go to the ocean, start evaporating, rising again on sunrays, become clouds, again fall on the earth . . . It goes on and on, round and round and round. It is a wheel. From where will you be out? One thing will lead to another, and you will be in the wheel.

The sky has no genesis. The sky is uncreated; it is not produced by anything. In fact, for anything to be, a sky is needed as a must, *a priori*; it has to exist before anything else can exist. You can ask the Christian theologian – he says, "God created the world." Ask him whether before He created the world there was any sky or not. If there was no sky, where did God used to exist? He must have needed space. If there was no space, where did He create the world? Where did He put the world? Space is a must . . . even for God to exist. You cannot say, "God created space." That would be absurd because then He would not have any space to exist. Space must precede God.

Sky has always been there. The Eastern approach is to become mindful of the sky. The Western approach makes you more and more alert to the clouds, and helps you a little, but it doesn't make you aware of your innermost core. Circumference – yes, you become a little more aware of the circumference but not aware of the center. And the circumference is a cyclone. You have to find the center of the cyclone. And that happens only through witnessing.

Witnessing will not change your conditioning. Witnessing will not change your body musculature. But witnessing will simply give you an experience that you are beyond all musculature, all conditioning. In that moment of beyondness, in that moment of transcendence, no problem exists – not for you.

And now it is up to you. The body will still carry the musculature and the mind will still carry the conditioning – now it is up to you: if sometimes you are hankering for the problem, you can get into the mind-body and have the problem and enjoy it. If you don't want to have it, you can

remain out. The problem will remain as an imprint in the body-mind phenomenon, but you will be aloof and away from it.

That's how a buddha functions. You also use memory; a buddha also uses memory – but he is not identified with it. He uses memory as a mechanism. For example, I am using language. When I have to use language, I use the mind and all the imprints, but continuously I am not the mind – that awareness is there. So I remain the boss, the mind remains a servant. When the mind is called, it comes; its utility is there – but it cannot dominate.

So, your question is right: problems *will* exist, but they will exist only in the seed form in the body and the mind. How can you change your past? You have been a Catholic in the past; if for forty years you have been a Catholic, how can you change those forty years and *not* be a Catholic? No. Those forty years will remain as a period of being Catholic. No – but you can slip out of it. Now you know that that was just identification. Those forty years cannot be destroyed, and there is no need to destroy them. If you are the master of the house, there is no need. You can use even those forty years in a certain way, in a creative way. Even that crazy education can be used in a creative way.

"What about all the imprints left on the brain, on the musculature of the body?"

They will be there but as a seed: potentially there. If you feel too lonely and you want problems, you can have them. If you feel too miserable without misery, you can have them. They will remain always available, but there is no need to have them, there is no necessity to have them. It will be your choice.

The future humanity will have to decide whether it has to go on the path of analysis or it has to change to the path of witnessing. I use both methods. I use analysis, particularly for seekers who come from the West – I put them in the groups. Those groups are analytical, those groups are by-products of psychoanalysis. They have grown: Freud will not be able to recognize encounter if he comes; or primal therapy will be difficult for him to recognize – what is happening? Have all these people gone mad? But they are offshoots of *his* work; he was the pioneer; without him there would be no primal therapy. He started the whole game.

When Western people come to me, I put them into the groups. That is good for them. They should start with what is easier for them. Then by and by, slowly I change. First, they go into cathartic groups like encounter, primal therapy, and then I start putting them into intensive enlightenment, then vipassana. Vipassana is a witnessing. From encounter to vipassana there is a great synthesis. When you move from encounter to vipassana, you are moving from West to East.

From ***The Tantra Experience***, Discourse #6, Q2 (previously titled ***Tantra Vision, V.1***)

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Introspection, Self-Remembering and Witnessing

What is the difference between introspection and self-remembering?

A lot of difference. Introspection is thinking about yourself. Self-remembering is not thinking at all: it is becoming aware about yourself. The difference is subtle but very great.

The Western psychology insists on introspection, and the Eastern psychology insists on self-remembering. When you introspect, what do you do? For example, you are angry: you start thinking about anger — how it is caused. You start analyzing why it is caused. You start judging whether it is good or bad. You start rationalizing that you had been angry because the situation was such. You brood about anger, you analyze anger, but the focus of attention is on the anger, not on the self. Your whole consciousness is focused on the anger — you are watching, analyzing, associating, thinking about it, trying to figure out how to avoid, how to get rid of it, how not to do it again. This is a thinking process. You will judge it "bad" because it is destructive. You will take a vow that "I will never commit the same mistake again." You will try to control this anger through will. That's why the Western psychology has become analytical . . . analysis, dissection.

The Eastern emphasis is not on the anger. The Eastern emphasis is on the self. To be aware when you are angry, to be so aware . . . Not to think, because thinking is a sleeping thing. You can think while you are fast asleep; there is no need for awareness. In fact, you continuously think without being at all aware. The thinking goes on and on and on. Even when you are fast asleep in the night, the thinking continues, the mind goes on continuing its inner chatter. It is a mechanical thing.

The Eastern psychology says, "Be aware. Don't try to analyze anger, there is no need. Just look at it but look with awareness. Don't start thinking." In fact, if you start thinking then thinking will become a barrier to looking at anger. Then thinking will garb it. Then thinking will be like a cloud surrounding it; the clarity will be lost. Don't think at all. Be in a state of no-thought – and look.

When there is not even a ripple of thinking between you and the anger, the anger is faced, encountered. You don't dissect it. You don't bother to go to its source because the source is in the past. You don't judge it, because the moment you judge, thinking starts. You don't take any vow that "I will not do it," because that vow leads you into the future. In awareness you remain with the feeling of anger — exactly here-now. You are not interested in changing it, you are not interested in thinking about it: you are interested to look at it directly, face to face, immediate. Then it is self-remembering.

And this is the beauty of it: that if you can look at anger it disappears. It not only disappears at this moment: the very disappearance of it by your deep look gives you the key that there is no need to use will, there is no need to make any decision for the future, and there is no need to go to the original source from where it comes. It is unnecessary. You have the key now: look at anger, and anger disappears. And this look is available forever. Whenever anger will be there you can look; then this look grows deeper.

There are three stages of the look. First, when the anger has already happened and gone. Almost, you look at the tail disappearing — the elephant has gone, only the tail is there — because when

the anger was there, really, you were so deeply involved in it you could not be aware. When the anger has almost disappeared, ninety-nine per cent — only one per cent, the last part of it is going, disappearing into the farther horizon — then you become aware: this is the first state of awareness. Good, but not enough.

The second state is when the elephant is there, not the tail: when the situation is ripe, you are really angry to the peak — boiling, burning — then you become aware.

Then there is still a third stage: the anger has not come, is still coming — not the tail but the head. It is just entering your area of consciousness and you become aware — then the elephant never materializes. You killed the animal before it was born. That is birth control. The phenomenon has not happened; then it leaves no trace.

If you stop it in the middle, half the head has happened, it will leave something on you — a trace, a load, a small wound. You will feel scratched. Even if you don't allow it now to have its full sway, it has entered. If you look at the tail, the whole thing has already happened. You can at the most repent; and repentance is a thinking. Again you become a victim of the thinking mind.

A man of awareness never repents. There is no point in repenting because the more awareness goes deep, he can stop a process even before it has begun. Then what is the point of repenting? And not that he tries to stop it — that's the beauty of it. He simply looks at it. When you look at a mood, at a situation, at an emotion, feeling, thought — when you bring the quality of looking — the look is like light: darkness disappears.

There is a vast difference between introspection and self-remembering. I am not in favor of introspection. In fact, introspection is a little pathological: it is playing with your own wound. It won't help. It won't help the wound to heal. In fact, it will do just the reverse: if you go on fingering your wound, you will keep it fresh. Introspection is not good. Introspective people are always morbid, ill. They think too much. Introspective people are closed. They just go on playing with their wounds and their anguish and their anxiety — and the whole life seems then too much of a problem; it cannot be solved. Everything looks like a problem for an introspective man. Whatsoever happens becomes a problem.

And, then, he is inside too much; he cannot move out. The balance is lost. Introspective people escape from life and go to the Himalayas. They are morbid, ill, pathological. A healthy person has a healthy swing: he can move in, he can move out. For him there is no problem for in and out. In fact, he doesn't divide the inner life and the outer life. He has a free flow, a free swing. Whenever it is needed, he simply moves in. Whenever it is needed, he simply moves out. He is not against the outside world; he is not for the inside world. In and out should be just like in-breathing and out-breathing: both are needed.

Introspectives become too brooding, too inside. They become afraid to go out because whenever they go out, there are problems, so they close up. They become monads with no windows. And then problems and problems — the mind goes on creating problems and they go on trying to solve.

An introspective person is more prone to become mad. Introverts become mad more than extroverts. If you go to the madhouses, you will find ninety-nine per cent of the people there are introverts, introspective, and only one per cent, at the most, extroverts. They don't bother about

the inner side of things. They go on living on the surface. They don't think that there are problems. They think there is only life to be enjoyed. Eat, drink, be merry is their whole religion, nothing else.

You will always find extroverts more healthy than introverts because at least they are in contact with the whole. The introvert loses all contact with the whole. He lives in his dreams. He has no outgoing breath. Just think: if you don't allow the breath to go out, you will become ill because the breath that has gone in will not remain fresh always. Within seconds it will become stale, within seconds it will lose the oxygen, the life, within seconds it is finished — and then you are living in stale air, dead. You have to go out to seek new sources of life, to seek fresh air. You have to be continuously moving.

To me, if you want to choose between the extrovert and introvert, I will say to you, "Choose the extrovert." He is less ill — lives on the surface, can never come to know the truth, but at least never goes mad. The introvert can come to know the truth, but that is one possibility out of a hundred. Ninety-nine per cent is the possibility he will go mad.

I am in favor of a flowing life. Life should be a rhythm: you go out, you go in, and don't cling to anything. Just remain alert. Remember. Go on remembering: when you are in the world, then too remember; and when you are inside yourself, then too remember. Always keep awareness alert, burning, alive. The flame of awareness should not be lost, that's all. Then live in the market or live in the monastery — you will never be a loser in life. You will attain to the profoundest depth that life can give. That profoundest depth is God. God is a swinger: out and in, introvert and extrovert both — but aware.

What is the difference between self-remembering and witnessing?

Just now I told you the difference between introspection and self-remembering. Now, the difference between self-remembering and witnessing.

Yes, there is a lot of difference again: because in self-remembering the emphasis is on the self. Just as in introspection the emphasis is on the thought, the feeling, the emotion, the mood, anger, sexuality, or anything, and the self is forgotten; in self-remembering the self is remembered and the whole energy is centered on the self, and you just look at the mood, at the situation, at the feeling — you don't think about it, because in the thinking the look is lost, the purity of the look is lost.

Witnessing is a step further ahead. In witnessing, even the self is dropped; only remembering remains. Not that I remember. The "I" is no longer part of witnessing. Just remembering . . . Witnessing is a witnessing of the self. Self-remembering is the beginning; witnessing is the end. By self-remembering you start looking at anger, keeping yourself centered at the self, crystallized at the self, looking at the ripples around you in the mind. But when you look at the mind, by and by, the mind disappears. When the mind disappears and there is void, then a new step can be taken: now, you look at yourself. Now the very energy that was looking at anger, sex, jealousy is free — because the jealousy, anger, and sex have disappeared. Now that same energy turns around to look at yourself.

When the same energy looks at the self, the self also disappears; then there is only remembering. That remembering is witnessing. In witnessing there is no self. You look at the anger, but when

you look at yourself, you are no longer you: just a vast, infinite, unbound witnessing. Just consciousness — infinite and vast — but with no crystallization. This has to be understood.

Gurdjieff worked his whole life on the method of self-remembering because in the West to introduce witnessing would have been almost impossible, because the West has been living with introspection. All the Christian monasteries, they have been teaching introspection. Gurdjieff introduced something beyond introspection: he called it "self-remembering." He was always thinking to introduce witnessing, but he could not because witnessing can be introduced only when self-remembering is settled; before this, it cannot be introduced. To talk about it before the ripeness of self-remembering will not reach anywhere; it will be useless. He waited long, but he couldn't introduce it.

In the East we have used both. In fact, we have used all the three: introspection was for very ordinary religious people, those who don't want to go deep; those who want to go deep, for them, self-remembering; and those who want to go so deep that they disappear in the depth, for them, witnessing. Witnessing is the last. Beyond that, nothing exists. You cannot be a witness to the witness — because that too will be witnessing. So beyond witnessing there is no possibility to go: you have come to the very end. The end of the world is witnessing.

Move from introspection to self-remembering, and from self-remembering, hope someday to move to witnessing. But keep it in mind that self-remembering is not the goal. It is good just as a bridge, but one has to cross, one has to go beyond it.

From ***Essence of Yoga***, Discourse #6, Q2 & Q5; ***Yoga: Science of the Soul, V.6*** (previously titled ***Yoga: The Alpha and the Omega, V.6***).

A Point of No Return

Is it possible to be in a state of pure consciousness for a while and to fall out again?

No, it is not possible. But something like it happens: you have a glimpse of pure consciousness; you have not entered. It is just as if you look from hundreds of miles' distance toward the Himalayan peaks. You have not reached them, but you can look from a vast distance. You can look at the peaks; you can have a feeling. You can open a window and look at the moon far away, and the rays will touch you and you will be illumined, you will have a certain experience, but from this window-experience you will fall again and again.

When pure consciousness is achieved — not a glimpse from a distance, but you have entered into it — then you cannot lose it again. Once achieved it is achieved forever. You cannot fall out of it. Why? Because the moment you enter it you disappear. Who can fall out of it? To fall out at least you have to remain as yourself. But to enter pure consciousness, the ego disappears completely, the self disappears completely. Then who will come back?

In a glimpse you have not disappeared; you are there. You can have a glimpse and close the eyes. You can have a glimpse and close the window. It will become a memory; it will haunt you; it will become a nostalgia. It will come in your dreams. Sometimes, suddenly, you will feel again a deep urge to have that glimpse, but it cannot be a phenomenon forever and forever. Glimpses are only glimpses. Good, beautiful, but don't cling to them because they are not permanent. You will fall out of them again and again — because you are still there.

When there is a glimpse, move toward the peaks, move toward the moon . . . become one with the moon. Unless you disappear completely you will fall. You will have to come back to the world because that ego will feel suffocated with the glimpse. The ego will feel deathlike panic. It will say, "Close the window! Enough you have looked at the moon. Now don't be foolish. Don't be a lunatic." The word "lunatic" means moonstruck. The word comes from "lunar" — of the moon. All mad people are called lunatics, moonstruck — thinking of distant dreams.

The mind, the ego, will say, "Don't be a lunatic. It is okay to have, sometimes, the window open and look at the moon, but don't be obsessed. The world is waiting for you. You have responsibilities to fulfill in the world." And the ego will bring you and persuade you, seduce you, toward the world — because the ego can exist only in the world. Whenever something of the other world penetrates into your mind, the ego becomes afraid, panicky, scared. It looks like death.

If that glimpse is to become a permanent lifestyle, your very being, then you have to bridge the distance, bridge the gap. You have to move. When you become pure consciousness then there is no falling out again. It is a point of no return. One only goes in; one never comes out. It has no exit, only one door . . . the entrance.

From ***Essence of Yoga***, Discourse #6, Q6; ***Yoga: Science of the Soul, V.6*** (previously titled ***Yoga: The Alpha and the Omega, V.6***).

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Witnessing-The Right Button

Meditation is a very simple process: all that you need to know is the right button. The Upanishads call it witnessing-the right button. Just witness your mind process, don't do anything at all. Nothing needs to be done, just be a witness, an observer, a watcher, looking at the traffic of the mind – thoughts passing by, desires, memories, dreams, fantasies. Simply stand aloof, cool – watching it, seeing it, with no judgment, with no condemnation, neither saying, "This is good," nor saying, "This is bad." Don't bring your moral concepts in, otherwise you will never be able to meditate.

That's why I am against the so-called morality: it is anti-meditation because a so-called moral person is so full of his moral ideas, shoulds and should-nots, that he cannot watch, he cannot simply watch. He jumps to conclusions: "This is not right and this is right." And whatsoever he feels is right, he wants to cling to it; and whatsoever he thinks is wrong, he wants to throw it out. He jumps among the thoughts, starts fighting, grabbing, and that's where he loses all witnessing.

Witnessing simply means a detached observation, unprejudiced; that's the whole secret of meditation. It is simple! Once you have known the knack of it, it is the most simple thing in the world because each child is born in that innocence. You have known it in your mother's womb, you have known it when you were a small child, so it is only a rediscovery. Meditation is not something new; you had come with it into the world. Mind is something new; meditation is your nature; it is your very being. How can it be difficult? You just have to know the knack: watch.

Sit by the side of a river and watch the river flowing. Yes, sometimes driftwood passes by and sometimes a boat comes and sometimes a dead body and sometimes a beautiful woman may be swimming in the river – you simply watch, you don't get bothered, you remain cool, you don't get excited. You are not supposed to do anything, you have nothing to do. It is the river and it is the river's business. You simply sit silently. Sitting silently, slowly, slowly the art is learnt . . . and one day, the moment your watchfulness is total, the mind evaporates.

If you are fifty percent watchful, fifty percent of the traffic disappears; if you are ninety percent watchful, ninety percent of the traffic disappears; if you are one hundred percent watchful, totally watchful, the mind totally disappears, the river is no more there.

Excerpt from **Philosophia Ultima**, Discourse #1

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05 I Am is the Way

Three Stages of Human Consciousness: Adam, Jesus and Christ

Man's evolution is from innocence to innocence.

The first innocence is ignorant, the second innocence is luminous. The first innocence is a kind of sleep; the second innocence is an awakening. The first innocence is a gift of God, the second innocence is man's own effort, his earning, his work upon himself. The first can be lost, the second cannot be lost. The first has to go – in the very nature of it – it cannot be eternal; but the second, once it comes, remains forever – it is eternal.

Remember, whatsoever you attain consciously, only that can you possess, *only* that. Whatsoever is given to you, and you receive it unconsciously, will be taken away. Only that really happens to you for which you work hard. Only that belongs to you which you create in your being. You become Master of it.

The first innocence in Christian terms is called Adam. And the second innocence is called Christ.

And Jesus is just in between the two. Jesus is the bridge between the first innocence and the second innocence. Hindus call the second innocence "rebirth": one becomes twice-born, *dwija*. And that's what Jesus also said to one of the famous professors and theologians of his time, Nicodemus: Unless you are born again, you will not attain to the kingdom of God.

Unless you are born *again* . . .

The first birth has happened; the second birth has to happen. The first has happened without cooperation, the second cannot happen without your cooperation. The first birth was almost like an accident – it happened to you unawares. The second birth can only be in immense consciousness; it cannot happen unawares; it can happen only in deep meditation.

Jesus is a bridge between Adam and Christ. That's why the story of the virgin birth has a metaphoric meaning. Jesus is born innocent. Everybody is born innocent – there is no other way to be born.

Every child is born in innocence. But then that innocence is lost sooner or later, and the more intelligent the child, the sooner it will be lost. If the child is stupid, imbecilic, idiotic, then it may go on lingering for a long time; it may not be lost. If you are intelligent, you will start moving away from it. You will start exploring the world. You will start adventuring into the world, into the unknown; you will become a wanderer. And the more intelligent you are, the more is the possibility that you will not follow the crowd, you will find your own way – you would like to do your "own thing." You will not move on the superhighway; you will move on small footpaths into the jungle because intelligence wants to take risks. Intelligence wants to dare; intelligence wants to go into the unknown and the dangerous because it is only in danger that intelligence comes to its peak. It is only when you dare that your intelligence becomes a crystallization. It is only when you risk that you are. The more you risk, the more you are. Risk brings being. A man who never risks remains without a being.

George Gurdjieff used to say that not everybody has got a soul. Because you have never dared, how can you get a soul? The soul comes only through daring. The only right way to attain a soul is to go into dangers, to risk all, to be a gambler, to go into the dark unknown.

The first innocence is going to go, has to go. And it is good that it goes. If it continues, you will not really be a man; you will be a vegetable or a cow or a buffalo, but you will not be a man. That is where man is different from the whole of nature. Nature lives in the first innocence; only man is capable of losing it. It is great dignity, it is glory – only man is capable of sin, no other animal can commit sin. You cannot call a dog a sinner, you cannot call a lion a sinner and you cannot call a tree a sinner. Only man can sin, and because man can sin, only man can go beyond sin. Only man can go astray – that means only man can come back home. Except for man, all the animals, birds and trees still exist in the Garden of Eden – they never left it. That's why nature has such beauty, such peace, such silence.

The Himalayas still exist in the Garden of Eden. So exists the rose bush of your garden, so exist the birds that come in the morning and sing songs around you. Nature is still there; it never left home, it never went astray, it never committed anything against God, it never disobeyed. It never dared; it is completely satisfied with the first birth.

To be satisfied with the first birth is to remain unconscious. It is only through sin that you become conscious. It is only by going wrong that consciousness arises. This *has* to be understood. So going wrong is not really going wrong because only through it does the consciousness arise. All has to be lost. One has to come to the point where all is lost, God is lost, heaven is lost – one cannot believe in paradise, and one cannot believe that innocence is possible. Only from that peak of frustration, anguish, anxiety is there a possibility of a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn.

Adam is perfectly at ease, so is Christ. The problem is with Jesus. Jesus is troubled. Zen people are right when they say for a man who has never heard of meditation, mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. He is happy; he is in a kind of natural state. He has no anxiety because God has not yet become a challenge to him. He has no future goals; he has no destination. He eats, drinks and is happy – the first hedonism I was talking about the other day: "Eat, drink and be merry." He lives in the body, he IS the body; he knows nothing more than that. With the body there is a kind of peace and health that surrounds him. You can always see that happiness around a child. The child is the first kind of hedonist. He believes only in eating, drinking and being merry. He simply lives the moment. He is completely abandoned in the moment – no anxiety, no clouds yet – his sky is clear.

The people who have not heard of meditation and enlightenment and *Nirvana* and God, who have never pondered over these great problems – for them things are clean; they are not confused.

"Mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers." But once a man has become interested in meditation, in growth, in spirituality, in the other shore, in the other reality – problems bubble up in thousands, problems crowd. Mountains are no more mountains now, and rivers are no more rivers; everything becomes confused, everything becomes topsy-turvy. Man goes into a chaos. The old cosmos, the old innocence, simply falls into pieces; not even a trace is left.

This is the meaning of the Christian parable of Adam's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. He became interested in higher things; he became interested in knowing things. He ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge; he started becoming more conscious. He started trying to understand what this reality is. He moves into knowing, and suddenly the doors of the Garden are closed for him.

Suddenly, he finds himself outside the Garden, and he does not know where the way back is. He has to go farther and farther away.

This is what Zen people say: Mountains are no more mountains; rivers are no more rivers. Then one has to go on a long journey. Tedious is the journey, full of miseries and nightmares. It is a wandering in a desert where oases are only dreams; they exist not. And then after a long, long journey – it may continue for many, many lives – one can come back. This time, coming back has a totally different meaning. Now one comes as a knowing consciousness. One is again innocent, but this innocence is no more ignorant, it is luminous, it is full of light. This is Jesus turning into Christ.

Adam finds himself outside the Garden. Jesus wanders in the world. Christ suddenly finds himself back in the Garden one day.

Adam, Jesus, and Christ – these are the three stages of human consciousness. Adam is absolutely unconscious. Jesus is half-conscious, half-unconscious – hence the conflict, the confusion, the division, the tension. And Christ is absolute consciousness.

Before we enter into the sutras, this has to be understood because these sutras belong to the last night of Jesus' earthly life – the departing message to his disciples. He is leaving them. He is going out of the world into God. He is going to die to the world and will be reborn into God. He is going to become twice-born: the resurrection after the crucifixion. And the resurrection can only be after the crucifixion.

Adam dies to God and is born to the world. Christ dies to the world and is born into God again. And Jesus remains in the limbo – half-half, divided, split. Something he knows and something he does not know; something he understands and something he does not understand. It is kind of cloudy there in the Jesus-consciousness. Adam is clear but fast asleep. Jesus is half awake; his eyes are full of dreams. Yes, he can see a little bit because he is half awake. Just like in the morning when you are half awake and half asleep, and you can hear the milkman knocking on the door, and you can hear children getting ready for their school, and you can hear the neighbor's radio. But you are not yet fully alert. Yes, these things go on like ripples, enter into you – you kind of hear, and yet you don't hear. You go on swinging between sleep and wakefulness. Sometimes you hear something and again you are drowned in sleep. You cannot figure out what is happening. Then you are fully awake.

Adam dies to God, is born into the world. Jesus lives in the world. Christ dies to the world and is born into God again. And these sutras belong to his last night, the departing message to his disciples.

Before we enter into these sutras, a few things will be of great help.

Teilhard de Chardin believes that “the evolution of consciousness depends on three steps.” And Chardin is one of the most important Christian thinkers of this century. But still, he remains confined to Christianity; he cannot soar higher than Christian boundaries. These are the three steps that he talks about. Ordinarily, consciousness is simple, innocent. After that there are three steps. First, he talks about complexity. He says, “Consciousness grows through complexity.”

That is true. The original mind is absolutely simple, its taste is one, it has no duality. And because there is no duality there is no possibility of dialogue, argument. And because there is no possibility of argument and dialogue, there is no possibility of understanding. With the conflict, with friction, one evolves. So from one, man becomes dual; from unity, duplicity; from duplicity, triplicity; from triplicity, multiplicity. That’s how man goes on growing – complication.

Man’s consciousness is one in the original state, then it becomes many. Through the many . . . the growth; that is the Hegelian concept of growth, and Marxian too. Hegel calls it “the dialectical process”: thesis creates its antithesis, antithesis and thesis join into a synthesis, and the synthesis becomes a thesis and creates its antithesis. And this is how it goes on.

You cannot grow if your consciousness is unitary. It has to create a conflict in itself. With the conflict, energy is created. Conflict creates energy, friction creates energy. You strike two stones and fire is born. You strike two dry pieces of wood and fire is possible. You rub your hands and electricity is born. All energy is created through friction. So, the original human consciousness has to become divided, has to become split, has to become dual. And the more evolved a mind man has, the more fragments he will have. So a thinker is almost a crowd. He is not one, he is not two, he is not three, he is many.

The second state Chardin calls “concentration” because once the unity is lost and man has become many, there arises chaos and one loses one’s identity. One does not know who one is, then an identity is needed, a self is needed, an ego is needed to hold all these fragments together. Otherwise, they will start falling apart and you will not be able to survive – hence the ego.

Ego is an effort to create a kind of unity inside yourself. The natural unity is lost. Now you have to create an unnatural, synthetic unity. The ego is a synthetic self, a created self, a managed self. One part of your being becomes the master and forces other parts to be slaves. A kind of government arises inside you.

Complexity creates energy. Concentration creates a possibility to use that energy; otherwise, there will be no use for it. Energy will be there, and energy will kill you. It will be too much, and it will be in so many directions. All those directions have to be focused in one direction; the whole energy has to be channelized into one. This is what Chardin calls “concentration”; unification around a center; a self is born, ego is born, discipline is born.

And the third he calls “direction.” Once the ego is there, once you have a kind of self, a kind of unity – although managed, but still a unity – then the goal is possible. You can become an arrow; you can have a target in the future.

These three steps Chardin thinks are enough to explain human consciousness. They are not. They are important but not complete.

The Hindu vision of life is far more complete. Chardin's vision is linear: unity, then complexity, then concentration, then direction. And the direction goes on and on, the arrow goes on and on and on, and there is no end to it. It is linear. The arrow goes on for infinity, it never comes back. This is not true. This is logical but not natural.

The Hindu vision is circular. Hindus say everything moves in a circle not in a line. Nature moves in a circle, seasons move in a circle, stars move in a circle, man's *life* moves in a circle. Everything natural moves in a circle. The circle is the way of nature. The linear is just a concept of the mind. The line does not exist in nature. If you are aware of non-Euclidean geometry, then you will know. Euclid believes in the line; non-Euclidean geometry says there is nothing like the line in existence. The line also is part of a bigger circle, that's all. No line is straight, and no line can be straight – you cannot draw a straight line. If you draw a straight line that simply means you are sitting on a circular earth and drawing a straight line. Go on drawing the line from both ends, go on drawing it, and you will find one day that the line has become a circle around the earth. So that small straight line was just a part of a big circle.

Hindus say it is circular. To me, the Hindu concept is far more true than the Christian concept of linear progress. But still, my own suggestion is a little different to both. My suggestion is: spiral – neither linear nor circular; evolution is a spiral. In that way both are joined together. In a spiral the progress moves as if it is moving in a line, because it never comes to exactly the same point again.

Christ never becomes Adam again because Adam was ignorant and innocent, and Christ is innocent and fully aware. He never comes back to Adam, exactly to Adam. So the Hindu concept misses something. But in another sense, he becomes Adam again because the innocence is the same, just that now it is fully aware. Then it was not aware, then it was asleep, now it is alert. In a sense Christ becomes Adam again because it is the same innocence. So, Hindus are right. And in a sense Christ never becomes Adam again, because it is luminous innocence. In that sense Christians are right. But they are only half-half right.

To have the vision of the full truth, I would like to call evolution a spiral. It comes back to the original point but never on the same plane – on a higher plane. It comes again and again but always on a higher plane. If you have been trekking in the mountains you know what I mean. You go on a path; the path moves around the mountain. Again, you come to the same point, the same rocks, the same valley, the same trees, but a little higher. It is a spiral.

To make it a spiral, I would like to add three more steps to it. Chardin says: complexity, concentration, direction. These three more steps have to be added. The first is: awareness, meditation. Concentration is just the beginning. Concentration is not relaxed, it is tense. One cannot concentrate twenty-four hours a day; one will go mad. So concentration can never become natural, but one can meditate twenty-four hours a day. One can live in meditation. It can become natural; it can become like breathing. It can be relaxed.

Concentration is focused consciousness. Meditation is just aware consciousness. For example, if you are listening to me, you can listen in a concentrated way. That will tire you, that will exhaust you. If you are listening very very tensely so that you don't miss a single word, then it will be tiring. But you can listen in a meditative way. That means you are relaxed and open, vulnerable, that's all. You will not be tired. Listening for one and a half hours, rather than being tired, you will be enriched, rejuvenated. You will feel more energy afterwards than before, and you will feel more flow in your being. So the fourth thing has to be awareness, meditativeness, openness.

Concentration is directional, meditation is non-directional. Concentration has an object, a content. Meditation has no object, no content; it is just an opening. You are listening to me, a bird starts singing – that too you listen to, a train passes by – that too you listen to. You are not listening to me *exclusively*. All is included. You are open from all the sides, not only open to me. This is a higher stage of evolution than concentration is: it is de-concentration.

And the fifth I call playfulness. Christianity has no idea of playfulness, and Chardin has no idea of playfulness. "Direction," "goal," "purpose" – that is very business-like, tiring, and makes man sad and serious. Something like playfulness has to be added because a really grown-up person is capable of play. A really grown-up person is sincere but not serious. Seriousness is a kind of illness because seriousness will create tension in you; it will never allow you to celebrate. Only playfulness can become celebration and joy.

And there seems to be no space for joy in Chardin's chart – nothing of playfulness. Complexity, concentration, direction – good as far as they go, but they don't go far enough. And they don't go into creating a happy, celebrating human being. And without celebration what is the purpose? All purpose leads to a purposeless play. You work, but you work finally to relax. You work hard, just so that you are able to play. You work five days, so that at the weekend you can rest on the beach. All purpose leads to purposeless play. So the fifth I call playfulness, non-seriousness, non-purposiveness, celebration, joy.

And sixth I call egolessness. Ego is needed – because one falls into a chaos, and a synthetic self is needed. But that self is synthetic, plastic, it is not real. It has to be dropped one day. Use it, go beyond it, and throw it! One has to come to egolessness, one has to forget that one exists separately from existence. In that forgetfulness, in that dropping of the ego, one becomes Adam again in a totally new way. One becomes Christ – again unity, again simplicity, again innocence but now luminous this time. You are twice-born.

This way, one again comes back to the original simplicity, the original face. But it is higher than the first originality, hence I call it a spiral. It is primal innocence but not just primal innocence. It has immense light in it, it is not dark. It is not primitive; it is the highest point of consciousness. It is divine innocence. What Plotinus calls "the One" – this is the One. First the One was not aware of itself, now the One is aware of itself. God is born in you.

In Adam God was a seed, in Christ God has become a flowering. The seed has come to its full manifestation.

From ***I Say Unto You, Vol. 2***, Discourse #9

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I AM is the Way

And Jesus says, . . . *And receive you unto myself; that where I am, where ye may be also.*

That is the whole effort of a Master. The Master wants to destroy the disciple so that the disciple also becomes a Master. The Master's work is complex. First, he persuades you to become a disciple, he "coos" to you, seduces you to become a disciple. Once you are a disciple, he starts killing and destroying you because unless you are destroyed as a disciple you will never become a Master.

And the real Master is one who wants you all to become Masters. That is the goal. Everybody should become an emperor, a king, a queen. The slavery – visible, invisible – has to be completely destroyed. All kinds of imprisonments around you have to be burnt down. Your freedom has to be made utter, ultimate.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.
Thomas saith unto him. Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Thomas is one of the most-loved disciples of Christ, one of the most innocent. The others are a little bit knowledgeable.

When Jesus says *And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know*, nobody else said anything. They must have kept quiet. Nobody knows where he is going, nobody knows the way which he is going to follow but only the most innocent of them is ready to ask.

Thomas says,
Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?
We have never been there.

Thomas was one of the most intimate and closest disciples. When Jesus came to India, Thomas followed him. Indian Christianity is older than any other Christianity in the world. The Indian Church is the oldest Church in the world because Thomas was the first apostle to come to India. Indian Christianity was started by Thomas.

Thomas asks, "We know not where you are going and which way you are going. And how can we know? – we are ignorant."

The real disciple never pretends to be knowledgeable. If he does not know, he is ready to say he does not know because that is the only way to learn from the Master. The knowledgeable disciples never learn a thing.

I have a few here too. When they ask questions, their questions have a different quality – as if they are asking for the others' sake. They have no problems of their own. Sometimes they write in their questions too "This is not my question – just for the others' sake . . . People will be enlightened. Many people have this question in their minds and it will be good if you discuss it. But it is not any personal question!" This is *their* question, but they cannot even confess that this is their question. "It will help others." Tricky people.

Once a man came to me and he said, “One of my friends has become impotent. Can you suggest some meditation that can be helpful to him?” I looked at the man, and I went on looking at him. He started trembling and perspiring. He said, “Why are you looking at me so hard?”

I said, “Can’t you send your friend? He can say that one of his friends has become impotent. Can’t you say even that? Have you become so impotent that you cannot even say that a problem has arisen in your being?”

Now he wants to know what can be done, but he does not want to show that the problem is his. Some friend . . . Now he is being diplomatic. Many questions come which are diplomatic: the questioner himself knows already; there is no problem for him. All the other disciples kept quiet, only Thomas asked. And because of these small gestures, Thomas became more and more close, intimate to Jesus.

Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

This statement is of immense importance, and has been tremendously misunderstood by Christians, misinterpreted. This statement has become a protection for the priest, for the dogmatist, for the demagogue. Christians have taken it to mean that nobody ever comes to God unless he comes through Christ – that means Jesus, son of Mariam. Nobody comes to God unless he comes through Jesus. They have meant, or they have interpreted it in such a way, that Christianity becomes the only right religion. All other religions become wrong. All other religions are against God – only Christianity.

Jesus saith unto him, I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

What does he mean? These priests and the missionaries and the Christians who go on converting the whole world to Christianity, are they right? Is their interpretation right? Or has Jesus something else? He has something utterly else.

In the Bhagavad Gita also there is a statement which Hindus go on misinterpreting. Krishna has said to Arjuna . . . And almost the same quality of closeness existed between Arjuna and Krishna as between Jesus and Thomas – the same relationship. And the same flowering had happened, and the same statement had bubbled up out of that relationship. Krishna said to Arjuna: *Sarva dharman parityajya mamekam sharanam vraja*: Drop all religions, forget about all religions and come to my feet because it is only through me that one reaches to God.

Now Hindus are happy with this statement. Krishna has said so clearly: Forget all religions. Drop all kinds of other religions and hold unto me. Hold to my feet – *Mamekam sharanam vraja*. Come to my feet; they are the bridges to God – the only bridges.

Both statements happened in the same kind of situation. Arjuna must have been very very close when Krishna said this. And so is the case with Thomas – he must have been very close. Christ must have been showering like flowers on Thomas when he said this. You will need that loving understanding of a Thomas, only then will you be able to understand the meaning of this. You

will need that loving intimacy of an Arjuna; only then will you be able to understand the statement of Krishna. Both are the same, both mean the same – and both have been misinterpreted.

The misinterpretation comes from the priest and the politician – those who try to convert religion into organizational, political strategies.

Jesus saith unto him, I AM the Way . . .

I AM . . . That has to be understood. It does not mean Jesus, it simply means the inner consciousness: "I am" – the inner life. This consciousness inside you, which you call "I am," this "I am" is the only way. If you can understand this "I am," what it is, what this consciousness is, you have found the way. It has nothing to do with Jesus, it has nothing to do with Krishna. When I say to you "I am the gate" it has nothing to do with me! That *I AM* is the gate. The gate is within you, the way is within you, the truth is within you. You have to understand who this is calling himself "I am" within you, what this consciousness is, what it consists of.

If you can go into your consciousness, if you can feel, see, realize the nature of your consciousness, that is the way. Meditation is the way – not Christ, not Krishna, nor Mohammed. Who am I? – this question will become the way.

Raman Maharshi is right when he says that only one question is relevant: Who am I? Go on asking this question, let this question become a fire in you. Be aflame with it! Let every cell of your body and your being, and every fiber of your existence pulsate, vibrate with it. And let this question arise from the deepest core: Who am I? And go on asking; don't accept any answer that is given by the mind. You have been reading the Upanishads, and in the Upanishads, they say "You are God." And your mind will say "Why are you asking again and again? I know the answer: You are God. And keep quiet!" Or if you are a Christian and have been reading the Bible again and again, you know: The kingdom of God is within you. So, "Who am I?" – "The kingdom of God. Now keep quiet!"

No answer from the head has to be accepted. No answer from the memory has to be accepted. No answer from knowledge has to be accepted. All answers have to be thrown in the whirlwind of the question "Who am I?" A moment comes when all answers have gone and only the question remains, alone like a pillar of fire. You are afire with it! You are just a thirst, a passionate quest: "Who am l?" When the question has burned all the answers, then the question burns itself too, it consumes itself. And once the question has also disappeared, there is silence. That silence is the answer. And that is the door, the gate, the way, the truth.

Please be careful. When Jesus says *I AM the way*, he means the one who calls himself *I AM* within you is the way. It has nothing to do with Jesus. Just by holding the feet of Jesus you are not going to go anywhere. Just by praying to Jesus you are not going to go anywhere. Listen to what he is saying.

Each Master throws you back to yourself because ultimately God is hidden in you as much as in the Master. You are carrying your light within yourself. You just have to turn back; you have to look inwards.

I AM the Way, the Truth . . .

Yes. In your very consciousness is the truth. When you become fully conscious you become the full truth. When you are absolutely conscious, it is not that you face truth as an object, you *are* the truth, it is your subjectivity, it is you. That's what Upanishads say: *Tatwamasi*: Thou art that.

. . . and the Life . . .

Three things Jesus says: It is the life – *I AM*, consciousness, awareness. This is life – the life that you know, the ordinary life. Then the second: *I AM the Way* – the way that joins the ordinary life with the extraordinary life, the way that joins Adam with Christ, the way that joins body with soul. And the third thing: *I AM the Truth.* Jesus has said all the three things.

You are that right now because *I AM the Life*. And you have the way too, hidden behind you, within you: *I AM the Way*. And you are the ultimate goal too, the destiny. You are the beginning and the middle and the end. You are Adam, Jesus and Christ.

. . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

No man has ever entered into God unless he has entered into his consciousness, until he has entered into his "I am"-ness. This is the meaning. This is the meaning of Krishna, and this is the meaning of Christ. This is the meaning of all the Masters. [...]

Forget all that Christians have been saying. Those dogmatic assertions are all chauvinistic. Forget what the theologians have put on top of Jesus's pure statements. Put aside all that has been taught and go directly into these sayings, and meditate. And immense will be the benefit. You will be blessed.

This is one of the greatest stories of human history, of human transformation. How Adam becomes Christ. How unconsciousness becomes luminous. How the ordinary is transformed into the extraordinary. How the worldly becomes suffused with the other-worldly. How matter is transmuted into consciousness.

From ***I Say Unto You, Vol. 2***, Discourse #9

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06 It is a Releasement

It is a Releasement

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.

There is an inmost center in us all,
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh, hems it in,
This perfect, clear perception – which is truth.

A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error; and to know
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.

Yes, these words of Robert Browning are right, absolutely right. Truth is not something outside. Truth is not an object that you have to find, search for, seek. Truth is your subjectivity: truth is the one who is seeking; truth is not the sought but the seeker himself. To think of truth as something outside is to miss from the very beginning; and once you take a wrong step, you go on taking more and more wrong steps because one step leads to another. It is a chain.

The first step is the most important step. In fact, it is almost half the journey. If the first step is right, you have already arrived; you have moved in the right direction.

Truth is not without but within. And everybody has been seeking it without, hence everybody is missing it. And it is not only true about truth but about all search as such. Bliss is within, so is beauty, so is love, so is joy. All the values that one wants to attain to are within one's own being.

These words of Robert Browning are of immense significance:

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.

And man has believed down the ages in some truth which is somewhere in heaven far away. And one has to travel to it, and one has to go on a long, long pilgrimage. There is bound to be great effort – practicing, cultivating, preparing – and truth is all the time waiting for you within yourself.

All the beliefs mislead you because all the beliefs are based on the false idea that truth is an object. People come to me and they ask "Where is God?" And they think that they are asking a very relevant question – as if God can be somewhere. They have not looked into the problem deeply. First, they have to search into this questioning itself. Who is the one asking for God?

Who is this one searching for God? One should start from the very start. “Who am I?” is the only significant question one can ask. And once this question is solved, all other questions are solved because God is found.

Raman Maharshi used to give only one meditation to everyone, whosoever would come to him: just to go on and on pondering, observing, watching, witnessing one thing – to let this question become so utterly your existence that it persists even when you are asleep – Who am I? And it has not to be repeated like a mantra. If you repeat it like a mantra, you will have missed the point; it is not a mantra, it is an inquiry, and the greatest inquiry there is. It has not to be used as a meditation technique; it has to become your very life. Walking, let the inquiry be there – “Who is walking?” Listening right now, let the inquiry be there – “Who is listening?” And finally, the inquiry has to penetrate to such profound depths that when you ask “Who am I?” the inquiry is there – “Who is asking this question?”

Move to the innermost center of your being. This inquiry is a movement withinwards. And this single question can solve all the problems; it is a master key: it unlocks all the locks.

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate’er you may believe.

Your belief is not going to change the nature of things. You can believe that a rose flower is a lotus – and you can believe stubbornly, you can believe blindly and madly – but the rose remains a rose; just by your belief it is not transformed into a lotus. Yes, you can remain in a kind of illusion, you can remain hallucinating, you can even start seeing it as a lotus. Belief creates dreams, but it cannot create reality. Belief cannot deliver reality to you because all belief is a hindrance. Belief basically means that you have believed before knowing; you are deceiving yourself. All believers are deceivers: they have lied to themselves. They have not known God, and they have started believing in a Christian God or a Jewish God or a Hindu God. They know nothing; they have not experienced anything.

Once a man came to me. He had listened for ten days, and then he came to me. He was crying, and he was an old man. And he said “You have destroyed all that I have believed, and now I am at a loss. For almost thirty-five years I have practiced a certain kind of life. I have done all that possibly can be done. And I was living in a beautiful dream, and you have shattered it all. I was thinking that I had started seeing God. I had great visions of God, and now they all have disappeared.” And he was crying like a small child whose toys have been taken away, he said “Now, help me to start again!” And I had to laugh even though he was crying, I said “Start again? Then you will be getting trapped into another illusion. What do you mean by starting again?” He said “My old beliefs are destroyed; now, give me new beliefs. That’s what I mean.”

People go on changing beliefs but that never brings a radical revolution; it cannot bring. A Hindu can become a Mohammedan – nothing changes; just you have changed your dream. A Christian becomes a Buddhist – nothing changes; deep down everything remains the same. Unless you drop believing nothing is going to change because belief is a deception. Belief means that you don’t know and yet you think you know. And the less you know, the more stubbornly you believe – naturally, you have to complement it. The less you know, the more arrogant, the more dogmatic, the more violent you are in your belief – ready to fight, kill and be killed because you are afraid. If somebody brings light to you, and you come to *see* that your belief is just a belief and nothing else, then all that you have invested in it has gone down the drain, then your life has been a stupid life. The life of a believer is a stupid life; it is unintelligent.

Robert Browning is right. He says “whate’er you may believe.” Your beliefs cannot make any change. Truth is as it is. Truth is not an object; you cannot believe in it, you cannot worship it, you cannot pray to it. Truth is your hidden reality. You are part of it, it is part of you; there is no separation between you and truth. And the first door to be opened has to open within you, then all the doors open. I am not saying that truth is not there without, but once it is known within, then you will know it without. There is no other way. Once you have seen it within yourself, then you will see it in a tree, in a mountain, in a star – in everything. Because now you have tasted the center; now the center is everywhere. Now you have known the inside of things. God is the inside of things.

But the first approach, the first acquaintance, has to happen within you because that inside which exists within you is the closest inside. How can you penetrate into the inside of a tree? It is very, very far away. You have not even penetrated your own inside – where you already are.

It happened . . .

Leo Tolstoy had gone for a morning walk with Chekhov. They came across a beautiful horse in the woods, and Tolstoy started talking about the horse. And he talked in such a way that Chekhov could not believe it. He said “What are you saying? You are talking as if you know the very inside of the horse!” – because Tolstoy was talking about “this morning, these birds, these trees, this sun, this sky, these clouds . . .” and how the horse was feeling about the clouds, and how he was feeling about the trees and the smell of the wet earth; how the horse was feeling about the grass and the flowers and the sun. And he was saying it as if it were directly from the horse’s mouth. Checkhov himself was a great artist, a great novelist, a great genius, but he had never visualized how the horse would feel. And Tolstoy was saying it so deeply, profoundly, that he said “Leo Tolstoy, I feel as if you had once been a horse in your past lives!” Tolstoy started laughing, and said “No, but the day I came across my own inside, I came across everybody’s inside. Before that, I knew myself as the body – I knew myself as if from the outside.”

Have you any acquaintance with yourself from the inside, or do you only know that which the mirror says about you? That is as if you were standing outside yourself and looking from there. You know all that people say about you. Somebody says that you are beautiful, and you think you are beautiful; and somebody says that you are ugly, and you start feeling miserable; and somebody says that you are intelligent, and you are flying high; and somebody says that you are stupid, and you are shattered. Again, this is nothing but a mirror: others’ opinions cannot be more than mirrors. But have you never seen yourself from the inside? And there you are; there you have always been, you are abiding there. And if you cannot know this space that you are abiding in, how can you know the inner reality of a tree or a mountain or a star? And how can you know the inner reality of the totality?

God is inside of totality. But to enter into that, one has to enter within one’s own door.

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate’er you may believe.

There is an inmost center in us all
Where truth abides in fullness . . .

True, absolutely true. And sometimes it happens that poets come very close to the mystics. Poetry comes closer to religion than anything else. Poetry is a glimpse into truth; mysticism is living there. Poetry is like the Himalayas seen from far away – those sunlit peaks, those virgin snows; religion is living there as those sunlit peaks, as that virgin snow. Poetry is a distant vision of truth; mysticism, or religion, is becoming one with it, knowing it as one's innermost center. But poetry comes closest.

Where truth abides in fullness . . .

Nothing is lacking in you; nothing has to be added to you. You are born perfect because you are born of perfection. You are perfect because the perfect is breathing within you, living in you. You are an extension of perfection. If God is perfect, then nothing can be imperfect because all is his expression. How can it be imperfect? So, there is no need to seek perfection, there is no need to improve upon yourself. All that is needed is to know who you are, and in that very knowing one comes to feel the completion, the perfection. One has not to become perfect; one already is. And because we are trying to become perfect, we are becoming more and more ridiculous.

Down the ages man has tried to become more and more perfect, and the only result is that man has become more and more ugly. The very effort is absurd. In trying to become perfect people have become guilty. In trying to become perfect they have become pathological.

In trying to become perfect, and failing again and again – and they have to fail because they are already perfect . . . You cannot attain to that which you already have, so the effort is doomed to fail. And when you fail again and again and again, naturally, a great sadness settles; one feels utterly depressed. All hope disappears and all joy with it. Life becomes an ugly evil; one has to bear it somehow. Life becomes sin. If you are trying to become perfect, life will become sin, because you will fail you will condemn yourself, you will hate yourself – and a man who hates himself has gone as far away from himself as it is possible to go.

There is an inmost center in us all
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, clear perception – which is truth.

Truth is not a thing but the clarity of perception. It is not that you will have to see something; it is only the clarity of seeing – that is truth. All objects disappear, all content disappears, only a clarity remains. Everything becomes transparent – you can see, you can see totally; nothing is hidden from you. That perception is truth.

Truth is not an object but an awakening in you. Let me emphasize it again and again that truth is within not without; it is an awakening within you; it is an awareness within you; it is intelligence functioning at its optimum. You cannot see truth; it is not a thing. You cannot grasp truth; it is not a thing. You cannot give or take truth; it is not a thing. It is your inner eye, your inner perception – what the Hindus call the third eye.

To be alert and awake is to be true. So, let us define. Untruth is unconsciousness, and truth is consciousness. Untruth is living like a somnambulist; truth is living like a buddha, alert, watchful, witnessing.

A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error; and to know
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.

The splendor is within you. It is just like a fountain hidden behind a rock and because of the rock it cannot flow. Remove the rock and the fountain starts flowing. This insight is also of tremendous significance. And I say "hidden behind a rock" not "behind rocks" because there is only one rock. Somebody thinks it is because of greed that he cannot attain to truth, so one has to renounce greed. Somebody else thinks it is because of anger, violence that he cannot attain to truth, so one has to renounce anger, violence. Somebody else thinks it is because of money, possessions, so one has to renounce all possessions. Somebody else thinks it is because of sex, love, attachment, so one has to renounce that. And people think that there are so many rocks: anger, sex, sadness, possessiveness, greed, etcetera, etcetera. No, there are not rocks; there is only one rock, and that rock is unawareness. Everything else is a by-product of that unawareness. It becomes greed, it becomes sex, it becomes anger; it can take many forms. But basically, it is only one thing: forgetfulness, unawareness.

We have become completely oblivious of who we are.

. . . and to know
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.

Don't search for any light outside. The last words of Buddha were "Be a light unto yourself. Be a lamp unto yourself." Don't search for light anywhere else; the light is already there, the fire is already there. Just probe a little deeper into your being, enquire. Maybe much ash has gathered around the fire . . . just probe deep inside, and you will find the spark again. And once you have found a single spark inside yourself, you will become a flame soon, you will be a fire – a fire that purifies, a fire that transforms, a fire that gives you a new birth and a new being.

It is because of this that Martin Heidegger uses the word "releasement" instead of "enlightenment." His word is beautiful. It is a releasement: something is already there; it has only to be released. Just like the seed sprouting, becoming a big tree, and then comes the spring . . . and there is great joy, and the tree bursts forth into thousands of flowers. But they were all hidden in the seed, the small seed. The seed has been carrying the blueprint for all that: the color, the shape, the fragrance – all was hidden in the seed. The tree is not anything new. The seed was unmanifest; the tree is its manifestation. It is a releasement.

I like Heidegger's word, it is beautiful. It is a releasement: enlightenment is a releasement.

You are already that. You have never been other than that. Remember, remind yourself, shake yourself into awareness. Use all the opportunities of life as triggering points, as occasions, so that you can become alert and aware of who you are.

These words of one of the great Greek mystics, Plotinus, will be of help. “You do not really go away from It, for It is there; you do not ‘go’ anywhere but remain present to It, yet you turn your back on It.” Or as Raman Maharshi used to say “Enlightenment is simply to admit that you are already enlightened.”

Just to admit . . . Yes, Raman is stating the simple fact: it is only admitting. You are enlightened; you consist of it. You are made of light; light is the stuff’ that you are made of. Then why can’t you admit it? Why can’t you recognize it? And rather than recognizing it, you do a thousand and one other things: you search for God, you go to the Himalayas, you move to the monasteries, you torture yourselves, you become masochists in the name of religion, you destroy yourselves, you slowly, slowly commit suicide. You do everything, but just a simple thing you never do: you don’t admit. Why can’t you admit it? And nothing is being taken away from you. In recognizing the fact, all is gained, nothing is lost. But you have become too attached to your chains, you have become too attached to your misery – you have started thinking that this is you.

It is like an emperor who has fallen asleep and dreams that he has become a beggar. And in his dream, he has a begging bowl and rotten rags, and somebody is trying to snatch the begging bowl from him. And he will fight; he will fight to the very bitter end. It is a question of life and death – somebody trying to snatch his begging bowl? He will give a great fight; he is not going to give it easily – that’s all that he has.

That’s what has happened. Misery is all that you have. You cannot admit that you are enlightened because then you will not be able to afford misery any more. So, many times you come to the brink, many times the recognition is very close by – you see the point – but you withdraw, you immediately start getting as far away from it as possible. You withdraw, you turn back. You have become too attached to your misery: that looks as if that is your kingdom.

This is my observation: listening to thousands of sannyasins, one thing seems to be absolutely certain: that nobody wants to renounce his misery. People are even ready to renounce their little bits of happiness; they are ready. This is strange, but this is how it is. If I say to them “Renounce your wife, renounce your children, renounce your home” they are ready, they say “We are ready to go with you, Osho, wherever you say. We can renounce.” But if I say “Renounce your misery, renounce your chains” then immediately I see that they cannot gather that much courage. They cling to it; they will fight for it.

Raman is simply saying that all that is needed for enlightenment is to admit that you are enlightened. Just think of it. Just for a moment meditate over it. Can you admit that you are enlightened? And immediately you will see that it is difficult because if you admit that you are enlightened then there will be trouble. And the trouble will be: you cannot be angry, and you cannot be sad, and you cannot fight with your wife or with your husband, and you cannot be possessive. All is lost, and that has been your whole life. Now, this is too much, you will say “How can one become enlightened so suddenly? First, I will have to practice.” That is only a way of postponing. You are saying “I cannot deny the truth of what you say, but I cannot admit it right now either. Yes, you are right, you must be right; but I have to prepare myself for it.” And this is how you have been preparing for so many lives.

You missed Buddha, you missed Yoka – you can miss me too.

And you are always preparing, and you are always postponing, and you say "Yes, we understand what you are saying."

Many times, you are almost enlightened, and then immediately you shrink back. I say "almost" because you can still shrink back, that's why I say "almost." Just one step more . . . but then fear grips you, you become so frightened. Then what will happen to your whole past and all your investments?

You will think that this should not be so – what investment can there be in misery? There is: people remain miserable because through misery they gain sympathy, at least sympathy. If they cannot get love, they can get sympathy, they can get attention.

And you are too attached to attention. Things are complicated then. You are too attached to attention – people should pay attention to you – and you don't know what else to do. If you are miserable, they pay attention. If you are ill, they take care of you. If you go mad, everybody is kind to you. Just see the point why so many people go mad and when they go mad. There is a perfect timing to it. Whenever they are passing into some crisis, through some crisis, and they need attention, love, sympathy, care, they immediately choose madness. It is a choice – unconscious, but still a choice.

If they remain sane, everybody is hard. If they remain sane then the world is too much; then the wife is hard, the children are hard, the boss is hard – everything is hard. And they are tired. But if they are insane, if they have a certificate to say that they are mad, if the psychiatrist says that they are not in a position that anything should be expected from them, they can relax. Now nobody expects anything from them, and they can expect everything from everybody else.

Thousands of people who live in madhouses have only learned a trick; this is their way of life; they have learned a style. They are not all mad; they have just found a beautiful way of life where care has to be taken of them by others – they need not worry.

Just look into all the investments that you have put into your misery. You hanker for love, and your husband never sits by your side. You hanker for love, and your wife never comes and massages you. Now, you have a headache, and she comes and she is all love. Just see the point: the headache has become a need because love is not freely available so you start paying for love with your headache. Whenever you need love, when there is starvation, when you feel that love will be nourishing, suddenly your mind triggers the mechanism – the headache comes.

And I am not saying that you are just pretending, I am not saying that you are pretending – a real headache comes; there is no pretension in it. I am not saying that you are just deceiving your wife, no; you are deceiving your wife and yourself too. The headache is real, but you have learned a trick.

Whenever love is starved, a mechanism triggers itself; it is autonomous. It immediately brings some illness to you and with illness, love comes. Your wife becomes your mother – you always wanted her to be your mother. You have been in search of a mother not in search of a wife. Every man is in search of a mother. Every woman is in search of a father.

It is difficult to accept it, but it must be so because people's mental age remains hanging somewhere near about thirteen – nobody grows psychologically more than that. Now, what more

can you expect of a thirteen-year-old boy or girl? Psychologically that is the average age, so even the man who is seventy or eighty remains interested in the breasts of women – why? For what? He is still childish. Those breasts symbolize the mother; they are symbols. He is still hankering for a mother, for a warm womb – somebody to encompass him. But the only way seems to be to be ill, to be miserable, to be sad. And it seems that the prize is worth it; that's why you can't agree with Raman Maharshi that all that is needed for enlightenment is just a recognition. One has to admit that "I am enlightened." But from that admission your life will never be the same again; you cannot afford those toys you have been playing with.

From ***The Sun Rises in the Evening****,* Discourse #3

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Darkness Has Its Own Joy

Sometimes running here and there, talking, laughing, working, reading, writing and cleaning – the fact is: When the door closes behind and the eyes are shut – it is dark.

Thoughts or no thoughts, feelings or no feelings it is dark. Morning or night any time inside it is dark. Looking inside for the looker, it is dark. Is "I" darkness? Who is writing this question?

Yes, Prasad, "I" is darkness, the ego is darkness, and if you look within and the looker is there, it will remain dark. Morning or evening won't make any difference, thoughts or no thoughts won't make any difference because the "I" itself is the essential thought, the fundamental thought – the looker.

It contains all thoughts and all feelings. You can look, but you have already divided yourself in two: the looker and the looked-upon. And this division is darkness, this duality is darkness, this split is darkness.

Oneness is luminous, oneness is light; twoness is darkness.

So, whenever a meditator goes in, first he always encounters darkness, and that darkness is frightening – who wants to go into that darkness? One becomes afraid, one wants to escape from it. In the beginning it is always so, but if you go on and go on and go on, and you stop even asking for light . . . Why should you ask? If it is dark, it is dark. And darkness is perfectly right – and when darkness is perfectly right, darkness is absolutely bright.

Accept it. Love it. Embrace it. Feel one with it. And the moment the split disappears, when there is no looker and looked-upon, no observer and the observed, then suddenly there will be light – and a light which needs no fuel, a light which is eternal.

But if you are divided, then that light won't happen to you.

So, what is to be done? You have to love this darkness; you have to fall into this darkness and disappear. Don't search for the light. The search for the light will keep you distant, unloving, unavailable to the darkness, and that will be a barrier to light. Don't search for light. If it is dark, it is dark. This is what Buddha calls *tathata*. If it is dark, it is dark; don't ask for something else, let it be dark, enjoy it. What is wrong with darkness?

But we are conditioned in such a way that we cannot enjoy a few things. We have been brought up in such a way that we can enjoy only light, not darkness. Now this is missing something tremendously beautiful and something tremendously alive.

Darkness has its own joy, light has its own joy, and the person who understands will enjoy both. And he will not create any conflict and he will not choose. Darkness has silence in it, which no light can ever have. Darkness has a stillness in it, utter stillness, which no light can ever have. And darkness has infinity: unbounded it is, it knows no boundaries. Light has always boundaries to it: it is never infinite, it is finite. Light comes and goes; darkness abides, darkness is eternal.

It is because of this experience that in India we have painted Krishna as dark – his other name, *Shyam*, means dark, "the black one."

Darkness has depth. Whiteness is shallow; whiteness always looks superficial. Start enjoying darkness. Feel its infinity, feel its spaciousness, feel its eternity. Be touched by it and be moved by it – it is so velvety; it has a beauty of its own. And unless you are capable of loving darkness, you have not earned the right to know light.

The light that you know is the outside light; it is against darkness. And the light that you will know when you transcend inner darkness will not be against darkness, it will contain all that darkness has – and something more, and plus. Remember it: the light outside is not the true light; the true light will have all the qualities of this light and all the qualities of this darkness and still will be more than the sum total of both of them. It is a great splendor where dualities meet and merge into each other, where dualities pour all their beauties into each other, and a new beauty arises: the beauty of unity, integration.

So, remember it: whatsoever you know about light and darkness – both have to be left behind. When you close your eyes, you have left the light outside; now you enter darkness. Love it. Sing a song with it. Have a dance with it. Don't fight with it, don't be afraid of it, don't keep a distance from it. And don't go on looking for light. Forget about light. This darkness is there – it has to be enjoyed; one has to be grateful to God for this darkness, this silence, this stillness, this velvety expanse. And then, one day, the observer and the observed are no more two.

When you love something, the duality disappears. If you love darkness, you become darkness. And when there is no duality, there comes a luminousness of a totally different quality. It is not the light that comes from the sun, and it is not the light that comes from electricity, and it is not the light that comes from the moon; then you have come to the very source of all light and all darkness, then you have come to the very root, the very ground, of being.

It is beautiful that the darkness is arising in you. You have taken a great step. Now don't go on fighting with it; otherwise, the next step will be hindered.

That's what I was saying the other day: if the myth of Sisyphus were written by a Zen Master, it would have been totally different – the gods would have been defeated. You cannot punish a Zen Master. Sisyphus would have enjoyed, would have danced, would have been ecstatic because there is no goal so there is no failure. When the rock starts slipping back towards the valley, he would have listened to the sound echoing, re-echoing, in the valleys. He would have enjoyed it, and he would have started the downward journey with great joy because he knows the beauties of the valley too. Yes, there are beauties of the hilltop, the sunlit hilltop, and the openness of the sky, but there are beauties of the valley too: the shelter, the security, the beautiful birds, and the rivers, and the friends, and the pub. Sisyphus would have come back dancing from the hill, thinking of the pub and the friends and the beloved. And his children must have been waiting, and his woman – and it was time. And he would have had a beautiful, restful night, and in the morning, he would have begun again: he would have taken the rock back to the top, another day, another challenge. Another day, another adventure, and in the morning, he would have started again, whistling a song. The story would have been totally different.

The Greeks could not envision it; the logical mind cannot envision it; an illogical mind is needed to envision that beauty. Yes, when you go in and there is darkness, don't become the Greek

Sisyphus, remember what I am telling you. Love the darkness: it is a gift. All is a gift from God. Feel grateful to God that he has given you such a beautiful darkness of your own – so virgin, so pure, uncontaminated. Relax into it, and as you relax, it disappears. When you have relaxed totally, it is no more found. Then you have arrived at the very source of all darkness and all light, but that source has a totally different quality of light. It is not this light – it has something of it. It is not this darkness – it has something of it, but it is immensely vast. That's why the mystics have always felt it difficult to say what it is.

Ineffable it is, inexpressible it is, and indefinable it is.

But, Prasad, you have taken a great step; going into darkness is a great step. Zen people call it "the great doubt," and the Christian mystics call it "the dark night of the soul." But the morning is just arriving, just following. The dark night of the soul has the morning following just on the heels of it, just following like a shadow. Don't be too worried about the darkness, don't become too obsessed by it; otherwise, you will miss the morning that is following it – and is just coming on the heels.

This is the way to look at life, and then thorns are no more thorns; they also have a beauty of their own. Then the cactus is as beautiful as any rose. And your heart expands when you can see the beauty of a thorn. To see the beauty of a rose is not much – anybody can see it; nothing is required of you. The rose is so obviously there – even a stupid person can see the beauty of it. But to see the beauty of the thorn great intelligence is needed, much is required of you; it is a challenge. Unless you have found beauty everywhere, you will not find God. Unless you are at home everywhere, you will never be at home.

So, in darkness, be at home. Whatsoever arises in you has to be accepted with joy as a gift. And I know it is difficult sometimes to think that this is a gift when you are ill, when it is all dark, when you are miserable, when love is broken. How can you see the beauty of it when a beloved dies? Death has happened – it is difficult to see the beauty. That only shows that you have a very, very narrow definition of beauty, that you have imposed some definition on reality. Drop that imposition. Let reality be freed.

Just the other day I was reading about a Hassid mystic, Zusia. He is one of the most beautiful Hassid mystics. He was going into the hills, and he saw many birds, caught by a man, in a cage. Zusia opened the cage – because birds are meant to fly – and all the birds flew away. And the main man came rushing out of his house and he said "What have you done?" And Zusia said "Birds are meant to fly. Look how beautiful they look on the wing!" But the man thought otherwise; he gave Zusia a good beating. His whole day's work had been destroyed, and he had been hoping to go to the market and sell the birds, and there were many, many things to be done – and now Zusia had destroyed the whole thing. He gave him a really good beating, but Zusia was laughing, and Zusia was enjoying – and he was beating him! Then he thought this man must be mad. And Zusia started moving.

When the man had finished, Zusia asked "Have you done it, or would you like to do a little more? Are you finished? Because now I have to go." The man could not answer. What to answer? This man was simply mad! And Zusia started singing a song. He was very happy – happy that the birds were flying in the sky and happy that he was beaten and yet it didn't hurt, happy that he could receive it as a gift, happy that he could still thank God. There was no complaint. Now, he had transformed the whole quality of the situation.

This has to be learned. Slowly, slowly a man has to become so wide that all is accepted, yes, even death, only then the song bursts forth. Yes, even the darkness, only then the light arrives. The moment you have accepted the night totally and there is no seeking and hankering for the morning, the morning has come. This is how it comes; this is the way of its coming.

From ***The Sun Rises in the Evening***, Discourse #6, Q2

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Is This Enlightenment

When the internal talking stops, is this enlightenment?

Parivesh, when the internal talking stops, who cares? Who is there to care? Who is there to raise the question "Is this enlightenment?" If you can still ask the question, then it is internal talking continuing.

If you can still see that this is enlightenment, then nothing has happened; then the mind is back from the back door. It has jumped upon your enlightenment too, and it has destroyed it. Enlightenment is not an experience, that's why nothing can be said about it. Enlightenment is not one of the series of experiences that you have lived through. Enlightenment is not something that happens to you like a content in the mind. When the mind is not there you don't say "This is enlightenment," you don't feel it as an experience; rather, on the contrary, you see it as your nature.

It has always been so – just because of that internal talk you were too occupied and you could not see it. It is not a realization; it is only a recognition, a remembrance. It has always been so from the very beginning – just you had got lost into thoughts, fantasies. Now the fantasy is no more there, you are back home. It is your home.

Enlightenment is not an experience; it is your interiority, it is you. One does not become enlightened; one comes to know that one is enlightenment, one is light, one is consciousness. But, Parivesh, your question is philosophical. *When the internal talking stops*, you ask, *is this enlightenment?*

Don't be philosophical about these things – these are not philosophical things. You cannot think about them; you can only be, and know; be still, and know. If I say "Yes, this is enlightenment" I will only be giving you an idea. That will burden your mind more, that will become part of your internal talk. Then you will not talk much about money, and women, and you may start talking about enlightenment, God, Buddhahood. But it is the same. The object of thinking does not matter much – you can give any object, and the thinking can weave and spin around it. The question is that the thinking should disappear, evaporate.

So, don't make enlightenment in any way a goal. Enlightenment is the very source, the very ground, of your being. You consist of enlightenment; you are made of this stuff called enlightenment. So, naturally, when you are silent and there is no distraction – thought means distraction, thought means going away from yourself, thought means something has come between you and yourself, thought means you have moved into the future or into the past, thought means you are not here, you are not now (all this is implied in thought) – when there is no distraction, you relax into your source. Slowly, slowly you rest into your being.

Martin Heidegger has called this resting into yourself "the releasement." He has also called it "the enchanted regioning." There is a region inside you, the enchanted region, a space where you are still God, where you have not fallen at all – where you cannot fall in the very nature of things; where you still live in the Garden of Eden, where the fall has not happened – cannot happen. One cannot fall from God and God's paradise; one can only fall asleep. This is my interpretation of the biblical story. Adam has not been driven out of the Garden of Eden; he has

fallen asleep. By eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge he has fallen in dreams, he has started thinking. That is the meaning of the whole parable. That is the meaning of the symbol of the Tree of Knowledge: he has started thinking. Thinking, he has gone away – in thinking only; otherwise, he lives in the same place. But he is no more available to God; he has moved into fictions, imaginations.

Wake up, and you have always been enlightened. Just wake up. Open your eyes. Don't let enlightenment become an idea in you, otherwise you will think about it, and that will be a distraction.

From ***The Sun Rises in the Evening***, Discourse #4

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07 Witnessing: The Nourishment of Your Buddhahood

Conscious Ignorance

What exactly do you mean by "conscious ignorance"? Is it recognition that one is ultimately, fundamentally ignorant? Or is there more to it?

Ashoka, conscious ignorance is not ignorance at all. It is the ultimate state of consciousness – how can it be ignorant? It is pure knowing. Of course, there is no knowledge, hence it is called ignorance. But there is knowing, utter knowing, clarity, transparency. No knowledge is gathered, but all is known.

Conscious ignorance means innocence *and* conscious. If innocence is unconscious, sooner or later it will be corrupted by knowledge. Unconscious mind is always ready to be corrupted, polluted, distracted.

Consciousness means centering, awareness – you cannot be distracted. You remain in your knowing, but you don't accumulate knowledge. Knowledge is always of the past: knowing is in the present, is of the present. Like a mirror: the mirror reflects if something comes before it, but when it passes the mirror is empty again. This is conscious ignorance – not that the mirror does not reflect: it reflects, but it doesn't gather. It is not like a photo plate.

A photo plate becomes knowledgeable. The moment something is reflected in it, it catches hold of it. It becomes attached to it. The mirror remains unattached – available, open, vulnerable, unprotected, with no defense, yet always virgin. This is virginity: when nothing corrupts you. Things come and pass.

You ask me: *What exactly do you mean by "conscious ignorance"?*

It is consciousness, knowing consciousness. Ignorant I am calling it because it cannot claim any knowledge – that's why. It cannot say "I know."

When the Emperor Wu asked Bodhidharma, "Who are you?" he simply said, "I don't know."

This is conscious ignorance. He misunderstood him. He thought, "Then what is the point? If you don't even know who you are, then what is the difference between me and you? I also don't know who I am."

Wu is simply ignorant. Bodhidharma is consciously ignorant. And that word "consciousness" makes all the difference – all the difference that there is in the world. It transforms the whole quality of ignorance. Ignorance becomes luminous. It is full of light – not full of knowledge but full of light.

You ask: *Is it recognition that one is ultimately, fundamentally ignorant?*

No. One is *not*, so how can one be fundamentally and ultimately ignorant? To think that one is you have already gathered knowledge, you have already claimed. You have already declared to the world that "I am!"

Those who know, they know something totally different. They know that "I am not – God is." They know that "My existence is arbitrary. My existence is make-believe. 'I' as a separate entity have never existed. I am just a wave in the ocean."

But when the wave is arising and reaching to the clouds, it can believe that "I am." And the ocean meanwhile is laughing and roaring and knows that this wave has gone crazy. Soon the wave will disappear in the ocean again. Even when it *is* there, it is not separate from the ocean. You cannot separate a wave from the ocean! Can you exist even for a single moment without the universe surrounding you? Not for a single moment.

So who are you? What are you?

Is it recognition that one is ultimately, fundamentally ignorant?

No. The conscious ignorance knows that one is not. There is utter silence inside. Nobody has ever been there. You have dreamt about it; it is your dream. You are nothing but a construct of your dreaming mind.

And secondly, ignorance does not mean that one is ignorant. It simply means that life is ultimately mysterious. The emphasis is not on your ignorance. Remember it because the ego is very cunning. It can survive even on the idea of ignorance. It can say, "I am ignorant – fundamentally, ultimately I am ignorant. But I am."

First it was claiming its existence through knowledge: "My knowledge is valid. Nobody else's knowledge is valid." Now it claims, "No knowledge is valid – I am ignorant. But I am." Now, behind ignorance, the "I" is hiding again. It has taken another face, a new mask, a new persona, but it is the old game being played with new rules. The form has changed but the content is the same – the same dream, the same stupid dream. The same arbitrary ego claiming absoluteness about itself.

No. When I say ignorance, my emphasis is never on I. My emphasis is on the ultimate mysteriousness of existence. Ignorance is ultimate because existence cannot be reduced to knowledge. It is irreducible. It is a mystery and remains a mystery. You cannot demystify it.

In fact, the more you try to demystify it, the more and more mysterious it becomes. It gathers new dimensions of mysteries.

Just watch: five thousand years of human mind's evolution – has it helped in any way to demystify existence? Existence has become far more mysterious than it has ever been before. Go back five thousand years: there was a limited number of stars because by the bare, naked eye you cannot count more than three thousand stars in the night. When the night is dark and full of stars and there are no clouds, at the most you can count three thousand stars, not more than that, by the bare, naked eye. How many stars are there? Now they say, "We have counted three thousand billion stars. We used to see only three thousand, now there are three thousand billion stars. And this is not the end: this is just the beginning of the counting."

The existence goes on and on. There seems to be no possibility that it will be ending somewhere.

When the Vedic mystics looked at the sky, it was mysterious. When you look at the sky it is far more mysterious. Vedic mystics will feel jealous of you – but you don't look at the sky.

For thousands of years man believed that life, existence, consists of matter. Now physicists say there is no matter – all is energy. They have not been able to solve the mystery of matter. The mystery has become very deep. Now there is no matter – it is all energy.

And what is energy? Now, even to define it is becoming difficult – because it was possible to define it in contrast with matter. Now there is *no* matter. How to define it? Definition is lost. It is there in its sheer mystery. And the efforts that have been made to define it have made it look even more mysterious.

If you go into modern physics, you will be surprised. Mystics don't look so mysterious now – with all God and heaven and angels and souls – even then they don't look so mysterious. The modern world of physics is far more mysterious, incomprehensibly mysterious. And the infinite space . . .

And Albert Einstein says it goes on expanding . . . into what? And he says, "We don't know yet into what. But one thing is certain: it goes on expanding."

Existence is expanding, into what? Naturally, the question arises. There must be some space beyond it, but that cannot be said. By the very definition of existence that is prohibited, because when we say "existence," we mean *all* that is, space included. *All that is*. Then how does it expand? Into what? There is nothing left outside it!

It is almost as mysterious as one day you go to the market and you keep yourself in your own pocket. It is possible to keep yourself in your own pocket? It should be – if existence can expand without there being anything to expand into. All space is in, in its pocket, and it goes on expanding into its own pocket! Looks absurd. Zen *koans* are nothing compared to it.

Albert Einstein says the world is finite. That too is mysterious. If the world is finite, then there must be something to define it. There must be a boundary! If you call it finite, then there must be a boundary to it. But to make a boundary you will have to accept something beyond the boundary, otherwise the boundary cannot be drawn. The boundary can be drawn only between two things!

You can have a fence around your house because of the neighbor. If there is no neighbor, nothing exists beyond your fence, how are you going to put the fence and where? And how will you decide that "This is the place where we should put the fence" that "this part belongs to me and there is nothing outside it"?

But Albert Einstein says this is how it is: "We can't explain it, but this is how it is. The world is finite and yet there is no boundary to it. Unbounded finiteness!" Absurd! Illogical!

And not only that: this unbounded finiteness is round in shape – because everything is round. How can an unbounded thing be round? Who will give it the shape of roundness?

The mystery has thickened every day. And Albert Einstein is just on the threshold of existence. It is maddening.

So when I say "conscious ignorance," I don't mean that you are ignorant: I mean that life is so vast and existence so infinite that there is no way to fathom it. You cannot measure it; it is immeasurable.

What exactly do you mean by "conscious ignorance'? Is it recognition that one is ultimately, fundamentally ignorant? Or is there more to it?

If there is not more to it, then the mystery is solved. There is always more to it! And there will always be more to it. Whatsoever can be said will never be satisfactory – there will always remain more to it.

And I am not saying that you understand what is not said and you understand inside, is enough – even that is not enough. Nothing *is* enough. That is the meaning. When I say existence is mysterious, it simply cannot be understood.

To see this point makes one feel humble. To see this point, to let it sink in your heart, one feels like bowing down. To bow down before this mystery that is unfathomable – not only unknown but unknowable – is prayer.

From ***The Perfect Master, V.1***, Discourse #8

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Existential Doubts

I remember.
I let go.
I forget.
I let go.
My love affair with life
keeps deepening.

Still, I am not without doubts.
But the plunge forward!
A dance unpredictable.
And I allow all around...
Dissolve in through sound . . .

Ahh, Osho – Thank you.
A question on polarities:
Man-Woman, Zen-Sufi . . .
Can any one being encompass it all?

Yes, Kavita, I am encompassing it all – so can you. Because being is vast. Being is neither male nor female. Bodies are male and female. Psychologies are male and female. But not being.

Being is simply being.

At the very core of your existence, there is no man, no woman. The consciousness is beyond polarity. When you are witnessing your body, if you are a man, you will see a man's body there as an object; if you are a woman, you will see a woman's body as an object. But the witness is the witness, man or woman. The witness is neither. The witness is simply there – a witness, that's all. A consciousness, an awareness.

That awareness comprehends all. When you become a witness, when you become a buddha, all is comprehended. Then there is no question of polarities.

The world is not just polar. That is the meaning of the Christian idea of the Trinity and the Hindu concept of Trimurti. The world is not divided in two – the world is divided in three. The three is very fundamental. The two is on the surface and the three is at the center. Man-woman, on the surface. Zen-Sufi, on the surface. But as you move deeper, as you dive deep into your being and you reach the center, all disappears. One simply is. A kind of purity, a pure existence.

Kavita, it is possible – not only possible, it has to be made possible. That's my work here. On the path, be a Sufi or a Zen. When you reach the center, forget all about it. When the goal is reached, the path has to be forgotten. These are divisions of the path.

One can climb up a mountain from many sides, can choose different routes. And when you are moving on different routes, you look as if you are moving in different directions, sometimes opposite also. One is going to the north, another is going to the south, but ultimately, when you reach to the peak, you will have come to the same place.

At the peak, Buddha is Christ, Christ is Krishna, Krishna is Mohammed, Mohammed is Zarathustra, Zarathustra is Lao Tzu. At the peak *all* distinctions dissolve.

So, Kavita, right now be Zen, be Sufi, and when you have reached to the peak be Zen/Sufi – then forget all about it! But on the path . . . one has to move on some path. And all paths are good because they all lead to the same goal. All doors are good because they lead to the same shrine.

You say:

I remember.
I let go.
I forget.
I let go.
My love affair with life
keeps deepening.

Still, I am not without doubts.

Don't be worried about it! Doubts are perfectly natural on the path. If you are without doubts that means you have reached the peak. They disappear only at the peak. They have a certain purpose – they goad you; they keep you going.

Doubts are not necessarily hindrances. It depends on you, on how you use your doubts. They can become hindrances. If because of doubt you simply stop moving, you say, "Unless my doubt is dissolved, I am not going to move," then the doubt has become a rock. But if you say, "The doubt is there, but in spite of the doubt I am going to move because that is the only way to resolve it . . . Unless I reach higher, I cannot resolve this doubt" – a better vision, from a height, will help.

Doubts are not resolved if you remain clinging to the same space where you are because those doubts are created by that state of mind. If you remain clinging to that state, the doubts will persist; they will become stronger every day.

Doubts are not resolved by somebody else answering you. These are not philosophical doubts – these are existential doubts. They are resolved only by experiencing. When you move a little higher, they disappear. You have reached to another state of mind. In that state of mind, they cannot exist. Suddenly they disappear, as if they have never been there.

In spite of the doubt, one has to go on moving. In fact, one has to use the doubt as a goad to move. Listen to the doubt and say to the doubt, "Okay, I will remember you, but the only way to solve you is that I should go a little higher in my consciousness. I should become a little more alert. It is my un-alertness that is creating you. It is my unconsciousness that is creating you, that is feeding you, nourishing you. It is my state of mechanicalness that is the cause of it."

If you try to solve your doubts where you are, you can gather many, many answers from many, many sources. They will make you knowledgeable, but not really – they will fill you with information. But the doubt will remain somewhere. On the surface, you may start pretending that you know, but you will know that you don't know. And it will gnaw at your heart.

You can learn the answers; you can start telling those answers to others, but your very existence, your very life-style, will show that you don't know.

That is the difference between the Western and the Eastern philosophies. They should not be called by the same name because their approaches are so basically different, so fundamentally different, so diametrically opposite.

The Western philosopher thinks but never changes his state of awareness. He thinks where he is. He thinks hard, he thinks very logically. He tries in every way to solve the problem, and he finds many solutions. But those solutions don't help his life. If they don't even help his life, how can they help somebody else's life?

For example: the English thinker and philosopher, David Hume, arrived at the same conclusion as Gautam Buddha, exactly the same. Had he been in the East he would have become a buddha, but unfortunately, he was in the West, in the very thick of the Western noosphere.

He arrived at the same conclusion, not by changing his consciousness, but only by logical argumentation. Buddha became enlightened, Hume remained unenlightened. Buddha arrived at a state of bliss; Hume remained crawling on the earth in the same way as of old. Buddha created a new tradition which has remained alive even today; twenty-five centuries have passed. Many people have bloomed because of Buddha.

What did Hume create? Hume also created great argumentation, and even today books are written on Hume and the argument continues. But it is only argumentation; not a single human being has been transformed by it.

And the irony is that the conclusion is exactly the same. Buddha came to see that there is no self; that was his realization. He meditated. He went deeper and deeper into his being. He searched inside, each nook and corner, and he didn't find anybody there. That was his release. The ego disappeared and with the ego all its miseries and hells.

The ego was not found, so all the problems that were created by the ego evaporated. When the source evaporated, all the by-products evaporated of their own accord. When the ego was not found, there was silence – and that silence is beatitude, and that silence is benediction.

When the ego was not found, there was all light, radiant. The whole existence flowed in. Buddha became a void capable of containing the whole existence. He himself became transformed. And thousands of other people became transformed from his insight. Remember, it was an insight.

What happened to David Hume? He also came to the same point, but it was not an insight – it was an outlook. Remember these two words. Literally they are significant: insight, outlook. He arrived at the same conclusion, *as* an outlook. He discussed, argued, pondered, thought, contemplated, concentrated – did everything on the problem, but never went in.

And he came to the point, exactly the same, at least in appearance the same, that there is no self. The self cannot exist. But it was not a great revolution in his life; it was just a beautiful conclusion in his treatise. But he remained the same man! Before the conclusion and after the conclusion there was not a bit of difference in the man. He continued to behave in the same way.

If you had insulted him, he would have become angry, but not Buddha. That is the difference.

He would have become angry, although he says there is no self. He would have forgotten all his philosophy. That philosophy was not his insight. He would have said, "That is philosophy – that is aside. But when you insult me, I am insulted. And I am going to take revenge. You have to be answered!"

When Buddha was insulted, he smiled. He said, "You came a little late. You should have come ten years before, then I was there, very much. Had you insulted me ten years before, I would have reacted madly. You come a little late. I feel sorry for you because now there is nobody to react. I hear what you are saying, but it simply passes through me. It comes in through one ear and it goes out through the other ear. There is nobody inside to catch hold of it. I am sorry. I feel compassion for you."

This is the difference between the Eastern and the Western approaches. Western philosophy is rightly called philosophy – love of knowledge, love of wisdom. For Eastern philosophy, Hesse has coined a word which I like. He has coined a new word; he calls it *philosia* – it means love of seeing. *Sia* means to see. That is exactly the translation of the Eastern term for philosophy, *darshan* – to see. It is philosia – it is insight, it is seeing in.

Western philosophy is a search for knowledge, and Eastern philosophy, or philosia, is a search for knowing. Knowledge looks out; knowing looks in. Knowledge gathers information; knowing does not gather anything – it simply goes in to see who is there. "Who am I?" Its inquiry is not objective, its inquiry is subjective.

Kavita, doubts will persist. They leave you only on the last rung, never before. Use them creatively. Each doubt has to be transformed into a goading. The doubt simply says you have to go a little further, a little ahead, a little higher. The doubt says, "I do not feel satisfied – whatsoever you have now is not satisfactory. You have to go a little deeper."

Don't be stopped by the doubt; that is not the function of the doubt. And don't start arguing, and don't start thinking because by thinking you will become a David Hume, you will remain the same person.

My effort here is to create buddhas. And unless you become a buddha, doubts will continue. You can solve one doubt; it will assert itself from another corner. It is the same doubt in a new shape, a new form. You repress it here; it pops up there. You will go mad. No need. Take note of the doubt, thank the doubt, and say, "Okay, so I will go a little further so you can be solved."

It is like this:

A man was sitting on a tree. His friend was sitting underneath the tree. The man on the tree was picking some fruits, and the man underneath the tree was waiting for the fruits and collecting whatsoever was falling. The man on the tree said, "I see a bullock cart coming." He was high on the top of the tree; he could see far away.

And the man underneath the tree looked to the side where the man was pointing and he said, "I doubt – I don't see. There is no bullock cart. What are you talking about? Can you deceive me? I have eyes, I am not blind. There is no bullock cart coming!"

And the man on the top said, “Yes, it is coming!”

And they started arguing. Is the argument going to help? Can the man on the tree convince the man who is not on the tree that the bullock cart is coming? Howsoever clever he is in his arguments, how can he prove to the man who cannot see the bullock cart?

What did the man do? First, he argued, tried in every way, saying, “It is coming. It is painted red. One bullock is black one bullock is white,” this and that and everything he described. “And the man has a beard,” and all. But it was in vain.

Then he recognized the truth: “How can he see? His vision is limited.” So he called him; he said, “You come up. You climb up the tree, and I will show you the bullock cart.”

Now, if the man underneath the tree says, “I will come up only if you convince me that the bullock cart is there,” then there is no way. But he climbed up the tree, and he saw the bullock cart, and the doubt was resolved. And there was no more argumentation. He apologized. He said; “I feel sorry. I unnecessarily argued with you. It was not a question of argument. You had a far better vision from here.”

This is what the buddhas have been doing down the ages. They say, “We have a far better vision from here. From this vantage point you will be able to see what is. Come closer to us. Don’t go on arguing.”

Not that buddhas cannot argue – they can certainly argue and they can argue better than you. But it is pointless! They can silence you through their arguments, but they cannot convince you. They can destroy all your arguments, but even that will not help – you will not be able to see the bullock cart. And the whole point is how to see it because only seeing is believing.

Kavita, go on climbing the tree. I am calling you. I can see. You cannot see yet. Doubts will persist. Let those doubts help you to climb up faster, sooner. Let it become an urgency, those doubts, make it an urgency. Doubts in themselves are not wrong – it all depends on how you use them. They can become blessings.

From ***The Perfect Master, V.1***, Discourse #8

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Witnessing, The Nourishment for Your Buddhahood

How is anxiety related to desire? It seems easier to see that one is desiring than to see that one is "anxieting" – In fact, there is no verb form for anxiety, at least not in English. Am I desiring my anxiety or anxieting my desire?

The desire is nothing but an escape from the state of anxiety. Desires don't create anxiety, as ordinarily is believed. Anxiety creates desire.

Man is anxiety.

Just the other day I was telling you: animals have no anxiety because they don't have to become – they are. A dog is a dog, and a tiger is a tiger, and there is no problem! The tiger is not trying to become a tiger. He is! He already is! There is no becoming involved.

In the world of animals there is no anxiety. In the world of buddhas again there is no anxiety, they have arrived, they have become. They are *siddhas* – they are beings. Now there is no goal left, no movement. The journey is complete. They have arrived home.

Hence the similarity in the eyes of the animals and the eyes of buddhas. The same silence! The same innocence. The same depth. The same purity. Yet the difference is also great: animals are unconscious, buddhas are conscious. Hence animals' eyes are innocent but not luminous. There is no anxiety, but there is no celebration either. There is no despair but no ecstasy either. In the eyes of the buddhas you will not find anxiety, you will not find agony; you will not find the constant urge to be this, to be that. The fever of becoming you will not find. But there will be a constant overflowing ecstasy – peaceful, blissful, a well-being.

Between these two is man: half animal, half buddha. And that is where anxiety exists. Anxiety is *this* tension. A part of you wants to go back to the animals. It goes on pulling you backwards. It says, "Come back! It was so beautiful – where are you going?"

The other part goes on hoping for the future. In some indirect way you know perfectly well that to be a buddha is your destiny. The seed is there! And the seed goes on saying to you, "Find the soil, right soil, and you will become a buddha. Don't go back, go ahead . . ." This tug-of-war is anxiety. Anxiety is one of the most important words to be understood because it is not only a word: it is the very situation man finds himself in. This is the human dilemma. The most fundamental dilemma is anxiety: To be or not to be? To be this or to be that? Where to go? Man is stuck on a crossroads, all the possibilities open. But if you choose one, you have to choose against other possibilities – hence the fear. You may be choosing wrong. If you go to the right – who knows? – the path going to the left may have been the right path.

And there are people, shopkeepers who go on calling, hawkers who go on calling, "Come to the right! This is the right way." "Come to the left – *this* is the right way!" "Come our way, this is the only way!" "Follow Christianity, or Hinduism, or Buddhism . . . all others are wrong. You will fall in hell."

Man is paralyzed! Standing on the crossroads, listening to all these people, he is paralyzed. Where to go? Whom to listen to? Whom to believe? How to be certain that you are going on the right track? Great suspicion, great doubt, great anxiety.

And deep inside you, something is pulling you back: "Better become an animal again. Fall into drunkenness. Take drugs or become a sex maniac. Or become violent – kill people!" Why is there so much violence in the world? The animal past goes on pulling you back. Your humanity is only skin-deep. Any moment you can become a wolf, you can become a tiger; you can tear the other into pieces. Any moment! Any moment you can kill. And not only can you kill others: you can kill yourself too. Suicide and murder, constantly pulling you, destruction calling you, alluring you.

And then there are buddhas . . . once in a while you see a man and you are enchanted. He has that enchanted space in him. He has that magic by which your future suddenly becomes your present. At least in his presence, at least when you vibrate with him, you forget all your animal past. You start flying like angels in the sky. Those people are also there.

This is the anxiety: Where to go? What to do? And whatsoever you do, anxiety will remain. If you become an animal, the buddha part will go on rebelling against it. Go and do something that your animal part feels good doing, but your Buddha part starts creating guilt in you. Even the greatest murderer, before he murders anybody, feels the pangs; a great pain arises in him. His Buddha part tries to stop him, "What are you doing?" He may listen, he may not listen – but he will repent! For years he will repent for what he has done. He should not have done it.

The thief, before he moves into somebody's house, is again and again warned by the buddha part, "Don't do it. There is still time – escape!" If you do it, you feel guilty. If you don't do it, you will feel guilty. Because if you don't do it, and you leave and you come home, then you cannot sleep because the animal part goes on saying, "You are a fool! So much money, and it was so easily available, and there was nobody in the house, and the whole neighborhood was fast asleep, and there was not a single chance of your being caught – you are just an utter fool! Why have you come back? There is still time – go again!"

If you follow one part, the other part makes you feel guilty. And vice versa. This is anxiety. And this anxiety is very existential. It is not that somebody is suffering it and somebody is not suffering – no. It is existential: everybody is born into it. Humanity is born into it. Human beings are born into anxiety. That is their challenge. That is the problem they have to solve – that is the problem they have to transcend.

Now, there are two ways to transcend it. One is the way of the world – you can call it desire. Desire is the way to hide this anxiety. You rush into earning money, madly. You become so absorbed in earning money that you forget all existential anxiety. Then there is no point, no time to think about real problems. Then you put aside everything and you just go into the search for money, more money. And as you get money, more and more desire arises. This desiring for money or political power is nothing but a cover for your anxiety.

That's why people are very much frightened when they are left alone and nothing is there to be done. That's why retired people become very, very uneasy, uncomfortable. They die fast. It is said – now psychological research has proved it – that a man who is retired is going to die ten years earlier than he would have died if he had remained employed. Ten years earlier? Why?

Because the anxiety that he has been repressing through his job asserts itself. He was running after money, chasing after political power; there was no time to give to anxiety.

Now there is all the time and nothing to do. Sitting in his armchair he does only one thing – *anxieting*. Nothing else to do! Now all the repressed anxieties of his whole life – that denied existential part takes revenge. It kills. He becomes ill, heart attacks come, he becomes paralyzed. But there is more possibility that all this is happening because of the psychology, not because of the body.

When a person is succeeding and his desires are taking him farther and farther away, he remains healthy. Politicians are almost always healthy when they are in power; when they lose power, they suddenly become old. When a person is earning and earning and earning, he remains healthy. When he becomes a failure, when he goes bankrupt, then suddenly, yes, in a single night all his hair can turn white – literally.

Desire is a way to avoid anxiety but only to avoid. You cannot destroy it by desiring. And desire gives you small anxieties, remember, very small anxieties, which are not existential. Of course, when you are earning money, you will have a few anxieties: the market and the share market, and things like that, and prices. And you have put so much money – are you going to earn out of it or are you going to lose? These small anxieties. These are nothing compared to the real anxiety – these are tricks to avoid the real.

Of course, when you are ambitious for political power, you will have anxieties, a thousand and one. But they are nothing! they are play-things compared to the fundamental anxiety.

You ask me: *How is anxiety related to desire?*

Desire is a cover-up for anxiety. It is a trick, a strategy. And meditation is to uncover it.

That's why people can't sit silently even for a few minutes. Because when they sit silently, anxieties start raising their heads. They become very much afraid. That's why people ask, even in meditation, "What should we do? Can we chant a mantra?" Then it is okay; then the mantra becomes your cover. Then you can repeat, "Ram, Ram, Ram," and you can go on repeating. This repetition keeps your anxiety repressed.

Real meditation is Zen, *Vipassana*. Real meditation is nothing but to sit silently, doing nothing. Just doing nothing, sitting silently, that is real meditation. There is no other technique, no technique at all in it. No mantra has to be repeated. No prayer has to be done, no God's name to be pronounced. You simply sit . . . but that is the hardest thing to do in the world. Looks so simple!

When I say again and again:

Sitting silently,
doing nothing,
and the Spring comes
and the grass grows by itself . . .

You think it is very easy: “We can sit and the spring will come and the grass will grow by itself.” This is the hardest and the most difficult and the most arduous thing in the world: to sit silently, doing nothing. And this is the greatest meditation.

What is meditation? Just allowing your existence as it is without covering it in any way. So the Transcendental Meditation of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is not meditation at all. It is neither meditation nor transcendental. It is just a strategy to befool people.

And America needs such people to fool them. America needs something to cover its anxiety.

Because money is there now, so money, and the search for money, cannot become a cover-up for long now. Society is affluent. People have all that you can desire. Now what? Now the anxiety is knocking on the doors, and the anxiety is saying, “Okay, now you have a two-car garage – now what? Let me come in! Now you have a house in the hills, another house on the beach, a beautiful yacht, what else? . . . now let me come in! You were telling me, ‘Wait! First let me have a house in the hills, another house on the beach. First let me purchase a beautiful yacht.’ Now you have all that – now let me come in. I can’t wait anymore!”

Anxiety is knocking on the American door. It always knocks when a society is rich. When a society is poor, Transcendental Meditation is not needed. That’s why in India nobody bothers about Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Who bothers? People have so many ways to cover up their anxiety so easily.

But when all the desires are coming to a completion, what to do? Something new is needed. Then in many directions new doors have to be opened: Go to the moon! One company is selling tickets for the moon. Of course, it has to be a Japanese company. People are purchasing. It is already booked. Tickets are being sold on the black market.

“What to do? Let us go to the moon! At least we can cover up with that. We have to go to the moon. We can say to the anxiety, 'Wait! First let me go to the moon, then I will look at you. Wait a little more.’” Or do Transcendental Meditation. Any foolish word, repeat it, call it a mantra. Go on repeating it. That becomes a blanket cover.

Real meditation is not a technique. Real meditation is just relaxing, sitting silently, letting it happen, whatsoever it is. Allowing the whole anxiety to come up, to surface. And watching it, watching it. And doing nothing to change it. Witnessing it is real meditation.

In that witnessing your Buddhahood will become more and more powerful. Witnessing is the nourishment for your Buddhahood. And the more powerful your Buddhahood is, the less anxiety there is. The day your Buddhahood is complete, all anxiety is gone.

Excerpt from ***The Perfect Master, V.1***, Discourse #8, Q3

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08 What am I Looking For?

What Am I Looking For?

What am I looking for?

Deva Parmita, man is a search for the self – not for *a* self but for *the* self. Man is constantly seeking the lost paradise: somewhere deep in the recesses of human beings, the nostalgia persists. We have known something that is only a far, faraway memory. The memory is not even conscious; we have lost all track of it, where it is. But the fragrance goes on arising.

Hence religion is not an accidental phenomenon. It is not going to disappear from the world; no communism, no fascism can make it disappear. Religion is going to remain because it is very essential. Unless a man surpasses humanity, unless a man becomes a buddha, religion remains relevant. Only for a buddha is religion irrelevant. He has arrived: now there is no need for any search.

Parmita, there are not different searches for different human beings. The search is singular, it is one, it is universal. The search is for the self, the supreme self. One wants to know, "Who am I?" because everything else is secondary. Without knowing oneself, whatsoever one is doing is pointless. Unless I know exactly who I am, my whole life is going to remain futile. It will not bring fruition, it will not bring flowering, it will not bring fulfillment.

The first step has to be that of self-knowledge. But the paradox is that if you start searching for *a* self you will miss *the* self. By "*a* self" I mean the ego, the process of egoing. That is a false self. Because we cannot find the true, we start creating the false, just to console ourselves. It is a substitute. But the substitute can never become the truth, and the substitute becomes a bondage.

Truth liberates. Substitutes for truth create prisons. The ego is the greatest prison that man has yet invented; you are all feeling suffocated, crushed. It is not that somebody else is doing it to you: you are the doer of it. You have taken a wrong step. Rather than searching for that which is, you have started substituting something for it – a toy, a pseudo thing. It may console you, but it cannot bring celebration to your life. And all consolation is suicidal, because while you remain consoled, time goes on slipping out of your hands.

The self is not *a* self. *The* self is exactly a no-self: there is no idea of "I" in it, it is universal. All ideas arise in it, but it cannot be identified with any idea that arises in it. All ideas arise in it, all ideas dissolve in it. It is the sky, the context of all contexts, it is the space in which everything happens. But the space itself never happens – it abides, it is always there, and because it is always there, it is easy to miss it. Because it is so much there and always there, you never become aware of its presence.

It is like the air: you don't become aware of its presence. It is like the ocean that surrounds the fish: the fish never becomes aware of it. It is like the pressure of the air: the pressure is so much, it has always been there, but you are not aware of it. It is like gravitation: it is so much, but you are not aware of it. It is like the earth rushing with great speed round and round the sun: the earth

is a spaceship, but nobody is aware of it. We are aboard a spaceship, and it is going at a great speed. Still we are not aware of it.

Awareness needs some gaps. When there are no gaps, you fall asleep; you cannot remain aware.

If one has always been healthy, one will not be aware of health. Awareness needs gaps – sometimes you should not be healthy. You should fall ill, then you can have a sense of health. If there was no darkness in the world and there was only light, nobody would have ever known light; people would have missed it.

That's how we go on missing the original self – you can call it God or nirvana, it doesn't matter. Sufis have two beautiful words. One is *fana*: fana means dissolving the ego, dissolving the false substitute. And the other word is *baqa*: baqa means the arrival, the arising, of the real self.

The real self is universal. How to find it? It is not far away, so you are not to make a long journey to it. It is so close that no journey is needed at all. It is within you. Rather than journeying, you will have to learn how to sit silently.

That's what meditation is all about – just sitting silently doing nothing. Thoughts arise: you watch. Desires arise: you watch. But you remain the watcher. You don't become a victim of the desires and the thoughts that are arising; you remain a watcher. You remain the context of all contexts, you remain the space before which everything appears. But the space never appears before itself – it cannot, it is impossible.

The mirror cannot mirror itself; the eyes cannot see themselves. I cannot catch hold of my hand with the same hand; it is impossible.

This is the most fundamental thing to remember, Parmita. You are the watcher and never the watched, you are the observer and never the observed, you are the witness and never the witnessed. You are pure subjectivity. You never appear as an object – how can you appear as an object in front of yourself? Whatsoever appears in front of you is not you.

Go on eliminating the contents. Go on saying, "*Neti neti*, I am not this, I am not this." Go on eliminating, and a moment comes when there is nothing left to eliminate. There is pure silence: no content moves in front of you, the mirror reflects nothing. That is the moment when self-knowing arises in you. You become illumined, you are enlightened.

So these few fundamentals are to be remembered: the self is a no-self. The self is not personal, it is universal. The self is the space or context in which all "positionality" in life appears, occurs, arises. It is the screen of life, but the screen itself never appears on the screen, it cannot. Everything else appears on it, it itself remains hidden. It is pure subjectivity.

This pure subjectivity is the ultimate goal everybody is searching for. But it seems difficult. We are so prone to become identified with the contents. So rather than searching for the real, we create something unreal, which is easy. The artificial is always easy, you can manufacture it.

Your ego is a manufactured phenomenon. And once you have manufactured the ego . . .

How is the ego manufactured? “I am a Hindu”: now you are on the way to creating an ego. “I am beautiful, I am intelligent, I am this, I am that” – you are bringing more and more bricks to make the prison called ego.

And this is what we go on doing in our whole life. Earn more money, have a bigger bank balance, and your ego will feel more grounded, more supported, more secure. Become famous: the more people know about you, the more you will think you are.

Hence the constant search for attention. If nobody pays any attention to you, you are reduced to nothing. If you move on the street and nobody says hello, people go on passing by, not even taking any note of you, suddenly you start feeling the earth disappearing underneath your feet. What has happened? They are not feeding your ego. But people feed each other’s egos because that’s how *they* can be fed. Somebody says, “How are you?” He is really saying, “Ask *me*, ‘How are you?’” He is simply asking for mutual gratification. And people do gratify each other; we support each other’s egos: somebody praises you; you praise him in return.

That’s what we call society. It depends on mutual satisfaction, and the greatest satisfaction seems to be ego-gratification.

Hence people are interested so much in politics because politics can gratify you as nothing else can. If you become politically powerful the whole country is in your grip; the whole country has to pay attention to you. You can impose your will on people, you have power.

The power of a politician is the power of violence. Now he controls the whole mechanism of violence: he controls the police, the government, the military, he controls everything. He can impose his will on you. That’s why politicians tend to become violent sooner or later. Politicians hanker deep down for wars because it is only in war that a politician becomes a great politician. If you go through history, you will see the point.

Winston Churchill would not have been such a great leader if there had been no Second World War. Neither would Adolf Hitler have been such a power if there had been no Second World War, nor would Mussolini. The war created the context: they were able to be as violent as possible. They were able to butcher people, to murder people, in millions.

People immediately pay attention when you are violent. If you live a peaceful life, no newspaper is going to report about you in your whole life. But if you kill somebody or you commit suicide, you will be immediately in the newspapers.

Just a few days ago, Reverend Jones committed suicide with all of his nine hundred disciples. You had never heard about this poor man before; nobody knew that there was anybody like that. Now the whole world knows.

They had lived in that commune for many years, but nobody would take any note of them. It is possible that had you taken note of them, they might not have needed to go to such an extreme, they might not have committed suicide. This is his way of making the whole world feel his presence – this is a very pathological way, ugly, but this is the same phenomenon again. People are searching for the ego: if they cannot find it through being creative, they will find it through being destructive. If they cannot find it by being a great saint, they will find it by being a great sinner.

Somebody asked George Bernard Shaw, “Where would you like to go when you die – to heaven or to hell?” He said, “It all depends.”

The man said, “What do you mean, ‘It all depends’?”

He said, “If I am going to be the first in heaven, then to heaven. If I am going to be second there, no. Then it is better to be in hell but be first.”

He is joking, but he is telling a truth – a truth about you, a truth about the whole humanity, the way it lives through ambition, through egoing.

Remember, the real self has nothing to do with anybody else paying attention to you. Note the difference: the false self needs others’ attention to be paid to you, and the real self only needs your attention – just your attention, and that’s enough.

If you turn your attention inwards, you will know the real self. If you go on seeking others’ attention, you will continuously live in a false entity which is always ready to disappear if you don’t feed it continuously. It has to be supported.

The ego is not an entity. It is not a noun; it is a verb. That’s why I am saying it is egoing. You cannot remain satisfied with any attention paid to you, you have to ask and hanker for more. You have to go on egoing; it is only through egoing that the ego can exist. It is a process – and it is so false and its demands are so ugly! It is a lie. It demands more and more lies from you, and to gratify it you have to become utterly false. You have to become a personality.

A personality means a false phenomenon, a mask. You have to become an actor; you are no longer a real person; you are no longer authentic. You don’t have any substance; you are just a shadow. And because of this shadow, there is always fear of death because any moment this shadow can disappear.

Your bank can go bankrupt, and immediately you are gone, you are nobody. Your power can be lost because there are other competitors pushing you. This whole life is a constant pushing and pulling, hence there is so much agony.

Do you know the root of the word agony? It comes from *ag*: ag means pushing. You are continuously being pushed, and in your turn, you are pushing others; that creates agony.

The whole world lives in anguish and agony. Only the person who comes to know his real self goes beyond it and enters into the world of ecstasy. And there are the two states: agony and ecstasy.

Parmita, you are in agony, as everybody else is. And the search is for ecstasy. Remember always, your commitments, your ideologies, your so-called ultimate values, your theologies, philosophies and religions provide contexts, often valuable contexts, for individual existence. But they are not what you are.

You are not even your body. You are not your mind. You are neither black nor white, you are neither Indian nor German. You cannot be defined in any way; all definitions will fall short. You are indefinable; you are something that surpasses all definitions. You are the vast sky in which

planets appear and earths appear, and sun and moon and stars – and they all disappear, and the sky remains as it has remained always. The sky knows no change. You are that unchanging sky. Clouds come and go; you are always here.

When Raman Maharshi was dying, somebody asked, "Bhagwan, soon you will be leaving your body; where will you go?" He opened his eyes, laughed and said, "Where can I go? I have been here; I will be here. Where can I go – *where*? There is nowhere to go. I am everywhere: I have been here, and I will remain here for ever and ever."

He is saying that he has come to know his being as the sky; he is no longer a cloud.

If you really want to search for the real self, don't get attached to any commitment, to any program, to any idea. Remain unattached, flexible, fluid; don't become stagnant. Always remain in a state of unfrozenness; don't freeze. The moment you freeze, you have something false in your hands; a cloud has arisen. Remain in a state of meltedness, don't become committed to any form or name. And then something tremendous starts happening to you: for the first time, you start feeling who you are.

The feeling does not come from the outside, it arises from the inner depths of your being. It floods you. It is light, utter light; it is bliss, utter bliss. It is divine. It is another name for God.

Never become crystallized; if you become crystallized in something, you are encaged. Remain free, remain freedom. All identity creates fixation; and every fixation, every identification, is a liability. The more fixed one's identity, the less the experience of which one is capable. The point is not to lack a position but not to be positional.

I am not saying to become unthinking. Remain intelligent, capable of thinking, but never get identified with any thought. Use the thought as a tool, as an instrument; remember that you are the master.

Not to be attached to whatever position one has at any particular moment is the beginning of self-knowledge. One *is*, one experiences aliveness, to the extent to which one can transcend particular positions and can assume other viewpoints.

That's what I mean by remaining fluid, flowing. One should remain available to the present. Die to the past each moment so that nothing about you remains fixed. Don't carry a character around yourself; all characters are armors, imprisonments.

The real man of character is characterless – you will be surprised by this. The real man of character is characterless: he has consciousness, but he has no character. He lives moment to moment. Responsible he is, but he responds out of the moment, not out of past contexts. He carries no ready-made programs in his being. The more you have ready-made programs, the more you are an ego. When you have none – no programs, nothing ready-made in you – when each moment you are as fresh as if you are born anew, to me that is freedom. And only a free consciousness can know the true self.

This is the search, Parmita. Nothing else will ever satisfy, nothing else can ever satisfy. All are consolations – and it is better to drop them, it is better to become aware that consolations are not going to help.

This is what I call sannyas: dropping consolations, renouncing consolations – not the world but consolations – renouncing all that is false, becoming true, becoming simple, natural, spontaneous. That's my vision of a sannyasin, the vision of total freedom.

And in those beautiful moments of total freedom, the first rays of light enter you, the first glimpses of who you are. And the grandeur of it is such, and the splendor of it is such, that you will be surprised to find that you have been carrying the kingdom of God within you and you have remained so unaware, and for so long. You will be surprised that it was possible not to know such a treasure. Such an inexhaustible treasure is within you.

Jesus goes on repeating again and again, "The kingdom of God is within you." Call it the kingdom of God or the supreme self or nirvana or whatever you will, that is our search – everyone's, not only of human beings but of all beings. Even trees are growing towards it, even birds are searching for it, even rivers are rushing towards it. The whole existence is an adventure.

And that is the beauty of this existence. If it was not an adventure, life would be absolute boredom. Life is a celebration because it is an adventure.

From ***Unio Mystica, V.2***, Discourse #2

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Being Aware is Enough for Transformation

It is said again and again that being aware is enough for transformation. How does it work?

It is a significant question because if you are aware of your cancer, the cancer will not be cured by just being aware of it – that is true. But as far as psychological transformations are concerned, the moment you are aware of them they disappear – because they do not exist as realities, they exist only as illusions.

You have seen a ghost standing in the dark: now you bring light, and you say there is nobody. Just the shape of the tree was giving you the false impression that somebody was standing there. The ghost has disappeared because in the first place the ghost was not there. Awareness helps, brings transformation because the illusions that you are suffering from are not realities. If you become aware of a rock, the rock is not going to disappear. But if you become aware of the ego, the ego is going to disappear because the ego is not a reality.

If you become aware, fear is going to disappear because fear is not a reality. If you become aware, death is going to disappear because death is a lie, it is not a reality.

Awareness functions in two ways. One: if something is real and you become aware of it, it becomes tremendously beautiful, it becomes psychedelic, it becomes very colorful. If it is unreal, it disappears. If it is real, it becomes *more* real; if it is unreal, it becomes absolutely unreal.

Awareness is a light. If you bring light into the dark room, darkness will disappear, but the paintings on the wall will appear. When the room was dark, the paintings were not there; although they were there, you could not have seen them – for you they were not there and darkness was there. When you bring light, darkness is there no more and the paintings have appeared.

Something disappears when you become aware, and something appears. Death disappears, deathlessness appears. The ego disappears, egolessness appears. You disappear as a separate entity: God appears. God means, “I am no longer separate.”

“Was you ever in love, Dusty?” asked Walker Long of old Dusty Rhodes one day as they were picking up and putting them down on a railroad right-of-way.

“Yeah, once when I was a young squirt, I was in love,” answered old Dusty.

“Well, you never did get married, did you?” pursued Walker Long.

“Nope, I never did marry,” vouchsafed old Dusty.

“How did that happen?”

“Well, it was like this. The gal I was in love with wouldn’t marry me when I was drunk, and I wouldn’t marry her when I was sober.”

Awareness has its own ways. If you are aware, you will not be able to do many things you have been doing up till now, and you will be able to do many things you have never thought of doing

before. If you are aware, you cannot be angry because anger can exist only in a state of unawareness: that is a prerequisite for anger to exist.

If you are aware, anger is impossible and compassion becomes a natural outcome: the same energy that was becoming anger becomes compassion. If you are aware, sex disappears and love arises: the same energy that was becoming sexuality through unawareness takes on a new manifestation of love through awareness.

As far as psychological transformation is concerned, awareness is enough, analysis is not needed.

That is the difference between Eastern and Western psychology: Western psychology is too concerned with analysis. In the East, for five thousand years psychology has existed; it is the most ancient science in the East. But its concern is totally different; it is not at all interested in analyzing, the whole thing seems to be unnecessary.

And now Western psychology is also becoming aware of the fact that analysis leads nowhere. Have you ever come across a person who is totally analyzed? Even Sigmund Freud was not. Nobody can be totally analyzed. You can analyze one dream, but another day another dream arises. You can go on analyzing – people go to the analyst for years, but dreams don't disappear, they go on coming; analysis does not make them disappear.

But in the East, we know the art of making them disappear. So who bothers? It is as if you see a ghost in the dark – there is no ghost, just the form of the tree – and you start analyzing. You never come close to the tree; you never bring light; you start analyzing the form from far away. You can go on analyzing: nothing is going to happen out of that analysis.

Eastern psychology says: Light a candle, bring the candle to the place, and first see whether the ghost exists at all. If the ghost does not exist, then why bother? Why long, long years of analysis?

The analyzed goes on pouring out rubbish, and the analyst goes on dissecting, analyzing, labeling and categorizing the rubbish. Much work goes on, and all futile, much ado about nothing.

Western psychology is based on analysis, Eastern psychology is based on awareness.

Just watch. There is no need to analyze. Become more and more intensely alert. And if you are aware of a problem, half the problem is already solved just by becoming aware of it. Just a slight awareness of the problem, and half the problem is already solved because you have taken some energy out of it: that energy has become awareness. Become more aware, and the problem becomes dissolved.

Chunk by chunk, the problem disappears as you become aware because you are pulling back energy which you had been pouring into the problem – that was creating the problem. You are taking your energy back; you are not cooperating any more. You were the creator of the problem: you have taken your energy back.

When all energy has been taken back, a moment comes when the problem flops. First become aware of a problem and then become more and more alert. Nothing else is needed; you need not go to any psychoanalyst.

It is one thing to have a problem, but it is another not even to be aware that you have a problem. That is like the eighty-year-old I heard about in Miami. He was vacationing with another octogenarian in Florida. During their stay they both made the acquaintance of some ladies younger than themselves.

They both fell in love and decided to get married in Florida in a double ceremony. Following the wedding night, they are both in their rocking chairs after breakfast.

The one says, “You know, I better see a doctor.”

The other says, “Why?”

“Well,” the first said, “I couldn’t consummate the marriage.”

“Oh,” said the second. “I better see a psychiatrist.”

“Why?” said the first.

“I didn’t even give it a thought.”

First become aware of your problem, and then go on becoming more and more aware of it. Don’t judge; judgment is an obstacle in becoming aware. Don’t call it any names, don’t evaluate. Don’t say it is good, don’t say it is bad, don’t label, don’t categorize. Just be alert: whatsoever it is, simply mirror it.

If you take a stand and you say, “This is bad,” then you have already blocked your awareness. You have concluded – now you are no longer impartial, you have already made a decision. And the moment you say something is bad, you cannot look at it eye to eye. When you say some man is bad, you can’t face him, you can’t encounter him; you avoid him. When you say something is good, you become positively attached; when you say something is bad, you become negatively attached.

Observation means no attachment at all, this way or that, neither negative nor positive. You are simply an impartial, mirror-like reflection, you simply reflect whatsoever is. In that awareness, problems melt. In that awareness, lies, falsities and fallacies disappear. And in that awareness, when falsities and appearances have disappeared, reality comes with radiant colors.

You need not take LSD or marijuana or psilocybin. Take a dose of awareness – and life is so beautiful, it is so utterly glorious, it is such an incredible splendor, that no LSD, no marijuana, can add anything to it. All that you need is awareness, and life becomes such a beautiful experience that you cannot imagine that there could be anything better. Ordinary life becomes so luminous.

The ordinary tree that you have passed your whole life – coming home, going to the office, you have always been passing the tree – for the first time you see the greenery of it. For the first time you see the luminous presence of the tree, the utter beauty of it.

Life is such a gift, and we go on missing it. And the reason is, between us and life there are so many lies crowding. Your awareness will destroy those lies: they will disappear, and reality will be nakedly encountered.

And to know reality in its utter nakedness is to know God.

From ***Unio Mystica, Vol. 2***, Discourse #10

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Falling Back into the Source

You say, "Accept yourself as you are," *and* "Unless you are reborn you cannot enter the kingdom of God." *Please comment on this apparent contradiction.*

Divakar, all contradictions are apparent. If you meditate a little bit, you will see that there is no contradiction. I say, "Accept yourself as you are." And I also say, "Unless you are reborn you cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Now, you are creating the contradiction by not meditating on it.

The way to be reborn is to accept yourself as you are: this is how one is reborn. You live in a kind of rejection; you don't accept yourself as you are. It is very rare to find a person who accepts himself – because the moment he accepts himself, he is reborn, he is enlightened.

You don't accept yourself; you go on rejecting yourself. You are constantly in search of ways of improving your image. You want to become more beautiful, healthier, stronger, famous, creative, this and that. You are not contented the way you are.

It seems so impossible to be contented the way we are because the mind can always imagine better things. You can have a little longer nose or a little shorter. You can have a little more intelligence, a little more physical beauty, a little more charisma, a little more psychological integrity, a little more powerful personality. You can always imagine, and your imagination makes you discontented with yourself as you are.

If roses were to think, they would be discontented too because they would see: "Look in the pond, the lotus flower is so big, and we are so small." They would feel very, very inferior, they would star suffering from an inferiority complex, and they would start searching for some psychoanalyst. Then small bushes would feel very much depressed because big trees, cedars of Lebanon, are reaching to the stars, and we are so small. Why has God been so unjust to us?" Then the whole existence would be in a tremendous discontent.

But only man is in discontent. Bushes are happy being bushes, and roses are happy being roses, and grass flowers are happy being grass flowers. Birds are happy being birds – nobody wants to be anybody else.

This contentment is all around if you just look. If you open your eyes, you will see contentment showering from every tree, from every star, from every rock. Just remove man from the world, and discontentment is removed.

Why is man discontented? Because he compares. And all comparisons are false because you are absolutely alone. Like you there is nobody else, so all comparison is false. You can compare one Fiat car with another Fiat car, but you cannot compare a Fiat car with a dog – or can you? Each human being is so unique, it is impossible to compare him. But you go on comparing.

You have been taught to compare. Your whole education depends on comparison, and it depends on comparison because it wants to create a competitive fever in you. The society has not yet known any other way to make you do something, the only way it knows is to create a competitive fever: create a neurosis, create a longing, an ill longing, to be the first. The society

has not yet discovered any better way to make you creative. “Compete, compare, defeat – reach first place.” It teaches you conflict, violence.

And to be in that conflict, naturally it teaches you discontentment with yourself – otherwise how will you improve? It gives you great ideals: “You have to be like this.” And then suddenly you look so short, so small, so tiny, so trivial. The ideal is so big, so great, and you are so small. You shrink: a great rejection arises in you; you start hating yourself. This is the whole misery that people are passing through.

I teach you acceptance. There is no need to compete, there is no need to compare, there is no need to be ambitious. Then you become afraid: “If there is no ambition and no competition and no comparison, then how am I going to grow?”

Growth has nothing to do with these things. Growth has something to do with energy; growth is an energy phenomenon. When you don’t compare, when you don’t compete, when you are not ambitious, when you don’t want to be anybody other than who you are, you accumulate much energy – because all that energy that was being wasted in competition and conflict, is no longer wasted. You become a reservoir.

Out of that energy comes creativity. Creativity has nothing to do with competition; it has something to do with overflowing energy. William Blake is right, he says, “Energy is delight.”

When you are overflowing with energy, aglow with energy, aflame with energy, it itself becomes creativity. You start growing, but now the growth has a totally different connotation. It has no goal – it has a source but no goal. Now you are not thinking what to be; you are not following a particular goal, a particular plan. You are such a big river that through your rushing energy you will reach the ocean.

No river is searching for the ocean, but rivers reach the ocean; and no river is competing with any other river, but all rivers reach the ocean. The river reaches the ocean through overflowing water. That very energy is enough to take it to the ocean.

You can become an ocean of creativity if you are contented. Then creativity arises in you, grows in you – not for any idea – but just because you have too much: you have to share it. You have to sing a song because the heart is so full and overflowing. You have to pour it into songs. You cannot contain the energy; hence the overflow happens. And that overflow is creativity.

When a tree is overflowing with energy it blossoms in thousands of flowers. Those flowers are just a simple statement from the tree: “Now I cannot contain any more. The colors are too many in me, and the fragrances are so much that I have to burst forth.” The tree is not fulfilling any ideal; it has no goal.

To have a goal is to be miserable, not to have a goal is to be blissful. The person who accepts himself in totality – with not even a slight grudge against himself, not even a slight rejection, not even a shadow of rejection – that man becomes enlightened immediately. Enlightenment has not to be achieved somewhere in the future. If you accept yourself, if you relax into your being, it can happen just this very moment, now, here.

So I say: Accept yourself as you are because this is the way to be reborn. And I also say: Unless you are reborn, you cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Please remember, the second statement is not for you to create a goal: "I have to be reborn; I have to enter into the kingdom of God." If it becomes a goal, you have misunderstood me. It is not a goal; it is a consequence. A consequence of what? A consequence of total acceptance: *tathata*, suchness. "I am this, and I am utterly happy with this." In that utter happiness and contentment is the miracle, the transformation. You are reborn.

And remember again, I am not saying to use "accept yourself" as a method so that you can be reborn; I am not saying that either, otherwise you have created a goal again. You say, "Okay, if this is the way to become enlightened, if this is the way to enter into the kingdom of God, then I am ready to accept myself." This is not acceptance. You are still thinking of the kingdom of God, you are still thinking of becoming enlightened. You are still competing with the buddhas. You are still thinking, "How did this man Gautam Buddha become enlightened, and I have not yet? How dare this man Jesus become Christ, and I am here and I have not yet become Christ?"

Friedrich Nietzsche has said exactly that. He has said, "I cannot accept God because if there is a God then what am I doing here? And how can anybody else become a God before me? Hence, I reject the idea: there is no God." Because if there has to be a God, then Friedrich Nietzsche has to be first. It is better to reject the whole idea: "There is no kingdom of God, there is no enlightenment." Otherwise, it creates a feeling of great inferiority: "Others have reached, and I have not reached yet. Am I lagging so far behind?"

So please don't make it a goal. My statement about being reborn is just a consequence. The source is acceptance, and the consequence is entry into the kingdom of God.

But the mind is very cunning – beware of it. The mind can say deep down in you, "So okay, if this is the key then I will use it, but I have to enter into the kingdom of God." And you have missed in that very cunningness.

Things are very simple. What I am saying is so simple; it has no complexity in it. But you can create complexity. Your mind can create such confusion, such a chaos! And the basic trick, the basic strategy of the mind is to make consequences goals.

Never make any goal, there is none. We are already at the source; we need not be anywhere else.

In deep acceptance you fall back into the source. That very falling back into the source is a rebirth, a resurrection. You disappear as a separate entity, and you appear as the mystic union: *unio mystica*.

From ***Unio Mystica, V.2***, Discourse #10

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09 Meditation is a State of No-Mind

A Single Solution to All the Problems

Osho, you say that your main concern is our spiritual not our psychological growth. What is the difference between them?

Deva Yachana, man is a three-storied building: one body, the mind and the soul. The body contains only the body. The mind contains body and mind both. And the soul contains all the three. The higher implies the lower, but not vice versa: the lower does not imply the higher.

This is one of the fundamental laws to be remembered. If you work on the higher, the lower will be automatically solved. If you work on the lower, the higher will not be automatically solved.

Spirit contains all the three dimensions of your being. That's why I say my concern is your spiritual growth — because it contains your totality. To be concerned with your psychological growth will leave the most essential and the highest part of you outside. And then there are many more problems.

Mind is a multiplicity; mind means the many. Millions of problems are there. If you start solving each single problem it will take millions of lives —even then you cannot be certain that you have solved the mind problems.

Greed is there, anger is there, lust is there, jealousy is there . . . and so on and so forth. If you solve one it will take years and years; and even then, nothing is solved. If you try to solve your anger, if you want to grow beyond your anger, at the psychological stage what can you do? At the most you can repress it — because awareness belongs to the spiritual realm. At the psychological level you can only fight. You can choose: you can repress one part against the other, but the repressed part is not dying. In fact, the more it is repressed, the more alive it will become — because it will be going closer and closer to the source of your energies and it will be getting more nourishment. And you can repress anger, but it will find some outlet from the backdoor. You cannot transform this way.

That's where Western psychology is lost — lost in a chaos. Small problems are not being solved, very small problems. It takes years and years of psychoanalysis . . . then too nothing is solved. At the most, you can do only a kind of window-dressing, a whitewashing. You give the patient a better mask to wear, but his original face remains the same.

Western psychology has failed.

The Eastern approach goes far deeper. It does not try to cut the foliage of a tree: it cuts the very roots. And to cut the very roots is to destroy the tree. If you go on pruning the leaves — that's what psychological work means: pruning the leaves — you are not going to destroy the tree at all. On the contrary, the more you prune it, the thicker the foliage will become. You cut one branch and three branches will come — because the tree will take the challenge that you are going to destroy it. Each and everything tries to survive. And when there is danger, the tree will make every effort to survive. That's what happens.

If you want to drop your anger, you become angrier than before. If you want to drop your sexuality, you become more and more sexual than before. That's what has happened to millions of people. They want to get out of the prison of sex; they make all kinds of efforts. Their desire is good; they are sincere people but misguided. They start fighting with sex, and sexuality retaliates with a vengeance. These people become more sexual than ordinary people, their whole mind becomes full of sex. They think of sex, they dream of sex, and they are continuously fighting. The more they fight, the more they give energy to the enemy — because the more and more they become focused on the enemy. They cannot be off-guard.

This has happened down the centuries. You can see the monks, your so-called mahatmas, your so-called saints — their minds are ugly. And the reason is not that they are not sincere people; the reason is that they have started from a wrong end.

"I think we should treat not the symptoms but the real problem." This was the approach of the Southern planter just after the Civil War. This gentleman of the old school found his wife in the arms of her lover and, mad with rage, killed her with his revolver.

A jury of his Southern peers had brought in a verdict of justifiable homicide, and he was about to leave the courtroom a free man when the judge stopped him. "Just a point of personal curiosity, sir, if you are willing to clear it up."

In reply, the gentleman bowed.

"Why did you shoot your wife instead of her lover?"

"Sir," he replied, "I decided it was better to shoot a woman once than a different man each week."

If you try to change your mind, you will have to shoot a different man each week. It is better to shoot the woman and be finished with it.

That's why I say my concern is not your psychological growth but your spiritual growth.

Spiritual growth means growth of awareness; it means nothing else. Becoming more and more alert. Becoming a light unto yourself. And when you are a light unto yourself, darkness starts disappearing of its own accord.

The man of awareness cannot be angry — that is impossible because to be angry the basic requirement is to be unaware. Try it, and you will be very much surprised. Try to be angry *and* aware — you will not be able to manage; nobody has ever been able to manage it. It is impossible. It is not in the very nature of things.

When you are aware, anger will disappear. If you lose awareness, anger will appear. Both are not possible — just as light and darkness cannot exist together; they cannot have a coexistence.

Why can light and darkness not exist together? Because darkness has no substance in it; darkness has no existence in it. It is nothing but the absence of light, so how can absence and presence exist together? If light is there then absence cannot exist. If absence exists, light cannot be present there.

Awareness is a single solution to all the problems.

Greed cannot exist when you are aware — why? Because when you are aware, you are aware that you are the ultimate bliss, that you have the whole kingdom of God within you. What more can you desire, what greed? It will be utterly stupid. Greed exists in the person when he is not aware of his own kingdom, when he is not aware that he is a born emperor, and lives like a beggar.

The moment that you become aware that you have all the treasures of the world in you, that nothing is missing, how can greed exist? Greed means you know your inner poverty and you go on accumulating. Greed means you know that you are poor and you have to be rich.

The man of awareness becomes alert that he is rich already! and there is no possibility of becoming richer. He is divine! Greed cannot exist when you know that you are divine.

How can anger exist with a man who is aware? From where does anger come? Anger is a wound in the ego. When your ego is hurt, you become angry. But the man of awareness knows there is no ego at all —- now, how can wounds happen to something which is found no more?

You escape from a rope in the night thinking it is a snake; you run, you are frightened to death. And then somebody laughs, takes hold of you — tells you, "It is not a snake, it is a rope! Come with me and we will take a lamp and we will see." You go with the person, still afraid, still ready to escape in case it is not a rope but a snake. But the closer you come, the better you see . . . you start laughing. Now, can you be afraid when you have seen that it is a rope?

And it is not that when you had thought it was a snake your fear was unreal — it was absolutely real. It was almost like a heart attack. You were trembling, suffocating, out of breath. You might have died of fear it was so real. But there was no real snake!

An unreal snake can create real fear. And that's how it is happening: an unreal ego can create real anger. You feel offended and anger arises. When the light of awareness is inside you, you know there is no ego — there is no snake. Simply anger disappears. And how can you be afraid when you are aware? In awareness it is known that you will never die because you were never born, that birth and death are just on the surface, at the deepest core of your being you are deathless. Then fear disappears.

Yachana, you became worried when I said that I am not concerned with your psychological growth — because what is psychological growth? Helping you not to be angry, helping you not to be an egoist, helping you not to be afraid — that is psychological growth.

Spiritual growth means: helping you to be aware. And a single medicine cures all the illnesses.

And if we go on working on the surface, it may appear that you are changing, but deep down you remain unchanging. It may appear that you are attaining to some psychological maturity, but it will be only skin-deep. Scratch a little and you will find the same old man there.

Once a patient was treated by a psychoanalyst because he thought he was a popcorn.

Finally, after years of intensive analytic work, success was there. In the final session, the psychoanalyst asked him once who he was and he replied, “A man, of course!”

Five minutes after he had left the office, the patient came rushing in, terrified. “Doctor, doctor, you should have told me that there are chickens outside. I barely escaped them!”

“But you know you are not a popcorn, don’t you?”

“Sure I do — but what about the chickens?”

All your psychological work will be just on the surface. You will appear as if you have changed, but that will be only an appearance. Any real situation will bring your real face back again. This is not transformation: this is just consolation. And I am not concerned with consoling you.

My effort here is to transmute you, to let you become something utterly new that you have never dreamed about yourself. Something immensely valuable is hidden in you – that has to be discovered. That is your soul.

And unless you discover that hidden source of all life, you will only be playing games — psychological games, physiological games. Yoga got lost in physiological games. Your so-called yogis are only doing physiological exercises. They have their own benefits; I cannot deny it. They will make you healthier, but that health remains of the body. And the body will be gone when death comes,and with the body all your yoga postures too! And the whole effort that you had made will be lost.

Psychology and psychoanalysis have become too much focused on the mind of man.

Mind is not your real core. It is just a bridge between the body and the soul, and a very fragile bridge it is. It is a very non-substantial phenomenon because it consists only of thoughts. Behind the mind there is your reality — you can call it soul, spirit, God or whatsoever you will.

My concern here is to help you to penetrate to that core. Once you have known that everything will settle in your life — because with that awareness you will be watchful of the body and you will be watchful of the mind, and all that is ugly will simply disappear.

That is the miracle of spiritual experiences: all that is ugly simply disappears, and all that is beautiful is enhanced. The evil disappears and the good is enhanced. The world and the worldly desires are no more relevant to you — a totally new dimension opens up.

From ***Philosophia Perennis, V.2***, Discourse #5, Q1

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Meditation is a State of No-Mind

What is meditation?

Meditation is a state of no-mind. Meditation is a state of pure consciousness with no content. Ordinarily, your consciousness is too full of rubbish, just like a mirror covered with dust. The mind is a constant traffic: thoughts are moving, desires are moving, memories are moving, ambitions are moving – it is a constant traffic! Day in, day out. Even when you are asleep the mind is functioning, it is dreaming. It is still thinking; it is still in worries and anxieties. It is preparing for the next day; an underground preparation is going on.

This is the state of no meditation. Just the opposite is meditation. When there is no traffic and thinking has ceased, no thoughts move, no desire stirs, you are utterly silent – that silence is meditation. And in that silence truth is known, and never otherwise.

Meditation is a state of no-mind.

And you cannot find meditation through the mind because mind will perpetuate itself. You can find meditation only by putting the mind aside, by being cool, indifferent, unidentified with the mind; by seeing the mind pass but not getting identified with it, not thinking that I am it.

Meditation is the awareness that "I am not the mind." When the awareness goes deeper and deeper in you, slowly, slowly, a few moments arrive – moments of silence, moments of pure space, moments of transparency, moments when nothing stirs in you, and everything is still. In those still moments you will know who you are, and you will know the mystery of this existence.

And once you have tasted those few dewdrops of nectar, great longing will arise in you to go deeper and deeper into it. Irresistible longing will arise in you, a great thirst. You will become afire!

That's what sannyas is all about. When you have tasted a few moments of silence, of joy, of meditativeness, you will like this state to become your constant state, a continuum. The desire to make meditation your whole lifestyle is what sannyas is all about.

And if a few moments are possible, then there is no problem. Slowly, slowly, more and more moments will be coming. As you become skillful, as you learn the knack of not getting involved in the mind, as you learn the art of remaining aloof, away from the mind, as you learn the science of creating a distance between you and your own thoughts, more and more meditation will be showering on you. And the more it showers, the more it transforms you.

A day comes, a day of great blessings, when meditation becomes your natural state. Mind is something unnatural; it never becomes your natural state. But meditation is a natural state — which we have lost. It is a paradise lost, but the paradise can be regained. Look into the child's eyes, look and you will see tremendous silence, innocence. Each child comes with a meditative state, but he has to be initiated into the ways of the society – he has to be taught how to think, how to calculate, how to reason, how to argue; he has to be taught words, language, concepts. And, slowly, slowly, he loses contact with his own innocence. He becomes contaminated, polluted by the society. He becomes an efficient mechanism; he is no more a man.

All that is needed is to regain that space once more. You have known it before, so when for the first time you know meditation, you will be surprised – because a great feeling will arise in you

as if you have known it before. And that feeling is true: you have known it before. You have forgotten. The diamond is lost in piles of rubbish. But if you can uncover it, you will find the diamond again — it is yours.

It cannot really be lost; it can only be forgotten. We are born as meditators, then we learn the ways of the mind. But our real nature remains hidden somewhere deep down like an undercurrent. Any day, a little digging, and you will find the source still flowing, the source of fresh waters. And the greatest joy in life is to find it.

“Buried in the deepest stratum of his unconscious, at the wellspring of man’s existence, lies an immense psychological force. In pure form, it is experienced as a longing, the object of which is constantly receding from him as the horizons of his world widen throughout his growth. It begins with the infant’s amazing discovery that the breast which brings it comfort is not part of himself. From that moment, longing drives the human organism to relate himself to, to comprehend, in the deepest sense to love, that which lies beyond him. This longing can become attached to many kinds of objects and pursuits. But to know it in its purity, without any object, is to know life itself. This longing is God, and to be this longing, pure and simple, without any content, is meditation.”

A child is born; the child comes ready with great energy. The child is nothing but pure energy embodied. And the first thing the child has to seek and search for is the mother’s breast, obviously. The child is hungry. For nine months in the mother’s womb the child was fed automatically; the child lived as part of the mother. Now he is cut from the mother; he has become a separate entity in himself — and the first thing, the first necessity, is to search for food. And that’s how the outward journey begins.

The energy is there; the energy starts reaching outward. And the first thing that the child wants to find is some source of food. He finds the mother’s breast. It is not an accident that the woman’s breast has become one of the greatest symbols to humanity. In art you will find it, in sculpture you will find it, in poetry you will find it — everywhere you will find it!

The female breast has become a focal point. Why? For what reason? Basically, it is nothing but a gland, nothing but a mechanism to feed the child. But why does it haunt people? Men are interested in it; women are interested in it — why so much obsession with the breast? The reason is simple: that was the first contact of the child with the world, the first experience, the most fundamental experience. Everything else is secondary.

The first experience was that of the breast. That’s why it has dominated the world of art, poetry, sculpture. Man has become obsessed with it. And so have women! They may be hiding their breasts, or they may be showing their breasts — and in fact both the processes are not very different. Hiding is a way of showing; hiding is a way of making it more interesting, more intriguing. Hiding the breast provokes the desire in the man to know how it is, what it is. The hidden breast becomes more beautiful than the naked breast. The naked breast is just a part of the body. But why has so much obsession existed about the breast? The reason is simple: it is the most fundamental experience, the first experience.

The entry into the world is through the breast. And the breast did two things: it nourished the child — and the first thing was to survive, and the breast was the food, the breast was life. And

the second thing: the breast gave warmth to the child, shelter to the child, love to the child. That's why food and love have become so much associated.

Whenever a woman loves you, she prepares beautiful food for you. That is a symbolic invitation. Whenever somebody loves you, he invites you for food. Why? The food, in a subtle way, represents the breast. Food and love became associated because both were flowing for the child from the breast.

And there are very few people who are really grown-ups. Childishness remains there.

That's why the bigger the breast, the more you are interested in it. Why? A simple biological reason: because the bigger breast is a bigger source of food for the child. If the breast is very small, that simply shows the child will not survive. That's why the flat breasted woman is unattractive — not that there is really any aesthetic reason for her unattractiveness, but there is some biological reason. She cannot be a mother to your children; that is the reason. The bigger the breast, the more motherlike she seems, the
more motherly she will be. She seems to be able to give birth to children and will be able to help them to survive, and in a healthy way.

That's why whenever you are not feeling loved, you start eating too much. The people who become addicted to food are the people who are missing love. They start substituting with food. If you are really loved, you cannot eat too much. You will be surprised by this psychological discovery: that the people who are loved and are in love eat less. They eat always in a proportionate way. People who are not loved or are not in love eat too much, because food can do two things.

It can fill them, can give them a feeling of being full, and they are feeling very empty because love is missed. Have you not watched it? Girls when they are unmarried are not fat; once they get married, they start getting fatter and fatter, and uglier and uglier. Why?

Now there is no problem — they have attained. And once they are married, the desire for love disappears. They become settled in the routine of life, they start taking everything for granted. And familiarity breeds contempt. Husbands and wives hate each other; although they go on saying, "We love each other," they hate each other. Deep down they feel imprisoned by each other. Love disappears and people start eating too much. Remember the relationship between love and food. But the reason is because that was the child's first experience, and he was getting both the things from the same source. They became associated: a simple case of conditioned reflex.

And once the child starts groping for the mother's breast, now the journey outward begins. He has come to know one thing: that the source of his life is outside him. That is the original fall. Now he will always think of having more money, of having more power, of having more prestige . . . of getting more and more people's attention, because the source of life is outside. And in fact, the source of life is inside.

Meditation means becoming aware that the source of life is inside. The body depends on the outside, true — but you are not the body alone. You don't depend on the outside. You depend on the inner world. These are the two directions: to move outward or to move inward. Mind is a process of moving outward, and mind starts the day the child finds the mother's breast. That is the beginning of the mind. And mind takes you farther and farther away from yourself.

Meditation is the recognition that “There is an inner world too, and I have to search for it.”

Mind is focused on some goal, some object. Meditation is the search to know the pure longing — not the object, but the longing for the object. “What is this longing in me that wants to have much money, that wants to have great power, that wants to become famous . . . what is this longing in me? Who is this longing in me? What is its nature?” To know this longing is meditation. And to know it in its purity is to know God. Longing without any content, pure longing, just the flame without any smoke, is God. Meditation brings you to God because it brings you to your innermost core. And when you start moving inward, the circle is complete.

You become mature only when meditation has started; otherwise, you remain childish. Your toys may go on changing — small children are playing with small toys, and big children, aged children, elderly children, are playing with big toys — but there is no qualitative difference.

You can see . . . sometimes your child will do it. He will stand on the table when you are sitting at the side on the chair, and he will say, “Look, Daddy, I am bigger than you.” He is standing higher, on the table, and he says, “Look, I am bigger than you,” and you laugh at him. But what are you doing? When you have more money, just watch how you walk. You are saying to all the neighbors, “Look! I am bigger than you.” Or when you become a president of a country, or a prime minister, look how you walk, with what haughtiness, with what ego. You are telling everybody, “I have defeated you all. I am sitting on the biggest chair.” The same games! From your childhood to your old age, you go on playing the same games. You can play the game of Monopoly, or you can go and play the real game of monopoly in the share market — it makes no difference, it is the same game just played on a bigger scale.

Once you understand it, that this is the root of your childishness, the outgoing mind . . . Small children start reaching for the moon, and even the biggest scientists are trying to reach the moon — they have reached. There is not much difference.

Reaching outside, you may reach other stars, but you will remain childish. Even if you reach the moon, what are you going to do there? You will be the same! With the same rubbish in your head, with all the holy cow dung that you go on carrying in your heart, you will be standing on the moon. There will be no difference at all! You can be a poor man, you can be very rich; you can be absolutely anonymous, you can be world-famous — it makes no difference at all. Unless the mind takes a turn and starts moving inward,
unless mind takes a totally new dimension and becomes meditation . . .

Meditation is mind turning toward its own source.

Meditation makes you mature; meditation makes you really a grown-up. Growing in age is not really becoming a grown-up, because I see people eighty years old and still playing games, ugly games of power politics — even at the age of eighty-two, eighty-three, eighty-four! The sleep seems to be so deep. When are they going to awaken? When will they think of the inner world?

And death will take all that you have accumulated — your power, your money, your prestige. Nothing will be left, not even a trace. Your whole life will be nullified. Death will come and destroy all that you have made; death will come and prove that all your palaces were nothing but palaces made of playing cards.

Maturity is to know something in you which is deathless, to know something in you which will transcend death — that is meditation. Mind knows the world: meditation knows God.

Mind is a way to understand the object: meditation is a way to understand the subject. Mind is a concern with the contents, and meditation is a concern with the container — the consciousness. Mind becomes obsessed with the clouds, and meditation searches for the sky. Clouds come and go, sky remains, abides.

Search for the inner sky. And if you have found it, then you will never die. The body will die, the mind will die, but you will never die. And to know it is to know life. What you call life is not real life because it is going to die. Only a meditator knows what life is because he has reached the very source of eternity.

*From **Philosophia Perennis, V. 2**, Discourse #5, Q2*

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Then Logic becomes a Stepping Stone to Love

Osho, as well as being someone like you, Pythagoras was also a great mathematician. How is this possible?

Bruno,

Man is not only the outer, and he is not only the inner either — he is both. And more: he is inner, he is outer, and he is transcendental too. Man is a three dimensional being. Those three dimensions are represented by Christianity as the Trinity, and by Hinduism as *trimurti* — three faces of God. And the man who lives only in one dimension lives a partial life. He will never know the beauty of the whole and the joy of the whole.

To live a partial life is to live in sickness because the parts that are not allowed, go on fighting with you. They want to express themselves. The denied being will take revenge on you. It will sabotage your life. It will not allow you to live peacefully; you will be in a constant civil war.

If you deny the body, the body will be angry with you. If you deny the soul, the soul will be angry with you. And a house divided against itself cannot be whole, cannot be at peace, cannot be at ease.

That's why you see millions of people in such great misery. The misery is caused because they live a fragmentary life. They accept only a part of their being and the major parts are rejected. It is like a tree rejecting its roots because they are invisible — the tree will start dying, the roots will be angry. Or it is like the tree denying its flowers, foliage, branches, and accepting only the roots, then it will have no meaning.

Man has lived in a partial way, hence the question.

The total man will be rooted in the body like a tree rooted in the soil, and he will be growing into the sky like the branches of a tree — he will be moving into the inner sky. And he will have something more too, something transcendental to this duality, a third dimension.

The first dimension is very visible, it is material. It can be measured: it is the world of mathematics, the world of science. The second, the inner, is not so visible — it is vague, cloudy, mysterious. It is a twilight zone, neither day nor night, just in the middle between both. It exists on the boundaries of the material and the ultimate, of this and that. That is the world of poetry, art.

And the third is absolutely invisible. Nobody has ever seen it, nobody can ever see it, because it is the very being of the seer itself. You cannot reduce it to an object: it is your very subjectivity. It is always the witness and never the witnessed. It is always the observer and never the observed. That is the world of the mystic: the transcendental. And a whole man will be a scientist, a poet and a mystic. Pythagoras was a whole man, a holy man.

When I say this, that the whole man will be all the three together, please don't take me literally. One need not be literally a scientist and yet one can be whole — but his approach will be scientific. He may not be an Albert Einstein, or a Newton, or an Edison. Buddha is not an Albert

Einstein, but still his scientific approach is there: he is utterly scientific in his approach. He will not allow any superstition. He will not allow any illogical approaches. He will be very logical — although he will lead you beyond logic! but he will lead you very logically, step by step, with a method.

Buddha is as much a scientist as Albert Einstein; you can look into his words. He says, “Don't believe what I say unless you have experienced it. Unless it has become your own understanding, don’t believe in me.” This can be said only by an utterly scientific mind. He says, “Don't believe anything because it is written in the scriptures. The scriptures may be wrong — who knows? Unless you have become a witness to it there is no guarantee of its truth.” It may be in the Vedas, in the Upanishads — there is no need to believe or disbelieve. Experiment, experience! Become a lab — your own lab. And unless you have concluded, all beliefs are just prejudices, superstitious, illogical, unfounded. And truth believed is a lie. Truth experienced is a totally different phenomenon. Truth believed is a lie.

This is the approach of a scientific mind.

Buddha is not a poet either in the ordinary sense — he never composed poetry. But he is a poet! The way he walks is poetry, the way he looks at life is poetry. The way he showers his compassion is poetry. He may not be a poet in the ordinary, literal sense, but he is sheer poetry. His very existence is poetic. The tremendous grace that surrounds him, the infinite beauty that he lives, and the splendor that he has brought to the earth — the earth has never been the same again. It was something else before Buddha, it is totally something else after Buddha.

What difference has Buddha made to the world? He walked on the earth, and he belonged to the beyond. He was embodied just like you and me, but he had come from the ultimate source. He lived here and now, but *as* the ultimate source. His fragrance is still there in the winds. Those who are alert will still feel his presence. That presence is eternal. So is Jesus, so is Pythagoras . . . they are all mystics, poets, scientists. The real man is bound to be a total man. And that’s my teaching too: I would not like you to be partial, I would not like you to be lopsided. I would not like you to live only in the body or only in the soul. People have tried that! And because of those efforts, man has not become what he has the birthright to become. Man has not bloomed, has not flowered. He cannot. Unless all the three dimensions are together, something will be missing. And that missing part will go on haunting you, will go on creating misery for you.

The missing part will not allow you to be really contented. The missing part will not allow you to be grateful to God. The missing part will not allow you to release the fragrance in tremendous gratefulness, thankfulness — to be prayerful. It will not allow you prayer. Only a fulfilled man can pray. Only a contented man can pray: contentment is prayer. Prayer is the perfume of absolute contentment.

Live in the body as Epicurus lived in the body. Live in the soul as all the mystics have always tried to live in the soul but don’t deny Epicurus. My vision of the whole man implies Epicurus too, as much as Jesus, as much as Zarathustra. And the poet is just between the two, the meeting-point of the mystic and the scientist in you. It is there that the poet exists — on the boundaries, on the frontiers. Let your poet also have its say. Dance, sing, create music. Live a life which is rooted in scientific outlook and has the grace and the beauty of poetry, and the depth of mysticism.

Bruno, Pythagoras is a whole man. It should be so with everybody else too.

You ask me: *As well as being someone like you, Pythagoras was also a great mathematician. How is this possible?*

I am not a mathematician, but whatsoever I am saying to you is utterly mathematical. I am not a logician, but what I am saying to you is absolutely logical. Although my logic will help you to go beyond logic — that's what I mean when I say "absolutely logical." Because the illogical is *as* much part of existence as the logical. If somebody is really logical, he will accept the illogical too because it is there and it cannot be rejected. To be logical means to accept the illogical too, then logic becomes a stepping-stone to the illogical. Then logic becomes a stepping-stone to love . . . And when everything in you has been used and nothing is neglected, you become an orchestra, then you are [a] harmony of tremendous grace. That harmony is the goal of religion.

From **Philosophia Perennis, V.2**, Discourse #4, Q1

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10 I Have no Name

I Have No Name

An old poem of J. Krishnamurti:

I have no name,
I am as the fresh breeze of the mountains.

I have no shelter;
I am as the wandering waters.

I have no sanctuary, like the dark gods;
Nor am I in the shadow of deep temples.

I have no sacred books;
Nor am I well-seasoned in tradition.

I am not in the incense
Mounting on the high altars,
Nor in the pomp of ceremonies.

I am neither in the graven image,
Nor in the rich chant of a melodious voice.

I am not bound by theories,
Nor corrupted by beliefs.

I am not held in the bondage of religions,
Nor in the pious agony of their priests.

I am not entrapped by philosophies,
Nor held in the power of their sects.

I am neither low nor high,
I am the worshipper and the worshipped.

I am free.

My song is the song of the river
Calling for the open seas,
Wandering, wandering,
I am Life.

I have no name,
I am as the fresh breeze of the mountains.

Truth has no name, and truth is not confined in any system of thought. Truth is not a theory, a theology, a philosophy. Truth is the experience of that which is. Truth is not intellectual or emotional; truth is existential.

These are the three layers of human consciousness. The first is the intellectual: it theorizes, it spins and weaves beautiful words but with no meaning at all. It is a very cunning part, very deceptive. It can make you believe in words as if they have some substance. It talks about God, truth, freedom, love, meditation, but it only talks; it is just words and words and words. Those words are empty shells; if you look deep down into them, they are hollow.

This part goes on decorating; it uses big jargon to hide its inner emptiness. And our whole education – social, religious, cultural – consists only of words. It only cultivates the intellectual part of our being, which is the most superficial. Through the intellect you cannot reach to the divine, through the, intellect you will be lost in the jungle of words. That's how millions of people are lost. Between you and God the greatest barrier is your so-called intellect. Remember, your intellect is not intelligence. Intelligence is a totally different matter.

Intellect is a pseudo coin; it pretends to be intelligence but it is not. And because you don't know the real you are easily deceived by the unreal, by the pseudo. Beware of the intellectual layer of your being, which is the most developed; that is the danger. The most superficial is the most cultivated. The most superficial is the most nourished. From the school to the university, the superficial is being nourished, strengthened. And slowly, slowly you get caught up in it, you become entrapped. Then people think about love; they don't feel, they only think.

Krishnamurti relates an incident which happened when he was travelling in a car. The car accidentally knocked down a poor animal, but two persons inside the car did not notice what had happened because they were engrossed in a conversation on how to be aware!

This is the situation of the majority of humanity.

God is present everywhere. Wherever you turn, He is. Open your eyes, He is, close your eyes and He is – because nothing else exists. God means isness.

Anything that participates in existence is divine. But you don't see; you go on talking about God, discussing. You have become so clever in hair-splitting, in logic-chopping. You have become so full of rubbish, which you call knowledge, because you can repeat the Vedas, the Koran, the Bible, like parrots.

You have to be aware of this dangerous layer that surrounds you like a hard shell.

Krishnamurti is right when he says, "I have no name . . ."

The word "God" is not God, and the word "love" is not love either. If you become too much engrossed in the word "god" you will go on missing God forever. If you become too much intrigued by the word "love" then you can go to the library, you can consult all the books – and there are millions written about love by people who don't know anything about love – you can collect great information about love, but to know about love is not to know love. Knowing love is a totally different dimension.

Knowledge about love is very simple; you can become a walking encyclopedia. You can know all the theories of love without ever testing any theory in your experience, without ever living a single moment of love, without any taste of what love is.

I am as the fresh breeze of the mountains . . .

God is neither old nor new, or, God is the most ancient and as fresh as the dewdrops in the early morning sun – because only God is. God is non-temporal; it does not belong to the dimension of time. Hence you cannot call it old or new – it is fresh, virgin. You need not go into the scriptures. You certainly have to go into the breeze that is passing through the pine trees; you certainly have to go into the fragrance that is being released by the flowers. Now . . .! You have to go into *this* moment with your total being, you have to relax here-now, and all the scriptures will be revealed to you. The Vedas and the Gitas and the Korans will be sung in [the] deepest core of your being. Then you will know that all the scriptures are true; but first your own inner scripture has to be known, understood.

I have no shelter;
I am as the wandering waters.

God is life – hence God is movement, hence God is constant change; that is the paradox of existence. It is something that never changes and yet constantly changes. At the innermost core everything remains the same, but on the circumference, nothing is ever the same. God is change and no-change. God is eternity and flux.

If you look at the world, you look at the manifest God, which is constant change – it is like a river moving and moving – but if you look at the unmanifest, then God is always the same. God is both.

This world is not separate from God. You need not go in search of Him anywhere else; He is hidden here; He is playing hide-and-seek here.

I have no sanctuary, like the dark gods;
Nor am I in the shadow of deep temples.

I have no sacred books;
Nor am I well-seasoned in tradition.

Religion has nothing to do with tradition or sacred books, religion has something to do with existential experience. Your first layer is intellectual – that has nothing to do with religion. You have to bypass it; you have to take a jump out of it.

Your second layer is emotional, the layer of feeling, where intuitions arise, visions are revealed, dreams of the unknown descend; where poetry is born, and the dance, and the song. It is closer to God. The intellectual layer is perfectly good for the mundane world, for the marketplace. It is calculation, mathematics; it can become science, technology. It has its uses – use it, but don't be used by it. The second layer is closer to God; it is the layer of feeling.

The first layer is masculine, the second layer is feminine. The first layer is aggressive, the second layer is receptive. The first layer believes in action, the second layer is a tremendous passivity. It

is like a womb. It is an open door; it is a deep welcome. The first goes in search for truth in a very aggressive way; it thinks in terms of conquering.

Even a man like Bertrand Russell writes a book, *Conquest of Nature*. Bertrand Russell remained confined to the first layer. He had the intrinsic capacity to go far deeper into reality, but he remained concerned with words, logic, mathematics. He thought in terms of conquering nature: how the part could conquer the whole, how the drop could conquer the ocean, how the leaf could conquer the tree. It is utter nonsense! The very idea of conquest is ugly, but that's how the male part of your being thinks. It is aggressive, it is violent, it is destructive, it is coercive, it is possessive, it is imperialistic.

The second layer is intuitive: that of feeling, that of dreaming. The second layer is poetic, aesthetic, of deep sensitivity. It is totally different; its approach is different – it does not analyze. The first part believes in analysis, the second part synthesizes.

Sigmund Freud remained with the first part, Assagioli moved to the second. Hence Sigmund Freud could create psychoanalysis; Assagioli could introduce a totally new concept, of psychosynthesis. But Sigmund Freud will look more scientific, obviously, more logical, rational. Assagioli will look like a visionary, a poet, but Assagioli goes deeper.

Poetry always goes deeper than prose. Singing always goes deeper than syllogism.

Become aware of the second layer in you, help it to revive. The society has repressed it; the society does not want it to function. The society is afraid of the second layer because the second layer is irrational, uncontrollable, unpredictable, because the second layer cannot be reduced to mechanical manipulations. The first layer is easily available for the politician, for the priest to dominate. It is easily available for the educators, the pedagogues to condition, to hypnotize. The second is not available.

The second is so deep that the hands of the priest and the politicians and the pedagogues cannot reach to it.

You will have to help your second layer to become more prominent. The emphasis has to shift from the first to the second. And the second is not the last; the second is only the door. The third is the last.

The third layer is that of being.

The first is intellectual, the second is emotional, the third is existential. With the first you think, with the second you feel, with the third *you are*. With the third, thinking disappears, feeling disappears. Only a kind of witnessing remains, a pure consciousness, an awareness. That's what meditation is all about.

All sacred scriptures are in the head, and all your rituals, religions, are in the head. Your rituals, your religions, your theologies, don't even reach to the second. If you want to reach to the second you will have to learn from the painters and the poets and the singers, musicians, dancers. You will have to go into the world of art. But if you want to go to the third – and without going to the third you will never know what God is – you will have to go into a deep communion with a Master.

Only a mystic can make you attuned with your own innermost being. Only one who is in *at-onement* with his own being can infect you. Religion is something like a contagious disease. It is not disease, it is health, ultimate health, but health can become as contagious as any illness can ever become.

Religion has to be learned only in the vicinity of a Master. It cannot be learned from traditions, from scriptures. You will need somebody alive so that you can be in love, somebody alive who can by his presence trigger a process in your being. It cannot be taught; it can only be caught.

I am not in the incense
Mounting on high altars,
Nor in the pomp of ceremonies.

I am neither in the graven image,
Nor in the rich chant of a melodious voice.

I am not bound by theories,
Nor corrupted by beliefs.

I am not held in the bondage of religions,
Nor in the pious agony of their priests.

I am not entrapped by philosophies,
Nor held in the power of their sects.

I am neither low nor high,
I am the worshipper and the worshipped.

That statement is of tremendous value: I am the worshiper and the worshiped. You are the seeker and the sought, you are the devotee and the deity, you are the temple and the Master of the temple. You need not go anywhere. If you need go anywhere it is only inwards, into your own interiority.

I am neither low nor high,
I am the worshipper and the worshipped.

I am free.

My song is the song of the river
Calling for the open seas,
Wandering, wandering,
I am Life.

From ***The Guest***, Discourse #10

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How to See What Is?

How to see what is?

Akam, there is no how to see what is because if you are carrying a how you will distort it. That which is, needs no method, technique, to see it — just silence, a transparent stillness, no thought in the mind, not even the thought of a certain method. No strategy, because all strategies are bound to distort.

In fact, no mind is needed to see that which is. Mind means thoughts. And if there is a traffic of thoughts, you will never be able to see what is, you will see something else. You will see what your thoughts allow you to see. Your thoughts prevent much reaching you.

You will be surprised to know what modern psychological researchers have come to know: ninety-eight percent of the reality is not allowed to enter in your being; the mind only allows two percent. So whatsoever you see is only two percent of the reality. And because the mind allows only two percent of the reality in and then gives you the feeling that this is the whole, you live in a false world. You think the part is the whole. And you live accordingly — your whole life becomes a falsification.

The mind is a judge: it allows only that which suits it, which fits with it, which nourishes it, strengthens it. It does not allow anything that goes against it. For example, you are listening to me: your mind will allow only that which helps to strengthen your opinions, your ideologies. If you are a Christian, you will hear one thing; and if you are a Buddhist, you will hear something totally different. If you have come here with a prejudice, for or against, you will hear different things. I am saying the same thing, but a Christian will interpret it in his own way and the Buddhist in his own way and the communist in his own way. One who has come with a determined idea that I am wrong will find all the arguments that help his prejudice. Each prejudice tries to get support for itself. So if you think any methodology is needed to see that which is, then you are starting from the very beginning in a wrong way.

That which is, is already there — you be silent, without any prejudice, without any ideology, atheist, theist, without any concept, without any *a priori*. You simply remain available, open, like a child who knows nothing. Function from the state of not knowing and you will be able to see what is.

Let me repeat: function from the state of not knowing. If you know, you will distort — knowledge is mind. The state of not knowing means you have put the mind aside; now your eyes are without dust, your mirror is clean. It will reflect! It will reflect that which is.

This is the way one comes to encounter reality — and the encounter is going to be shattering. It is not going to help your ideas about it. It will destroy all that you have been always thinking is right. It is going to surprise you. It is going to show you that you have lived up to now in a dream, that you have lived up to now in your own projections, that you have not allowed reality to penetrate you —on the contrary, you have created a world of your own ideas around yourself. You have lived in a capsule, without any windows. That's how people are living.

A Christian cannot know reality, a Hindu cannot know reality, a Mohammedan cannot know reality. Only a man who is courageous enough to drop all this garbage, who can simply be, who

can simply be innocent. . . Jesus says to his disciples, “Unless you are like small children you will not enter into my kingdom of God.” He is saying: Function from the state of not knowing.

The Upanishads say: Those who claim to know, beware — they know nothing. Those who say they know not, surrender to them — because there is a possibility of some transformation happening around them, with them, in communion with them. Socrates, at his ultimate peak of wisdom, said, “I know only one thing, that I know nothing.”

Function from the state of not knowing, and it will bring you immense, ecstatic experiences, because the person who is without knowledge is capable of wondering. The person who is without knowledge is capable of awe. He can dance seeing a rose flower, he can sing because the sky is full of stars. He can be in tune with existence. Seeing a sunset, he can go into wild ecstasy — because he knows nothing. Life is a mystery to him. Knowledge demystifies life. Because he knows nothing, everything, the most ordinary too, becomes absolutely extraordinary, luminous, because everything is mysterious.

Everything *is* mysterious! Your knowledge simply hides your ignorance and destroys your capacity to be mystified. Knowledge is destructive of mysticism. Hence all the mystics of all the ages have been saying one single thing: Drop knowledge — all knowledge is rubbish. Be in a state of not knowing; function from that state. Look at trees like a child, look at the moon like a poet, look at the sky like a madman!

Akam, don't ask *how* to see what is, because that question ‘how?’ simply means you want some methodology, some knowledge, some information, so that you can interpret reality. But reality is uninterpretable. You want something so that you can explain to yourself what it is all about — but reality is unexplainable. You would like to define reality, but it is indefinable. [...]

It is not a question of method, not a question of how. It is more a question of understanding the very process of how the mind functions. And when you have understood how the mind functions, you will put it aside. Then there is no barrier between you and reality. And when there is no barrier, there is no separation either — because it is the barrier that separates. When there is no barrier, you are one with reality. In that oneness, the reality reveals its secrets to you.

From ***The Fish in the Sea Is Not Thirsty***, Discourse #2

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Do I have to Lose Myself to Lose my Ego?

Do I have to forget myself to lose my ego?

Eva, it is not a question of forgetting yourself — on the contrary, it is a question of remembering yourself.

What is the ego? Ego exists because you have forgotten yourself because you don't remember who you are. And it is very difficult to live without some idea of who you are. Not knowing the reality of your being, you have to create a false substitute.

What is the ego? Ego is the false substitute that you have created for the self. It is not your self, but it is very difficult to live without a self — it will be almost impossible to live without a self, some kind of self is needed, is a must; otherwise, how will you keep yourself together?

You will start falling apart.

Even if the center is false, it helps you. Even a false center keeps you at least somehow together. You have forgotten yourself — hence you need the ego.

If you remember yourself, there will be no need for the ego.

You ask, Eva: *Do I have to forget myself to lose my ego?*

Ego is not anything real that you have to lose or you can lose — you don't have it in the first place. It is just an idea, a shadow; it is non-existential. It is like your name: when you were born, you did not come with a name. Then somebody — your mother, your father, your family — started calling you "Eva." Some name is needed to call you by; it is utilitarian.

Your name is the first name that was ever given. When Haavva was created because man was alone, Adam was alone and was very much depressed because of the loneliness . . . the whole existence and Adam was lonely. He asked God to give him a companion, and God created a woman. God asked Adam, "What are you going to call her? What name would you like to give her?" And he was so ecstatic that now at least there was somebody with whom he could be friendly, with whom he could be loving, with whom he could talk, communicate, with whom there was a possibility of relating. He was no more alone! — he was so ecstatic that he said he would call this creature "Eve," "Eva," "Haavva."

"Why?" God asked.

And Adam said, "Because Eve, Eva or Haavva means life — she is my life. Without her I was almost dead."

But when Eve was created, there was no name. A name was given to her because Adam would need it. Sometimes he would have to call her: "Where are you?" Sometimes the name would be needed — but a name is a false thing, it is just a label. We give names to people just to make it helpful to commune, to relate, to call, to address. But names are not real! You need not drop them, and even if you drop them nothing will be dropped.

You can drop this name “Eva”— nothing will be dropped. Simply an idea! And you are no more attached to it. In exactly the same way: the name is for others to call you by, but you need something to call yourself by too — that’s what the ego is: I.

If you want to say something about yourself, you need some word — that word is “I.” Names are for others to call you by; the ego is for you to call yourself by, to address yourself. It is also false; it does not exist. You need not lose it. All that is needed is to understand it — why has this “I” become so important, why has it become so significant, so central, so substantial? A shadow has become so substantial — why? Because you don’t know your real self.

When Jesus says “I,” he does not mean the same “I.” When he says, “I am the gate, I am the truth, I am the way,” his “I” does not connote any ego. When Krishna says to Arjuna, “Come to my feet, surrender to me,” his “me” is not the same as your “me.”

Buddha used to say to his disciples, “Be a light unto yourself.” A great King, Prasenjit, had come to see him. And he saw many sannyasins coming and bowing to Buddha, and saying:

“*Buddham Sharanam Gachchhami* — I go to the feet of the Buddha.

Sangham Sharanam Gachchhami — I go to the feet of the community of the Buddhas.

Dhammam Sharanam Gachchhami — I go to the feet of the ultimate law, the ultimate law that supports existence, that runs like a thread and makes the existence a garland.”

Prasenjit was a man of logic, well-educated, sophisticated. He was a little bit puzzled. He asked Buddha, “Excuse me, Sir, but you say to people, ‘Be a light unto yourself,’ and then they surrender to you, and they touch your feet — you don’t prevent them. This is illogical, this is contradictory. If you say ‘Be a light unto yourself,’ then there is no need to surrender to anybody else. Then why should they touch your feet?”

And Buddha laughed and he said, “They are not my feet, and they are not surrendering to *me* — because there is nobody inside me as the ego who can claim. I am just an excuse — they are surrendering. It is not a surrender to me; it is simply a surrender — I am just an excuse. Because they are not yet capable of surrendering without any excuse, I allow them to use me as an excuse. But there is nobody to whom they are surrendering.”

That’s exactly the meaning of a buddha: one who is not; in the sense of an ego, one who is not. But as far as the supreme self is concerned, the ultimate self is concerned, he *is* and you are not. The ego is a false idea, and it is needed because the real self is unknown.

Eva, you need not forget yourself to lose the ego — in fact, that’s how you have gained it.

You need to remember yourself, not to forget but to remember. You have to become more aware and alert, you have to wake up. You have to see who you are, not what has been told to you — that you are a woman, that you are a man, that you are a Hindu, a Christian, a white or a black — not what has been told to you.

You will have to go inside your being to the very innermost core and see who you are. In that very seeing, in that very remembering, the ego disappears. When the light comes, the darkness

disappears; when the real self is remembered, the unreal is no more needed. And it is not that you have to drop it: it is simply not found.

But we live in the ego, and in every possible way we go on finding new props for it. In every act we go on nourishing it — even in those actions of which you are not the doer you go on claiming that you are doing it. People say, "I am breathing." Just look at the absurdity of it.

If you are breathing then you will never die; death will come and stand in front of you and you will go on breathing. You may not oblige death; you may say, "I am not going to stop breathing."

You are not breathing; breathing is not your activity; it is not your doing — it *is* happening.

You cannot breathe. If it stops, it stops. If the next breath is not going to come back, you will not be able to do anything. Breathing is a happening, but man has made it, or at least believes it to be, a doing.

You say, "I love." Even the expression "love-making" is utter nonsense. You cannot love; you cannot not love. Love is a happening, not a doing. What can you do about love? Either it happens or it doesn't happen. If you try, then it will be something false, then it will not be love at all — then it will only be acting.

If you are ordered to love a woman or a man, what are you going to do? You will go through empty gestures: you will hug and you will kiss and you will go through all the movements, and with no love at all. The whole thing will be mechanical! And that's what is going on, what goes on around the world. The wife has to love the husband, the husband has to love the wife — it is a kind of duty to be fulfilled. It becomes a performance, acting. It is not real; hence it is not satisfying, it brings no contentment, no fulfillment.

The ego is very cunning in that way: it goes on finding supports, props, new pastures to feed itself on. If you fail, you blame circumstances. If you succeed, it is you who have succeeded. If you fail it is fate, kismet; if you fail it is the society, the ugly society. If you fail, it is the cunning people, the cunning competitors. But if you succeed, you succeed.

A great Sufi story:

Mulla Nasruddin took his disciples to an exhibition. Many things were going on at the exhibition. At one place people were staking much money and trying to shoot arrows to reach a certain target. Mulla gathered his disciples and he said, "Come, and I will show you something." That is the Sufi way of teaching the disciples. He took the bow and the arrow — a great crowd gathered: "A Sufi Master with his disciples — something is going on!" People were very silently watching. With great show, Mulla shot the arrow . . . it fell very short, it never reached the target. The crowd started laughing. Mulla said, "Stop! Don't be foolish." He turned to his disciples and said, "Look, this is what happens when you live with an inferiority complex. This is how the person who suffers from an inferiority complex will act — he will never reach the target; he will fall short. His whole heart is not in it." The crowd became silent: "Yes, there is a lesson in it."

Next arrow . . . and it simply went far ahead, it left the target behind. That was also a failure; the crowd started laughing again. And Mulla said, "Be silent! You don't understand these secrets." He turned to his disciples and said, "Look, this is how a man who thinks himself very superior

behaves. He will never reach the target. He runs so fast that he will bypass the goal, and he will not stop at the goal. He is too confident. He is also unbalanced."

The crowd again became silent: "Yes, there is a lesson."

And Mulla tried the third time . . . and the arrow went directly into the target. Now the crowd was silent and waiting for what Mulla was going to teach to his disciples.

He went to the owner and demanded the money. The owner said, "Why?"

He said, "This is me! The first was the arrow of a man who suffers from an inferiority complex; the second the arrow of the man who suffers from a superiority complex — and this is Mulla Nasruddin's arrow. Where is the money?"

This is what we go on doing. In each situation, watch. When you fail, it is God, it is fate, it is society, circumstances . . . a thousand and one names. But the simple phenomenon is that you don't want to take the responsibility because it hurts the ego. But when you succeed, it is always you — it is never God, never fate, never circumstances, never your cunning strategies, no. It is simply you, your talents, your genius, your intelligence. It is always you, when you succeed.

Watch the ego, and don't feed it. It dies if you don't feed it. If you stop feeding it, it starves to death.

Mrs. Cochrane was standing beside the coffin of her dead husband. Their son stood at her elbow. The mourners, one by one, passed in review.

"He is feeling no pain now," said Mrs. Croy. "What did he die of?"

"Poor fella," said Mrs. Cochrane. "He died of the gonorrhea."

Another woman gazed at the corpse. "He is well out of it now," she said. "He has got a smile of serenity on his face. What did he die from?"

"He died of the gonorrhea!" said the widow.

Suddenly, the son pulled his mother aside. "Mom," he said, "that's a terrible thing to say about Pop. He did not die of gonorrhea — he died of diarrhea!"

"I know that," said Mrs. Cochrane, "but I would rather have them thinking he died like a sport — instead of the shit that he was!"

The ego is constantly there, in every situation — it will not miss any situation to feed itself, to strengthen itself. Stop feeding the ego — that is the first thing to do.

And the second thing is: become more aware. Walking, walk with awareness; listening, listen with total awareness — not in a kind of sleep, not so-so, not lukewarm. Talking, talk with awareness. Whatsoever you are doing, let your whole life be colored by awareness. And slowly, slowly that awareness will bring you a vision of your real self.

So this is a double attack on the ego. First, don't feed it; second, become more aware — so the ego disappears by starvation and the self appears by being aware. And once the clouds of ego are no more there, the self rises like a sun. And that self has nothing to do with your "I." Still the word will be used. I use it, Jesus uses it, Buddha uses it — it has to be used, but now it has a totally different meaning. On the lips of a Buddha or a Krishna or a Christ it has a totally different connotation.

When the being is transformed, everything is transformed — even the language that is uttered by a buddha has a totally different meaning. His words can't have the same meaning. It is impossible! Because now a new light has happened, and in that new light everything becomes new.

You live in darkness, you stumble in darkness, you grope in darkness. The man of awareness lives in light. He never stumbles, he never gropes. He moves with grace, he has a totally different quality of being, life, love.

Do two things, Eva: first, don't feed the ego any more — enough is enough — and second, become more aware. This is a double attack, from two sides. It always succeeds; it has never failed.

From ***The Fish in the Sea Is Not Thirsty***, Discourse #2

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Witnessing and the Heart

Would you please speak a little on witnessing and the heart. Can they be experienced simultaneously?

Witnessing and the heart are one and the same thing. Witnessing is not of the mind. Mind can never be a witness. When you start witnessing, mind becomes the witnessed not the witness. It is the observed not the observer. You see your thoughts moving, your desires, your fantasies, your memories, your dreams, just as you see things moving on the screen of a film. But you are not identified with them. That non-identification is what is meant by witnessing. Then who is the witness? Mind is being seen then who is the seer? It is the heart.

So heart and witnessing are not two things. If you witness, you will be centered in the heart, or if you are centered in the heart, you will become the witness. These are two processes to reach to the same goal. The lover, the devotee never thinks of witnessing. He simply tries to reach to the heart, to the source of his being. Once he has reached the heart, witnessing comes on its own accord. The meditator never thinks of love and the heart. He starts by witnessing, but once witnessing is there, the heart opens. Because there is no other place from where to witness.

The path of the meditator and the path of the devotee are different, but they culminate into one experience. At the ultimate point, they reach to the same peak. You can choose the path, but you cannot choose the goal. Because there are not two goals, there is only one goal. Of course, if you have followed the path of a devotee, you will not talk of witnessing when you have arrived. You will talk of love. If you have followed the path of meditation, you will not talk of love when you have arrived. You will talk of witnessing. But the difference is only of words, language, expression. But that which is expressed is the one and the same reality.

From ***The Fish in the Sea is not Thirsty*****,** Discourse #2

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11 The Path of Intelligence

The Path of Intelligence

Can the intellect be a door to enlightenment, or is enlightenment only achieved through surrender?

Enlightenment is always through surrender, but surrender is achieved through intelligence. Only idiots cannot surrender. To surrender you need great intelligence. To see the point of surrender is the climax of insight; to see the point that you are not separate from existence is the highest that intelligence can give to you.

There is no conflict between intelligence and surrender. Surrender is through intelligence, although when you surrender intelligence is also surrendered. Through surrender intellect commits suicide. Seeing the futility of itself, seeing the absurdity of itself, seeing the anguish that it creates, it disappears. But it happens through intelligence. And especially in concern with Buddha, the path is of intelligence. The very word *buddha* means awakened intelligence.

In the *Heart Sutra* one-fourth of the words used mean intelligence. The word buddha means awake, bodhi means awakening, *sambodhi* means perfect awakening, *abhisambuddha* means the fully awake, bodhisattva means ready to become fully awake. All go back to the same root, *budh*, which means intelligence. The word buddhi, intellect, also comes from the same root. The root budh has many dimensions to it. There is no single English word that can translate it; it has many implications. It is very fluid and poetic. In no other language does any word like budh exist, with so many meanings. There are at least five meanings to the word budh.

The first is to awake, to wake oneself up, and to awaken others, to be awake. As such, it is opposed to being asleep, in the slumber of delusion from which the enlightened awakens as from a dream. That is the first meaning of intelligence, budh — to create an awakening in you.

Ordinarily, man is asleep. Even while you think you are awake, you are not. Walking on the road, you are fully awake — in your mind. But looked at from the vision of a buddha, you are fast asleep because a thousand and one dreams and thoughts are clamoring inside you. Your inner light is very clouded. It is a kind of sleep. Yes, your eyes are open, obviously, but people can walk in a dream, in sleep, with eyes open. And Buddha says: You are also walking in sleep — with eyes open.

But your inner eye is not open. You don’t know yet who you are. You have not looked into your own reality. You are not awake. A mind full of thoughts is not awake, cannot be awake. Only a mind which has dropped thoughts and thinking, which has dispersed the clouds around it — and the sun is burning bright, and the sky is utterly empty of clouds — is the mind which has intelligence, which is awake.

Intelligence is the capacity to be in the present. The more you are in the past or are in the future, the less intelligent you are. Intelligence is the capacity to be here-now, to be in this moment and nowhere else. Then you are awake.

For example, you are sitting in a house and the house suddenly catches fire; your life is in danger. Then for a moment you will be awake. In that moment you will not think many thoughts. In that moment you forget your whole past. In that moment you will not be clamored at by your psychological memories — that you had loved a woman thirty years before, and boy, it was fantastic! Or, the other day you had been to the Chinese restaurant, and still the taste lingers on, and the aroma and the smell of the freshly cooked bread. You will not be in those thoughts. No, when your house is on fire you cannot afford this kind of thinking. Suddenly, you will rush to this moment: the house is on fire and your life is at stake. You will not dream about the future, about what you are going to do tomorrow. Tomorrow is no longer relevant, yesterday is no longer relevant, even today is no longer relevant! — only this moment, this split moment. That is the first meaning of budh, intelligence.

And then there are great insights. A man who wants to be really awake, wants to be really a buddha, has to live each moment in such intensity — as you live only rarely, rarely, in some danger.

The first meaning is opposite to sleep. And naturally, you can see reality only when you are not asleep. You can face it; you can look into the eyes of truth — or call it God — only when you are awake. Do you understand the point of intensity, the point of being on fire? Utterly awake, there is insight. That insight brings freedom, that insight brings truth.

The second meaning of budh is to recognize — as to become aware of, acquainted with, to notice, give heed to. And so, a buddha is one who has recognized the false as the false, and has his eyes opened to the true as the true. To see the false as the false is the beginning of understanding what truth is. Only when you see the false as the false can you see what truth is. You cannot go on living in illusions, you cannot go on living in your beliefs, you cannot go on living in your prejudices if you want to know truth. The false has to be recognized as false. That is the second meaning of budh — recognition of the false as false, of the untrue as untrue.

For example, you have believed in God; you were born a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan. You have been taught that God exists, you have been made afraid of God — that if you don’t believe you will suffer, that you will be punished, that God is very ferocious, that God will never forgive you. The Jewish God says, “I am a very jealous God. Worship only me and nobody else!” The Mohammedan God also says the same thing: “There is only one God, and no other God; and there is only one prophet of God — Mohammed —and there is no other prophet.”

This conditioning can go so deep in you that it can go on lingering even if you start disbelieving in God.

Just the other day Mulla Nasruddin was here, and I asked him, “Mulla Nasruddin, since you have turned into a communist, you have become a comrade, what about God?”

He said, “There is no God! — and Mohammed is the only prophet.”

A conditioning can go so deep: Mohammed remains the prophet.

You have been brought up to believe in God, and you have believed. This is a belief. Whether God exists or not has nothing to do with your belief. Truth has nothing to do with your belief.

Whether you believe or not makes no difference to truth. But if you believe in God you will go on seeing — at least, thinking — that you see God. If you don't believe in God, that disbelief in God will prevent you from knowing. All beliefs prevent because they become prejudices around you, they become thought-coverings — what Buddha calls *avarnas*.

The man of intelligence does not believe in anything and does not disbelieve in anything. The man of intelligence is simply open to recognizing whatsoever is the case. If God is there he will recognize — but not according to his belief; he has no belief. Only in a non-believing intelligence can truth appear. When you already believe you don't allow truth any space to come to you. Your prejudice is enthroned, already enthroned. You cannot see something which goes against your belief; you will become afraid, you will become shaky, you will start trembling. You have put so much in your belief — so much life, so much time, so many prayers, five prayers every day. For fifty years a man has been devoted to his belief; now suddenly how can he recognize the fact that there is no God? A man has put his whole life into communism, believing that there is no God; how can he come to see if God is there? He will go on avoiding.

I'm not saying anything about whether God is or is not. What I am saying is something concerned with you, not with God. A mind, a clear mind, is needed, an intelligence is needed which does not cling to any belief. Then you are like a mirror: you reflect that which is, you don't distort it. That is the second meaning of budh.

An intelligent person is neither a communist nor a Catholic. An intelligent person does not believe, does not disbelieve. That is not his way. He looks into life, and whatsoever is there he is ready to see it. He has no barriers to his vision; his vision is transparent. Only those few people attain to truth.

The third meaning of the root budh, intelligence, is to know, to understand. The Buddha knows that which is; he understands that which is, and in that very understanding is free from all bondage — to know in the sense of to understand, not in the sense of knowledgeability. Buddha is not knowledgeable. An intelligent person does not care much about information and knowledge. An intelligent person cares much more for the capacity to know. His real authentic interest is in knowing, not in knowledge.

Knowing gives you understanding; knowledge only gives you a feeling of understanding without giving you real understanding. Knowledge is a pseudo-coin, it is deceptive. It only gives you a feeling that you know, and you don't know at all. You can go on accumulating knowledge as much as you want, you can go on hoarding, you can become very, very knowledgeable. You can write books, you can have degrees, you can have PhDs, DLitts, and still you remain the same ignorant, stupid person you have always been. Those degrees don't change you; they can't change you. In fact, your stupidity becomes more strong . . . it has degrees now! It can prove itself through certificates. It cannot prove through life, but it can prove through the certificates. It cannot prove in any other way, but it will carry degrees, certificates, recognitions from the society; people think you know, and you also think you know.

Have you not seen this? The people who are thought to be very knowledgeable are as ignorant as anybody, sometimes more ignorant. It is very rare to find intelligent people in the academic world, very rare. I have been in the academic world, and I say it through my experience. I have seen intelligent farmers; I have not seen intelligent professors. I have seen intelligent woodcutters; I have not seen intelligent professors. Why? What has gone wrong with these people?

One thing has gone wrong: they can depend on knowledge. They need not become knowers; they can depend on knowledge. They have found a secondhand way. The firsthand needs courage. The firsthand, knowing, only few people can afford — the adventurers, people who go beyond the ordinary path where crowds move, people who take small footpaths into the jungle of the unknowable. The danger is they may get lost. The risk is high.

When you can get secondhand knowledge, why bother? You can just sit in your chair. You can go to the library or to the university, you can collect information. You can make a big pile of information and sit on top of it. Through knowledge your memory becomes bigger and bigger, but your intelligence does not become bigger. Sometimes it happens when you don't know much, when you are not very knowledgeable, that you will have to be intelligent in some moments.

I have heard . . .

A woman bought a tin of fruit but she could not open the tin. She did not know how to open it. So she rushed to her study to look in the cookbook. By the time she looked in the book and found out the page and reference, and came rushing back ready to open the tin, the servant had already opened it.

She asked, "But how did you do it?"

The servant said, "Madam, when you can't read, you have to use your mind."

Yes, that's how it happens. That's why farmers, gardeners, woodcutters, are more intelligent, have a kind of freshness around them. They can't read, so they have to use their minds. One has to live and one has to use one's mind.

The third meaning of budh is to know, in the sense of understanding.

The Buddha has seen that which is. He understands that which is, and in that very understanding is free from all bondage. What does it mean? It means you are afraid.

For example, these heart sutras' talks are making many people feel fear. Many people have sent their messages: "Osho, no more! You make us afraid of nothingness and death." Prageet is very afraid. Vidya is very afraid, and many more. Why? You don't want to get rid of fear? If you want to get rid of fear, you will have to understand fear. You want to avoid the fact that the fear is there, the fear of death is there.

Now Prageet, on the surface, looks a strong man — a Rolfer — but deep down he's very much afraid of death; he is one of the most afraid persons around here. Maybe that's why on the surface he has taken the stance of strength, power, a bully. That's what a Rolfer is!

I have heard that recently the devil in hell is appointing Rolfers: they torture people for their own sakes, and they torture very technically. If you are afraid inside, you will have to create something strong around you, like a hard shell, so nobody comes to know that you are afraid. And that is not the only point — you also will not know that you are afraid because of that hard shell. It will protect you from others, it will protect you from your own understanding.

An intelligent person does not escape from any fact. If it is fear he will go into it – because the way out is through. If he feels fear and trembling arising in him, he will leave everything aside: first this fear has to be gone through. He will go into it; he will try to understand. He will not try how not to be afraid; he will not ask that question. He will simply ask one question: "What is this fear? It is there, it is part of me, it is my reality. I have to go into it, I have to understand it. If I don't understand it then a part of me will always remain unknown to me. And how am I going to know who I am if I go on avoiding parts? I will not understand fear, I will not understand death, I will not understand anger, I will not understand my hatred, I will not understand my jealousy, I will not understand this and that . . ." Then how are you going to know yourself?

All these things are you! This is your being. You have to go into everything that is there, every nook and corner. You have to explore fear. Even if you are trembling, it is nothing to be worried about: tremble, but go in. It is far better to tremble than to escape, because once you escape, that part will remain unknown to you, and you will become more and more afraid to look at it because that fear will go on accumulating. It will become bigger and bigger if you don't go into it right now, this moment. Tomorrow it will have lived twenty-four hours more. Beware! — it will have got more roots in you, it will have bigger foliage, it will become stronger; and then it will be more difficult to tackle. It is better to go right now; it is already late.

And if you go into it and you see it . . . And seeing means without prejudice. Seeing means that you don't condemn fear as bad from the very beginning. Who knows? — it is not bad. Who knows that it is? The explorer has to remain open to all the possibilities; he cannot afford a closed mind. A closed mind and exploration don't go together. He will go into it. If it brings suffering and pain, he will suffer the pain but he will go into it. Trembling, hesitant, but he will go into it: "It is my territory, I have to know what it is. Maybe it is carrying some treasure for me? Maybe the fear is only there to protect the treasure."

That's my experience, that's my understanding: if you go deep into your fear, you will find love. That's why it happens that when you are in love, fear disappears. And when you are afraid you cannot be in love. What does this mean? A simple arithmetic — fear and love don't exist together. That means it must be the same energy that becomes fear; then there is nothing left to become love. It becomes love; then there is nothing left to become fear.

Go into fear, Prageet, Vidya, and all others who are feeling afraid. Go into it, and you will find a great treasure. Hidden behind fear is love, and hidden behind anger is compassion, and hidden behind sex is samadhi.

Go into each negative thing and you will find the positive. And knowing the negative and the positive, the third, the ultimate happens — the transcendental. That is the meaning of understanding, budh, intelligence.

And the fourth meaning is to be enlightened and to enlighten. The Buddha is the light, he has become the light. And since he's the light and he has become the light, he shows the light to others too, naturally, obviously. He is illumination. His darkness has disappeared, his inner flame is burning bright. Smokeless is his flame. This meaning is opposite to darkness and the corresponding blindness and ignorance. This is the fourth meaning: to become light, to become enlightened.

Ordinarily, you are a darkness, a continent of darkness, a dark continent, unexplored. Man is a little strange: he goes on exploring the Himalayas, he goes on exploring the Pacific, he goes on reaching for the moon and Mars; there is just one thing he never tries — exploring his inner being. Man has landed on the moon, and man has not landed yet in his own being. This is strange. Maybe landing on the moon is just an escape, going to Everest is just an escape. Maybe he does not want to go inside because he's very much afraid. He substitutes with some other explorations to feel good, otherwise you will have to feel very, very guilty. You start climbing a mountain and you feel good, and the greatest mountain is within you and is yet unclimbed. You start going, diving deep into the Pacific, and the greatest Pacific is within you, and uncharted, unmapped. And you start going to the moon — what foolishness! And you are wasting your energy in going to the moon, and the real moon is within you — because the real light is within you.

The intelligent person will go inwards first. Before going anywhere else he will go into his own being; that is the first thing, and it should have the first preference. Only when you have known yourself can you go anywhere else. Then wherever you go, you will carry a blissfulness around you, a peace, a silence, a celebration.

So, the fourth meaning is to be enlightened.

Intelligence is the spark. Helped, cooperated with, it can become the fire, and the light, and the warmth. It can become light, it can become life, it can become love: those are all included in the word enlightenment. An enlightened person has no dark corners in his being. All is like the morning — the sun is on the horizon; the darkness of the night and the dismalness of the night have disappeared, and the shadows of the night have disappeared. The earth is again awake. To be a Buddha is to attain to a morning, a dawn within you. That is the function of intelligence, the ultimate function.

And the fifth meaning of budh is to fathom. A depth is there in you, a bottomless depth, which has to be fathomed. Or, the fifth meaning can be to penetrate, to drop all that obstructs and penetrate to the very core of your being, the heart. That's why this sutra is called the *Heart Sutra — Prajnaparamita Hridayam Sutra —* to penetrate.

People try to penetrate many things in life. Your urge, your great desire for sex is nothing but a kind of penetration. But that is a penetration into the other. The same penetration has to happen into your own being: you have to penetrate yourself. If you penetrate somebody else it can give you a momentary glimpse, but if you penetrate yourself you can attain to the universal cosmic orgasm that remains and remains and remains.

A man meets an outer woman, and a woman meets an outer man. This is a very superficial meeting — yet meaningful, it brings moments of joy. When the inner woman meets the inner man . . . And you are carrying both inside you, a part of you is feminine, a part of you is masculine. Whether you are man or woman does not matter; everybody is bisexual.

The fifth meaning of the root budh means penetration. When your inner man penetrates your inner woman there is a meeting; you become whole, you become one. And then all desires for the outer disappear. In that desirelessness is freedom, is nirvana.

The path of Buddha is the path of budh. Remember that "Buddha" is not the name of Gautama the Buddha, Buddha is the state that he has attained. His name was Gautam Siddhartha. Then one day he became Buddha, one day his bodhi, his intelligence bloomed.

"Buddha" means exactly what "Christ" means. Jesus's name is not Christ: that is the ultimate flowering that happened to him. So is it with Buddha. There have been many Buddhas other than Gautam Siddartha.

Everybody has the capacity for budh. But budh, that capacity to see, is just like a seed in you — if it sprouts, becomes a big tree, blooms, starts dancing in the sky, starts whispering to the stars, you are a buddha.

The path of Buddha is the path of intelligence. It is not an emotional path, no, not at all.

Not that emotional people cannot reach; there are other paths for them — the path of devotion, Bhakti Yoga. Buddha's path is pure Gyan Yoga, the path of knowing. Buddha's path is the path of meditation, not of love.

And just like budh, there is another root, *gya*, at the basis of *gyanam*. Gyanam means cognition, knowing. And the word *prajna*, which means wisdom — prajnaparamita – the wisdom of the beyond; or *sangya*, which means perception, sensitivity; or *vigyanam* which means consciousness — these roots come from gya. Gya means to know.

You will find these words repeated so many times in the sutra — not only in this sutra but in all the sutras of the Buddha. You will find a few more words, repeated very often, and those words are *ved* — ved means to know; from ved comes the Hindu word *veda* — or man, which means mind; *manan* which means minding; or *chit*, which means consciousness; *chaitanya*, which again means consciousness. These words are almost like paving stones on the Buddha Way. His path is that of intelligence.

One thing more to be remembered: the sutra, it is true, points to something that lies far beyond the intellect. But the way to get to that is to follow the intellect as far as it will take you.

The intellect has to be used, not discarded; has to be transcended, not discarded. And it can be transcended only when you have reached to the uppermost rung of the ladder. You have to go on growing in intelligence. Then a moment comes when intelligence has done all that it can do. In that moment say goodbye to intelligence. It has helped you a long way, it has brought you long [far] enough, it has been a good vehicle. It has been a boat you crossed with: you have reached the other shore, then you leave the boat. Then you don't carry the boat on your head; that would be foolish.

The Buddha's path goes through intelligence but goes beyond it. A moment comes when intelligence has given you all that it can give, then it is no longer needed. Then finally you drop it too, its work is finished. The disease is gone, now that medicine has to go too. And when you are free of the disease and the medicine too, then only are you free. Sometimes it happens that the disease is gone, and now you have become addicted to the medicine. This is not freedom.

A thorn is in your foot and is hurting. You take another thorn so that the thorn in your foot can be taken out with the help of the other. When you have taken the thorn out you throw both; you

don’t save the one that has been helpful. It is now meaningless. The work of intelligence is to help you to become aware of your being. Once that work has happened and your being is there, now there is no need for this instrument. You can say goodbye, you can say thank you.

Buddha’s path is the path of intelligence, pure intelligence, although it goes beyond it.

From ***The Heart Sutra***, Discourse #8, Q1

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Surrender is Understanding

My surrender is goal-oriented. I'm surrendering in order to win freedom, so it is not real surrender at all. I'm watching it, but the problem is: it is always [the] "I" who is watching. Therefore, every realization out of that watching is reinforcement of the ego. I feel tricked by my ego.

You have not understood what surrender is.

The first thing to remember about surrender is: you cannot do it; it is not a doing. You can prevent it from happening, but you cannot manage for it to happen. Your power about surrender is only negative: you can prevent it, but you cannot bring it [about].

Surrender is not something that you can do. If you do it, it is not surrender because the doer is there. Surrender is a great understanding that "I am not." Surrender is an insight that the ego exists not, that "I am not separate." Surrender is not an act but an understanding.

In the first place you are false, the separation is false. Not for a single moment can you exist separate from the universe. The tree cannot exist if uprooted from the earth. The tree cannot exist if the sun disappears tomorrow. The tree cannot exist if no water is coming to its roots. The tree cannot exist if it cannot breathe. The tree is rooted in all the five elements – what Buddhists call *skandhas*, the five groups we were talking about the other day. *Avalokita* . . . when Buddha came to the transcendental vision, when he passed through all the stages, when he passed through all the rungs of the ladder and came to the seventh – from there he looked down, looked back – what did he see? He saw only five heaps with nothing substantial in them, just emptiness, *shunyata*.

The tree cannot exist if these five elements are not constantly pouring energy into it. The tree is just a combination of these five elements. If the tree starts thinking, "I am," then there is going to be misery for the tree. The tree will create a hell for itself. But trees are not so foolish, they don't carry any mind. They are there, and if tomorrow they disappear, they simply disappear. They don't cling; there is nobody to cling. The tree is constantly surrendered to existence. By surrendered it means it is never separate, it has not come to that stupid idea of the ego. And so are the birds, so are the mountains, so are the stars. It is only man who has turned his great opportunity of being conscious into being self-conscious. Man has consciousness. If consciousness grows, it can bring you the greatest bliss possible. But if something goes wrong and consciousness turns sour and becomes self-consciousness, then it creates hell, then it creates misery. Both alternatives are always open; it is for you to choose.

The first thing to be understood about ego is that it exists not. Nobody exists in separation.

You are as much one with the universe as I am, as Buddha is, as Jesus is. I know it, you don't know it; the difference is only of recognition. The difference is not existential, not at all! So you have to look into this stupid idea of separation. Now if you start trying to surrender, you are still carrying the idea of separation. Now you are thinking, "I will surrender, now I am going to surrender" – but you think you are.

Looking into the very idea of separation, one day you find that you are not separate, so how can you surrender? There is nobody to surrender! There has never been anybody to surrender! The

surrenderer is not there, not at all – never found anywhere. If you go into yourself, you will not find the surrenderer anywhere. In that moment is surrender. When the surrenderer is not found, in that moment is surrender. You cannot do it. If you do it, it is a false thing. Out of falsity only falsity arises. You are false, so whatsoever you do will be false, more false. And one falsity leads to another and so on and so forth. And the fundamental falsity is the ego, the idea, "I am separate."

You ask: "My surrender is goal-oriented."

The ego is always goal-oriented. It is always greedy; it is always grabbing. It is always searching for more and more and more; it lives in the more. If you have money, it wants to have more money; if you have a house, it wants to have a bigger house; if you have a woman, it wants to have a beautiful woman, but it always wants more. The ego is constantly hungry. It lives in the future and in the past. In the past it lives as a hoarder – "I have this and this and this." It gets great satisfaction: "I have got something" – power, prestige, money. It gives a kind of reality to it. It gives the notion that, "When I have these things, I must be there." And it lives in the future with the idea of more. It lives as memory and as desire.

What is a goal? A desire: "I have to reach there, I have to be that, I have to attain." The ego does not, cannot, live in the present because the present is real and the ego is false – they never meet. The past is false, it is no more. Once it was, but when it was present, ego was not there. Once it has disappeared, is no longer existential, ego starts grabbing it, accumulating it.

It grabs and accumulates dead things. The ego is a graveyard: it collects corpses, dead bones.

Or, it lives in the future. Again, the future is not yet – it is imagination, fantasy, dream.

Ego can live with that too, very easily; falsities go together perfectly well, smoothly well.

Bring anything existential and the ego disappears. Hence the insistence of being in the present, being here-now. Just this moment . . . If you are intelligent there is no need to think about what I am saying; you can simply see into it this very moment! Where is the ego? There is silence, and there is no past, and there is no future, only this moment . . . and this dog barking. This moment, and you are not. Let this moment be, and you are not. And there is immense silence, there is profound silence, within and without. And then there is no need to surrender because you know you are not. Knowing that you are not is surrender.

It is not a question of surrendering to me, it is not a question of surrendering to God. It is not a question of surrendering at all. Surrendering is an insight, an understanding that "I am not." Seeing "I am not, I am a nothingness, emptiness," surrender grows. The flower of surrender grows on the tree of emptiness. It cannot be goal-oriented.

The ego is goal-oriented. The ego is hankering for the future. It can hanker even for the other life, it can hanker for heaven, it can hanker for nirvana. It doesn't matter what it hankers for – hankering is what it is, desiring is what it is, projecting into the future is what it is.

See it! See into it! I'm not saying think about it. If you think about it you miss. Thinking again means past and future. Have a look into it – *avalokita*! – look into it. The English word look comes from the same root as *avalokita*. Look into it and do it right now. Don't say to yourself,

“Okay, I will go home and do it.” The ego has entered, the goal has come, the future has entered. Whenever time enters you are falling into that falsity of separation.

Let it be here, this very moment. And then you suddenly see you are, and you are not going anywhere, and you are not coming from anywhere. You have always been here. Here is the only time, the only space. Now is the only existence. In that now, there is surrender. “My surrender is goal-oriented,” you say; “I’m surrendering in order to win freedom.”

But you are free! You have never been unfree. You are free, but again there is the same problem: you want to be free, but you don’t understand that you can be free only when you are free from yourself – there is no other freedom. When you think about freedom, you think as if you will be there and free. You will not be there; there will be freedom. Freedom means freedom from the self, not freedom of the self. The moment the prison disappears, the prisoner also disappears because the prisoner is the prison! The moment you come out of the prison, you also are not. There is pure sky, pure space. That pure space is called nirvana, moksha, liberation.

Try to understand rather than trying to achieve.

“I am surrendering in order to win freedom.”

Then you are using surrender as a means, and surrender is the goal, is the end unto itself. When I say surrender is the goal, I’m not saying that surrender has to be achieved somewhere in the future. I’m saying that surrender is not a means, it is an end unto itself. It is not that surrender brings freedom, surrender is freedom! They are synonymous, they mean the same thing. You are looking at the same thing from two different angles.

“So it is not real surrender at all.”

It is neither real nor unreal. It is not surrender at all. It is not even unreal.

“I am watching it, but the problem is it is always ‘I’ who is watching. Therefore, every realization out of that watching is a reinforcement of the ego. I feel tricked by my ego.”

Who is this “I” you are talking about who feels tricked by the ego? It is the ego itself. The ego is such that it can divide itself into fragments, into parts, and then the game starts. You are the chaser and you are the chased. It is like a dog trying to catch hold of its own tail and goes on jumping. And you look and you see the absurdity of it – but you see the absurdity, the dog cannot see it. The more he finds it is difficult to catch hold of the tail, the more he becomes crazy, the more he jumps. And the faster and the bigger the jump, the more the tail jumps faster and bigger also. And the dog cannot conceive what is happening: he’s such a great catcher of everything, and this ordinary tail, and he cannot catch hold of it?

This is what is happening to you. It is “I” who is trying to catch and who is the catcher and the caught both. See the ridiculousness of it, and in that very seeing be free of it.

There is not a thing to be done – not a thing, I say, because you are already that which you want to become. You are buddhas, you have never been otherwise. Seeing is enough.

And when you say that, "I am watching," it is again the "I." Watching, the "I" will be created again because watching again is an act; there is effort involved. You are watching – then who is watching? Relax. In relaxation – when there is nothing to be watched and nobody as a watcher, when you are not divided into a duality – there arises a different quality of witnessing. It is not a watching, it is just passive awareness; passive, I say – remember. It has nothing aggressive in it. Watching is very aggressive: effort is needed, you have to be tense. But be non-tense, relaxed. Just be there. In that consciousness when you are simply there, sitting doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself.

That is the whole Buddhist approach: that anything that you do will create and enhance the doer – watching also, thinking also, surrendering also. Anything that you do will create the trap. Nothing is needed to be done on your part. Just be . . . and let things happen. Don't try to manage, don't try to manipulate. Let the breeze pass, let the sunrays come, let life dance, and let death come and have its dance into you too.

This is my meaning of *sannyas*: it is not something that you do but when you drop all doing and you see the absurdity of doing. Who are you to do? You are just a wave in this ocean. One day you are, another day you will disappear; the ocean continues. Why should you be so worried? You come; you disappear. Meanwhile, for this small interval, you become so worried and tense, and you take all the burdens on your shoulders, and you carry rocks on your heart – for no reason at all.

You are free this very moment!

I declare you enlightened in this very moment. But you don't trust me. You say, "That's right, Osho, but just tell us how to become enlightened."

That becoming, that achieving, that desiring, goes on jumping on every object that you can find. Sometimes it is money, sometimes it is God. Sometimes it is power, sometimes it is meditation – but any object, and you start grabbing it. Non-grabbing is the way to live the real life, the true life, non-grasping, non-possessing.

Let things happen, let life be a happening, and there is joy, there is rejoicing – because then there is no frustration, ever, because you had never expected anything in the first place. Whatsoever comes is good, is welcome. There is no failure, no success. That game of failure and success has been dropped. The sun comes in the morning and wakes you, and the moon comes in the evening and sings a lullaby and you go to sleep. Hunger comes and you eat, and so on and so forth. That's what Zen masters mean when they say: When hungry, eat, when sleepy, sleep, and there is nothing else to do.

And I'm not teaching you inaction. I'm not saying don't go and work, I'm not saying don't earn your bread, I'm not saying renounce the world and depend on others and become exploiters; no, not at all. But don't be a doer. Yes, when you are hungry you have to eat, and when you have to eat you have to earn the bread – but there is nobody doing it. It is hunger itself that is working; there is nobody else doing it. It is thirst itself that is taking you towards the well or towards the river. It is thirst itself moving; there is nobody who is thirsty. Drop nouns and pronouns in your life and let verbs live.

Buddha says: The truth is that when you see a dancer, there is no dancer but only a dance. When you see a river, there is no river but only *rivering*. When you see a tree, there is no tree but only treeing. When you see a smile, there is nobody who is smiling, there is only smiling. When you see love, there is nobody who is a lover but only loving. Life is a process.

But we are accustomed to thinking in terms of static nouns. That creates trouble. And there is nothing static – all is flux and flowing. Flow with this, flow with this river, and never be a doer. Even when you are doing don't be a doer. There is doing but there is no doer. Once this insight settles in you there is nothing else.

Enlightenment is not something like a goal that has to be attained. It is the very ordinary life, this simple life that surrounds you. But when you are not struggling, this ordinary life becomes extraordinarily beautiful. Then trees are greener, then birds sing in richer tones, then everything that is happening around is precious . . . then ordinary pebbles are diamonds.

Accept this simple, ordinary life. Just drop the doer. And when I say drop the doer, don't become a dropper! Seeing into the reality of it, it disappears.

From ***The Heart Sutra***, Discourse #2, Q2

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Who is Watching the Mind

Can the mind commit suicide?

The mind cannot commit suicide because whatsoever the mind can do will strengthen the mind. Any doing on the part of the mind makes the mind more strong. So suicide is impossible.

Mind doing something means mind continuing itself — so that is not in the nature of things. But suicide happens. Mind cannot commit it — mm? — let me make it absolutely clear: mind cannot commit it, but suicide happens. It happens through watching the mind, not by doing anything.

The watcher is separate from the mind, it is deeper than the mind, higher than the mind. The watcher is always hidden behind the mind. A thought passes, a feeling arises — who is watching this thought? Not the mind itself — because mind is nothing but the process of thought and feeling. The mind is just the traffic of thinking. Who is watching it? When you say, "An angry thought has arisen in me," who are "you"? In whom has the thought arisen? Who is the container? The thought is the content — who is the container?

The mind is like when you print a book: on white, clean paper, words appear. That empty paper is the container and the printed words are the content. Consciousness is like empty paper. Mind is like written, printed paper.

Whatsoever exists as an object inside you, whatsoever you can see and observe, is the mind. The observer is not the mind, the observed is the mind.

So if you can go on simply observing, without condemning, without in any way creating a conflict with the mind, without indulging it, without following it, without going against it, if you can simply be there indifferent to it, in that indifference suicide happens. It is not that mind commits suicide: when the watcher arises, the witness is there, mind simply disappears.

Mind exists with your cooperation *or* your conflict. Both are ways of cooperating — conflict too! When you fight with the mind, you are giving energy to it. In your *very* fight you have accepted the mind, in your very fighting you have accepted the power of the mind over your being. So whether you cooperate or you conflict, in both the cases the mind becomes stronger and stronger.

Just watch. Just be a witness. And, by and by, you will see gaps arising. A thought passes, and another thought does not come immediately — there is an interval. In that interval is peace. In that interval is love. In that interval is all that you have always been seeking — and finding never. In that gap, you are no more an ego. In that gap you are not defined, confined, imprisoned. In that gap you are vast, immense, huge! In that gap you are one with existence — the barrier exists not. Your boundaries are no more there. You melt into existence and the existence melts in you. You start overlapping.

If you go on watching and you don't get attached to these gaps either . . . because that is natural now, to get attached to these gaps. If you start hankering for these gaps . . . because they are tremendously beautiful, they are immensely blissful. It is natural to get attached to them, and desire arises to have more and more of these gaps — then you will miss, then your watcher has disappeared. Then those gaps will again disappear, and again the traffic of the mind will be there.

So the first thing is to become an indifferent watcher. And the second thing is to remember that when beautiful gaps arise, don't get attached to them, don't start asking for them, don't start waiting that they should happen more often. If you can remember these two things — when beautiful gaps come, watch them too, and keep your indifference alive — then one day the traffic simply disappears with the road, they both disappear. And there is tremendous emptiness.

That's what Buddha calls *Nirvana* — the mind has ceased. This is what I call suicide — but mind has not committed it. Mind cannot commit it. You can help it to happen. You can hinder it, you can help it to happen — it depends on you, not on your mind. All that mind can do will always strengthen the mind.

So, meditation is not really mind-effort. Real meditation is not effort at all. Real meditation is just allowing the mind to have its own way, and not interfering in any way whatsoever — just remaining watchful, witnessing. It silences, by and by, it becomes still. One day it is gone. You are left alone.

That aloneness is what your reality is. And in that aloneness, nothing is excluded, remember it. In that aloneness everything is included — that aloneness is God. That purity, that innocence, uncorrupted by any thought, is what God is.

From ***The Discipline of Transcendence, V. 3***, Discourse #2, Q4

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12 See the False as the False and Follow Your Nature

See the False as the False and Follow Your Nature

Truth is. It needs no effort on your part to invent it. Truth has to be discovered, not invented. And what is hindering us from discovering it? We have been taught many lies, mountains of lies. Those are the barriers which go on falsifying the truth, which do not allow our hearts to reflect that which is.

Truth is not a logical conclusion. Truth is existence, reality. It is already here — it has always been here. Only truth exists. Then why cannot we find it? How do we manage not to find it? Because from the very childhood we are taught falsities, prejudices, ideologies, religions, philosophies . . . all lead you astray.

Truth is not an idea. You need not be a Hindu to know it, or a Mohammedan, or a Christian. If you are a Hindu, you will never know it; your very being a Hindu will keep you blind. What do we mean when we say, "I am a Hindu, or a Mohammedan, or a Jew?" We mean, "I have already got ideas about truth — ideas from the Bible or the Koran or the Gita, but I have got ideas already. I don't know the truth, but I know much about it." And that knowing much about it is the only problem that has to be solved.

Once you drop your ideas about truth you will be confronting it, within and without both. You will be facing it — because there is nothing else!

But the parents, the society, the state, the church, the educational system, they all depend on lies. As the child is born, they start trapping it into lies. And the child is helpless. He cannot escape his parents; he is utterly dependent. You can exploit his dependence . . . and it has been exploited down the ages.

Nobody has been exploited so much as children — neither the proletariat nor women, nobody has been exploited so much and so deeply and so destructively as the innocent children. Because they are helpless and dependent, they have to learn whatsoever you teach them. They have to imbibe all the falsehoods that you go on forcing upon them. It is a question of survival for them — they cannot survive without you. It is a question of life and death! They have to be Hindus, they have to be Mohammedans, they have to be Jainas, they have to be Buddhists, they have to be communists. Whatsoever you are interested in putting into their minds, you go on putting it in.

Instead of making them more alert, more aware, more alive, more reflective, instead of making them more mirror like, pure, you make them full of ideas . . . layers and layers of dust. And then it becomes impossible for them to see that which is. They start seeing that which is not and they stop seeing that which is.

Hence, to be really religious means a rebirth: again, becoming like a child, dropping all that the society has given to you.

Religion is a rebellion — a rebellion against all that has been forced upon you, a rebellion against being reduced to a computer. Just look inside! Whatsoever you know, you have been told; it is not your knowing, it is not authentic. How can it be authentic if it is not yours? You are not a witness to it; you are just a victim — a victim of circumstances. It is just an accident to be born in India or to be born in England. It is just an accident to be born in a Hindu family or in a Christian family. Because of these accidents your essential nature has been lost — you have been forced to lose it. If you want to regain it you will have to be reborn.

That's precisely what the meaning is when Jesus says to Nicodemus, "Unless you are born again you will not enter into the Kingdom of God." He does not mean that you actually have to die, commit suicide, and then be born again. That won't help because again you will be born to some parents in a certain society, within a certain church, and again the same stupidity is going to be done to you.

Jesus means by "rebirth" that deliberately, consciously, now you are capable of dropping all that has been taught to you. Drop your knowledge and become innocent. And that is the only way to become innocent. Knowledge is a contamination. To be in a state of not-knowing is innocence, and to function from that state is the only way to know the truth.

Meditate over these tremendously significant sutras of Gautama the Buddha. He says:

Mistaking the false for the true
and the true for the false,
you overlook the heart
and fill yourself with desire.

Mind is nothing but desire. The heart knows no desire. You will be surprised to hear it, that all desires belong to the head. The heart lives in the present; it pulsates, beats, in the here-now. It knows nothing of the past and it knows nothing of the future. It is always now, here.

And I am not talking about a certain philosophy. I am simply stating a fact so simple you can observe it within yourself: your heart is beating now. It cannot beat in the past; it cannot beat in the future. The heart only knows the present; hence it is utterly pure. It is not polluted by the past memories, by knowledge, by experience, by all that you have been told and taught, by the scriptures, by the traditions. It knows nothing of all that nonsense! And it knows nothing of the future, of the morrow. For it, past exists no more, the future not yet. It is utterly here. It is immediate.

But the mind is just the opposite of the heart: the mind is never now, here. Either it thinks of beautiful experiences of the past or it desires the same beautiful experiences in the future. It goes on shuttling between past and future, it never stops at the present. It is utterly unaware of the present. For the mind, the present exists not. See the point: the present is the only thing that exists, but for the mind the present is the only thing that exists not. Past is nonexistential, future is nonexistential, but those are the things which are existential for the mind.

The head is the problem . . . and the heart is the solution. The child functions from the heart. As you start growing, you start moving from the heart to the head. When you graduate from the university you have completely forgotten about the heart. You are hung up in the head, your whole energy has moved to the head. Now you don't know anything of reality. You are full of garbage — scholarly garbage, academic nonsense. You may be a PhD, a DLitt. You know much, knowing nothing at all! — because real knowing happens in the heart, not in the head. And the universities exist to distract your energies from the heart to the head.

All the universities in the world up to now have been enemies of humanity. Their whole function is to serve the state and the church. They are agents of the status quo; they are agents of the vested interests. They don't serve you, they serve the powers, the masters, the oppressors, the exploiters. Whosoever happens to be in power the universities serve. They are not in the service of humanity yet.

If they were really in the service of humanity, then the university would be the place to learn rebellion. The university would create revolutionaries. The university would not create conventionalists, conformists; the university would create nonconformists, nonconventional people. It would create rebels — adventurous, ready to risk their lives for truth. That has not happened yet.

It is a sad fact that in the name of education something ugly is continued, something very ugly. Behind a façade, something very criminal continues. And this is the crime: that they divert your energies from the heart to the head, they destroy your capacity to love and they force you to learn logic. Logic is more important than love for them, thinking is more important than sensitivity. This is just putting the bullocks behind the cart. It is totally topsy-turvy.

That's why humanity is in such a mess: the untrue seems to be true and the true seems to be untrue. They have succeeded in distorting your vision. The buddhas have been fighting against all these vested interests.

Buddha says:

Mistaking the false for the true
and true for the false,
you overlook the heart
and fill yourself with desire.

Mind is desire, and you go on filling yourself with more and more desire, more and more ambition, more and more longing for power, prestige, wealth. And you completely forget that there is a heart beating within you which already lives in God, which is already part of the ultimate law — *Aes Dhammo Sanantano* — which is already part of the inexhaustible, eternal law. You are joined from the heart to God. Your hearts are the roots in the soil of God.

Your hearts are still being nourished by God, by truth, but you are not there. You have vacated the place. You live in your head. Day in, day out, you live in your head; you never descend from there. Even in the night while asleep you go on rumbling in the head . . . dreams, and dreams upon dreams. In the day thoughts, in the night dreams. They are not different.

The dream is only a translation of thinking in the language of sleep, and vice versa: thinking is nothing but a translation of dreaming in the language of the day. You go on moving between these two: dreaming and thinking. Both are desiring. What do you think? What is there to think except desire? And what do you dream except desire?

Buddha says the false appears to be true because you have become false to your own truth, to your own heart. Come back to the heart, and then you will be able to know the truth as the truth and the false as the false. That is enlightenment, that is coming home.

See the false as false.

But from where to begin? Begin from seeing the false as the false. That's why all the buddhas appear to be negative, all buddhas appear to be destructive. They negate. Jesus negates. He says again and again: It has been told to you in the past, but I say to you . . . And he changes the whole standpoint.

For example, he says: It has been told to you in the past that tit for tat is the law. If somebody throws a brick at you, react by throwing a rock. But I say unto you, if somebody hits you on one cheek, give him the other cheek too. And if somebody takes away your coat, give him your shirt too. And if somebody forces you to go one mile with him, go two miles.

Mohammed is against all kinds of images of God because his people were worshipping for centuries; they had three hundred and sixty-five gods — one god for every day of the year. The Kaaba of Mohammed's days was one of the greatest temples on the earth — dedicated to three hundred and sixty-five gods! Mohammed destroyed all those idols. It looks negative . . .

Buddha says: There is no truth in the Vedas, in the Upanishads. Beware of beautiful words, beware of philosophic speculation. Don't waste your time with hairsplitting, with logic. Be silent! Throw the Vedas out of your head, only then can you be silent. He looks negative, he looks nihilistic, he look dangerous, but that is the only way you can be helped.

You have to be told the false is false. You have to begin with this: *neti, neti* — neither this nor that. The master has to say to you, "This is false, that is false." He has to go on pointing out to you whatsoever is false first, because when you have known all that is false, suddenly a transformation happens in your consciousness. When you have become aware of the false, you start becoming aware of the true.

You cannot be taught what is truth, but you can certainly be taught what is not truth. You have been conditioned; you can be unconditioned. You have been hypnotized — as Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Jainas . . . The function of a master is to dehypnotize you. Once you are dehypnotized, suddenly you will be able to see the truth. The truth need not be taught.

See the false as false,

The true as true.

Look into your heart.

Follow your true nature.

One of the most significant statements ever: *Look into your heart. Follow your nature*. He is not saying follow scriptures. He is not saying follow me. He is not saying follow certain rules of conduct. He is not teaching you any morality. He is not trying to create a certain character around you — because all characters are beautiful prison cells. He is not giving you a certain way of life. Rather he is giving you courage, encouragement, to follow your own nature. He wants you to be brave enough to listen to your own heart and go accordingly.

"Follow your nature" means flow with yourself. You are the scripture . . . and hidden deep down within you is a still, small voice. If you become silent you will be guided from there.

The master has only to make you aware of your inner master. Then his function is fulfilled. Then he can leave you to yourself; he can throw you back upon yourself. A master is not to enslave the disciple; a master is to free him, to give him total freedom. And this is the only possibility of attaining total freedom: *Follow your nature.* By "nature" Buddha means dhamma. Just as it is the nature of water to flow downwards and it is the nature of fire to rise upwards, so there is a certain nature hidden in you. If all the conditionings that have been put around you by the society are removed, suddenly you will discover your nature. Your nature has become God. *Aes dhammo sanantano* — this is the eternal, inexhaustible law: your nature is to become God.

Man is a potential god — a bodhisattva. Man is meant to become a god. Less than that won't satisfy you, less than that is of no use. You can have all the money in the world, all the power, all the prestige possible, and still you will remain empty — unless your divine nature flowers, opens its buds, unless you become a lotus, a one-thousand-petaled lotus, unless your divinity is revealed to you, you can never be contented.

The ordinary religious person is told to remain satisfied, contented, with whatsoever is the case. The so-called religious saints go on teaching people: Be satisfied. Satisfaction is one of their fundamental teachings. That is not the way of the true masters.

The true master creates discontent in you — and such a discontent that nothing of this world can ever satisfy it. He creates such a longing in you, that unless you attain to the ultimate you will remain aflame, afire. He creates pain in your heart, he creates anguish . . . because life is slipping by every moment, and each moment gone is gone forever, and you have not attained to God yet, and one day is over.

He creates such a deep longing in you, such pain in the heart! He creates tears in your eyes because only through such divine discontent will you move, will you take the quantum leap, the ultimate jump into the unknown. It is only through such divine discontent that you will gather together all your energies, and you will risk, and you will go on the ultimate adventure of finding who you are.

Follow your own nature. Your nature is consciousness. But you have been told by the priests: follow certain rules of conduct, the Ten Commandments, follow certain principles — not your nature. Priests are very much afraid of your nature because if you follow your nature, you will get out of their grip, you will be a slave no more. You won't go to the churches and the temples and the mosques, and you won't listen to your stupid priests, politicians, the so-called leaders. I

call them “so-called leaders” because what is actually happening is that blind people are leading other blind people.

You won’t listen to them anymore if you listen to your own nature. If you know your own inner voice you will become free. Your inner voice has to be crushed, destroyed, utterly destroyed — at least distorted so much that even if you hear it, you can’t understand it. And they have succeeded. Unless you struggle hard against them there is no possibility of succeeding. Their exploitation is so old, their oppression is so ancient, their strategies are so cunning . . . and they have infinite power in their hands. And what are you against them as an individual?

But if you go in, if you listen to your heart, you will attain to such power that no power on the earth can enslave you again.

Follow your nature . . . But how to follow your nature if you don’t know what it is? And you are not allowed to know it! You are given precise instructions as to what to do: what to eat, when to get up in the morning, when to go to bed. You have been given precise instructions. Those instructions, if followed, make you a slave. If not followed, they make you a criminal. If followed, you become a saint —but a slave. People will worship you, respect you, but all that respect is a mutual understanding: “If you follow our instructions, we will respect you. If you don’t follow, you will be thrown into jail.”

Either you are made a slave spiritually or a prisoner physically: these are the two alternatives the society gives to you. And it never lets you become aware that there is a source of infinite guidance within you, from where God speaks.

God still speaks, he has not stopped speaking. He is not partial — it is not that he spoke to Mohammed and to Moses and he does not speak to you. He is speaking to you as much as he was speaking to Mohammed. The only difference is Mohammed was ready to listen and you are not ready to listen. Mohammed was available and you are not available.

To become available to your inner nature is what I call meditation.

Remember these two words. “Character” is an invention of the politicians and the priests; it is a conspiracy against you. Consciousness is your nature. Yes, a man of consciousness has a certain character, but that character follows his consciousness. It is not imposed by anybody else on him; it is his own decision. And he is not encaged in it; he is totally free to change it any moment. As circumstances change, his consciousness gives him different directions and he changes his character.

The man of character — the so-called man of character — is encaged. Even if circumstances change, he goes on repeating the same character, although it is no longer relevant, it does not fit. The context in which it was meaningful has disappeared, but he goes on repeating the same nonsense. He is like a parrot. He is a machine: he does not respond, he only reacts.

A man of consciousness responds, and his responses are spontaneous. He is mirror like: he reflects whatsoever confronts him. And out of this spontaneity, out of this consciousness, a new kind of action is born. That action never creates any bondage, any karma. That action frees you. You remain a freedom if you listen to your nature.

But this simple advice seems to be very difficult for people. It should be the simplest thing in the world. Each child is born following his nature, but as you grow up, slowly you lose contact with it — you are forced to lose contact with it. The contact can be regained, it can be rediscovered. Later on, when you become very knowledgeable, encaged in a certain character, utterly blind to your own heart and nature, you start asking such questions.

Just the other day Prem Vijen asked:

"Beloved Master, what do you mean when you say, 'Go in'?" Such a simple statement — "Go in" — and you ask me, "What do you mean?" Can't you understand these simple words, "go in"? I know you understand the words, but going in has become so difficult because you have been taught only how to go out. You can only go out; you only know how to go out. Your consciousness has been turned towards others; it has forgotten the way to itself. You go on knocking on others' doors, and whenever it is said to you, "Go home," you say, "What do you mean by 'going home'?" You know only others' houses, but you don't know your own home. And you are carrying it within yourself. You have been forced to become extroverts. One has to learn again ways of inwardness.

Søren Kierkegaard has said: Religion means inwardness — going into your own interiority. But the simple words, "go in," have become so difficult to understand. Mind only knows how to go out; it has no reverse gear in it.

I have heard that when Ford made his first cars, they had no reverse gear. It was a later addition. Without a reverse gear, it was really a problem: whenever you wanted to come back, you had to go miles unnecessarily, you had to go round. Even if you wanted to go a few feet back, you might have to take a journey of miles. Then Ford became aware that a reverse gear was needed.

I am teaching you here that the reverse gear is there, built in, you have just forgotten about it. You know how to go out. Nobody asks, "What does it mean when you say 'Go out'?" But everybody wants to ask, "What do you mean when you say 'Go in'?" Simple words!

Thinking is going out: non-thinking is going in. Think, and you have started moving away from yourself. Thought is the way leading you farther away. Thought is a project. No-thought . . . and suddenly you are in. Without thought you cannot go out, without desire you cannot go out. You need the fuel of desire and the vehicle of thought to go out.

Sitting silently, doing nothing . . . not even thinking, not even desiring . . . and where will you be?

Going in is not really going in. It is simply stopping going out . . . and suddenly you find yourself in.

Prem Vijen, you need not go in because if you go you will always go out. Going means going out. Stop going! Stop going anywhere! Can't you sit silently without going anywhere? Yes, physically you can sit, that is not very difficult. You can learn a yoga posture and you can make your body almost a statue, but the problem is — what are you doing inside? Desires, thoughts, memories, imagination, all kinds of projects? — stop them too.

How to stop them? Just become indifferent to them, unconcerned. Even if they are there, don't pay attention to them. Even if they are there, don't give them any importance. Even if they are there, let them be. You sit silently inside — watching. Remember that word "watching" — witnessing, just being alert. And as watching grows, becomes deeper, the same energy that was becoming desires and thoughts and memories and imagination — the same energy is absorbed in the new depth. The same energy is used by this deepening inwardness. And you will know what it means when I say "Go in."

Don't start looking in the dictionaries or in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. It is not a question of words! Words are simple to understand; when I say "Go in," that's exactly what I mean — go in! Don't start asking about the words — listen to the hidden message; otherwise, you will miss the train. [...]

If you become too much interested in words — "What does it mean to go in? What does it mean, verbally, linguistically?" — Vijen, you are going to miss the train. Don't waste time with words!

And it is a particularly new kind of disease that has gripped the intellectuals of the world. For at least fifty years the philosophical world has become too much interested in words, linguistic analysis. They don't ask anymore what God is. They don't ask anymore whether God exists or not. The contemporary philosophers ask, "What does it mean when you use the word 'God'?" It is not a question of whether God exists or not. It is not a question of what God is. It is not a question of how to attain God. Now the question has taken a very new turn: "What do you mean when you use the word 'God'?"

What do you mean when you use the word "rose"? Now it is easy: you can take hold of the philosopher, force him to go to the garden, and you can show him the rose: "This is what I mean when I use the word 'rose'." But this cannot be done with the word "God" — and this cannot be done with the word "meditation" and this cannot be done with the words "going in." These are subtle phenomena. Don't become linguistically interested. I am not here to teach you linguistic analysis.

My whole approach is existential. If you really want to know what it means to go in, go in! And the way is: watch your thoughts and don't get identified with them. Just remain a watcher, utterly indifferent, neither for nor against. Don't judge because every judgment brings identification. Don't say, "These thoughts are wrong," and don't say, "These thoughts are good." Don't comment on the thoughts. Just let them pass as if it is just traffic passing by, and you are standing by the side of the road unconcerned, looking at the traffic.

It does not matter what is passing by — a bus, a truck, a bicycle. If you can watch the thought process of your mind with such unconcern, with such detachment, that moment is not very far away when one day the whole traffic disappears . . . because the traffic can exist only if you go on giving energy to it. If you stop giving energy to it . . . And that's what watching is: stopping giving energy to it, stopping energy moving into the traffic. It is your energy that makes those thoughts move. When your energy is not coming, they start falling; they cannot stand on their own.

And when the road of the mind is utterly empty, you are in. That's what I mean, Vijen, when I say "Go in." And that's what Buddha means when he says: *Follow your nature.*

From ***Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha V.1,*** Discourse #3

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Your Energy Makes those Thoughts Move

Sitting silently, doing nothing . . . not even thinking, not even desiring . . . and where will you be?

Going in is not really going in. It is simply stopping going out . . . and suddenly you find yourself in.

You need not go in because if you go you will always go out. Going means going out. Stop going! Stop going anywhere! Can't you sit silently without going anywhere? Yes, physically you can sit, that is not very difficult. You can learn a yoga posture and you can make your body almost a statue, but the problem is — what are you doing inside? Desires, thoughts, memories, imagination, all kinds of projects? — stop them too.

How to stop them? Just become indifferent to them, unconcerned. Even if they are there, don't pay attention to them. Even if they are there, don't give them any importance. Even if they are there, let them be. You sit silently inside — watching. Remember that word 'watching' — witnessing, just being alert.

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And when the road of the mind is utterly empty, you are in.

Excerpted from ***The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol. 1***, Discourse #3

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13 Light in the Seed

Unimagined Ecstasy, Unimagined Pain

Beloved Master, unimagined ecstasy, unimagined pain.

Yoga Sudha, it is natural. Ecstasy and great pain happen together because it is a new birth: the joy of being born, the joy of entering into the unknown, the great adventure into God. But pain is also there, great pain: the pain of leaving the old, the familiar, the known; the pain of leaving the secure, the safe; the pain of dying — dying as the ego. If the ecstasy is true, it is bound to happen that there will be great pain. This is one of the criteria by which to judge whether the ecstasy is true or not.

It is like uprooting a tree from its known soil and transplanting it into a new climate, into a new country. The tree will have to learn to live again from ABC; it is hard to unlearn and it is hard to learn again. There is bound to be pain. Great pain and agony precede great ecstasy. It can continue for months, for years too — it all depends on you.

Now, don't look back. That which is gone is gone, and gone forever, never to return again. Whatsoever you do, you cannot bring it back.

The child cannot enter into the womb again, howsoever pleasant it was, comfortable, convenient, secure, safe. The child may have great nostalgia for the womb, for those beautiful, eternal nine months. Yes, I say eternal because the child feels them as eternity, not as nine months. He has no idea of calculating time — those long, long nine months of such warmth, of such protection, of such unworried existence, of such tremendous rest and relaxation. The nostalgia hangs around. The child would like to go back to the womb, but it is not possible.

Going back is not possible at all; it is not in the nature of things. One always has to go forward. And when you look forward everything is so unfamiliar that great fear arises. One never knows where one is. One loses one's identity, one passes through a great crisis of identity. The known is no longer there to cling to, and the unknown seems to be ungraspable.

But don't look back; that which can't happen, can't happen. Look forward! And don't interpret the new and the unknown as unsafe. Interpret it in terms of adventure, exploration. Interpret it as great freedom. Buddha talks again and again about freedom. It is freedom from the past, freedom from the mother, freedom from the parents, freedom from the society, freedom from the church, the state.

What I am giving to you is absolute freedom. Yes, fear can arise, but fear arises because of your interpretation. Deep down somewhere in the unconscious you still would like to go back, to close your eyes to the new sunrise. You would like to go back even though there was nothing very valuable, nothing significant, but at least one was safe. The territory was familiar; one lived surrounded by walls. We call it a prison, but you used to call it your home; and I have taken you out of your home because it was not your real home, it was only make-believe. This freedom, this ecstasy that is arising, is your real home.

Now, if you cling to the past, which is no longer possible, and you don't allow the future to happen smoothly, the pain can continue, the agony can continue, for months, for years. And you will be split: a part of you clinging to the no-more and a part of you longing for the not-yet.

Now be courageous. Take the quantum leap! Just as the snake slips out of the old skin, slip out of the old. It has fulfilled its function; it has brought you to the new. Gratefully say goodbye to it and plunge into this exploration that is becoming valuable to you. Plunge into this insecurity, into this danger, because life is where insecurity is; life is where danger is. There is no way to live totally unless you learn to live dangerously — more danger, more aliveness; less danger, less aliveness.

And I am making peaks upon peaks available to you. This is an unending chain. You will reach one peak thinking that this is the end and now you can rest, but by the time you have rested a little bit you will become aware of a higher peak challenging you, calling you forth. A new pilgrimage starts. And this goes on and on.

Life is an eternal pilgrimage. There is no goal to it, it is a pure journey. Hence the joy of it. If there was a goal to it, that would mean a full stop to your life. Then what are you going to do? After the full stop there is nothing, nothing more. Life knows nothing of full stops. Life is a continuum, a song that never ends, a story that goes on unfolding. Each moment something new is ready to happen if you are available.

Your observation is true. You say, "Unimagined ecstasy, unimagined pain."

That's how it has always been. I don't talk much about the pain because that will make you so afraid that you will not take the jump. I talk about ecstasy to persuade you, to seduce you into taking the jump. Once you have taken the jump you will know that there is great pain too, but that pain is a blessing in disguise. That pain is the pain the gold passes through when it goes through the fire: it purifies, it makes you more and more integrated, it gives you centering, it creates a soul in you. Without this pain there is no soul, and without this pain no ecstasy is possible. You would like to bypass the pain and reach the ecstasy, but that cannot be done.

Aes dhammo sanantano: this is the law, and the law has to be followed; you can't go against the law. But once you have known the ecstasy, it is worth going through all the pain. You can sacrifice everything for the ecstasy because ecstasy is another name for God approaching closer to you. Your melting into God is what ecstasy is all about.

The word "ecstasy" is beautiful; it simply means "standing out." Out of what? Standing out of your ego, your personality, your mind; getting out of the whole structure in which you have lived — not only lived but with which you have become identified.

Standing out of all this, just a pure witness, a watcher on the hills — and everything is left deep down in the valley.

Drop the nostalgia. Drop this dreaming about the valley. You have lived in the valley long enough, and what have you gained? For many, many lives you have lived in the valley, in all those chains, thinking that they were ornaments. Maybe they were made of silver and gold, maybe they were studded with diamonds and emeralds; but whether a chain is made of iron or

gold, it makes no difference. In fact, a golden chain is far more difficult to break because you become more attached to it.

You have lived in the valley so long, for so many lives — now try to live on the peaks. And be totally with the peaks. Forget all about the valleys because that will be a disturbance. That disturbance is creating pain. You are looking back again and again: there is still some desire, some longing, some hope that you may get back to your old structures again.

But let me make it absolutely clear to you: there is no going back. Now you have crossed that point from where a person can still go back, so it is an exercise in futility to feel pain for something which is no more. But it will keep you occupied and you will miss the joys of the peak, the fresh air of the peak, the unpolluted atmosphere of the peak, the closeness of the sun and the clouds. Now is the time to whisper with the clouds and with the sun and the stars! It is a beautiful moment.

Decide in favor of ecstasy, and whatever pain happens through that decision, accept it with joy, with thankfulness. The more gratefully you accept it as part of growth, the sooner it will disappear — and it will not leave even a trace on you; you will be unscratched by it. If you cling to it too long, it will leave wounds. Even if they heal, the marks will remain.

In these moments, when one passes from one stage of being to another stage of being, one is very vulnerable. In these moments one is very soft, impressionable. Don't give much attention to pain.

And that's what you have been doing for a few months. I have been watching silently. Many times, I have to be just a silent watcher because I hate to interfere. Even though I know you are in need, still I respect your freedom so much that, unless you ask, I will keep quiet, I will not say a word. I will feel great compassion for you — I am perfectly aware of your tears and the anguish that you are passing through — but I have been keeping myself aloof deliberately because this is the only way to give the disciple a chance to grow.

If I go on interfering at every stage, helping, supporting, you will start depending on me too much. Then you will never be able to walk on your own feet; you will always need crutches. And I don't want to give you crutches, I don't want you to be dependent on me. The only gift that I can give to you is that of total freedom, of independence.

Hence, I have been silent, waiting for the day when you would ask the question. Today you have asked the question. Now I can speak, I can share my understanding with you, but still the decision always remains with you. You can go on crying and weeping over spilled milk, or you can gather yourself and take a plunge into the new world that I have made available to you.

Don't waste time. Time is really precious, far more precious than money, far more precious than anything in the world, because it is through time that you can contact eternity. And these moments are rare: if you miss them once, you never know when they will come back again. Maybe after lives you will come across a buddha again . . . and there is every possibility you will repeat the same mistakes because mind wants to repeat. Mind is repetition — even after lives it repeats the same mistakes.

It happened once: a young prince asked Buddha to initiate him as a *bhikkhu*, as a sannyasin. Buddha was a little reluctant. This was very rare — buddhas are never reluctant, or very rarely; they are always happy if somebody is asking for initiation.

Ananda, Buddha's chief disciple, immediately became aware that Buddha was a little hesitant. He said, "Bhagwan, why are you hesitating? I have never seen you hesitate. You persuade people, you help people, you do everything possible to bring them to the way — and this man himself is asking! And not an ordinary man — a great prince, with great potential. If he becomes a disciple, many more will follow. Why are you hesitating?"

Buddha said to Ananda, "Because this young man has been initiated in the past by other buddhas at least seven times, and he has committed the same mistake again and again. And mind is repetitive. I know I can give him initiation, but he is bound to repeat the same mistake. But if you say so, I will initiate him. Now watch what happens."

The young man was initiated . . . and of course this whole dialogue with Ananda had happened in front of him, so he was very conscious not to repeat anything. But he did not remember anything of his past lives, and when you don't remember, how can you avoid repetition? If you remember, you can avoid.

He asked Buddha many times, "Please tell me, what is my mistake that I have been repeating again and again? And you say I have lived with seven other buddhas? I don't want to miss this opportunity."

Buddha said, "That won't help very much because you have asked the sixth buddha the same question and the fifth also, and they answered. I am not going to do it. I will tell you only when the time arrives."

And the time arrived within a few days. They traveled to another city; they were staying in a small caravanserai — ten thousand sannyasins — there was no space. It must have been as overcrowded as it is here! Now when I look at you, I completely forget whether you are sannyasins or sardines. I have to go on reminding myself, "No, these are my sannyasins."

The older sannyasins of Buddha were given a little better space, a little more space — they were old, senior. This young man was the latest addition to the Buddha's *sangha* — his order; he got the place at the outermost circumference, just in the porch where people used to put their shoes. He had to sleep there. A prince, sleeping in a porch where people keep their shoes? He was very hurt.

In the night he could not sleep, for the same reasons that you suffer — mosquitoes! They are the ancient-most enemies of meditators. If you are not meditating, they will not take any notice of you; once you start meditating, they suddenly become interested in you. The blood of a meditator has a certain sweetness.

And there were mosquitoes, and he was unable to sleep; and the serai was so overcrowded, and people were coming and going the whole night — somebody was coming, somebody was leaving. How can you sleep in a porch? In the middle of the night he said, "This is stupid, this is just nonsense! I have not become a sannyasin for all this. I had a beautiful palace, every facility. Tomorrow morning, I will say goodbye to Buddha."

In fact, he wanted to leave at that very moment, but that would not be right. At least he had to say to Buddha, “I am finished.”

But before morning, Buddha came to him and said, “Now the time has come. I can answer your question. This has happened to you again and again: you have been initiated seven times, but just for small things you always became so much disturbed that you went away. You can go — this is your old habit. Because of this habit I was hesitant.”

He had brought Ananda with him and he said, “Look! What do you say now? This man wants to leave tomorrow morning.”

The young man had not said a single word. He fell at Buddha’s feet. He said, “How did you come to know in the middle of the night?”

Buddha said, “That is not your business. That’s what makes me a master. In the morning you want to go; you can go but go with this awareness: that this is how you have been losing the track again and again.”

The young man never left. It was difficult — Buddha gave him many, many uncomfortable situations — but he was a man of integrity; he belonged to a very famous family, ancient, noble; he belonged to the warrior race. It was against his whole upbringing to leave the Buddha. And now that Buddha had told him what the cause had been in the past . . . and as meditation deepened, he started remembering his past associations with other buddhas. Slowly, slowly he became aware that yes, for small things he had left buddhas; for such small things he had lost the way many times.

Yes, Sudha, the pain is there, and it is not only for you; others will also pass through the pain. Many have passed through it; many will have to pass through it. Pass through it joyously. Keep your eye on the ecstasy. Don’t focus yourself on the pain — that is the wrong approach. Focus yourself on the ecstasy and think that the pain is the price we pay for the ecstasy. Soon the pain will disappear. And the energy released from the pain will bring you to even higher realms of ecstasy, will bring you to greater altitudes of ecstasy.

Be watchful . . .

From ***The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, V.6*** #6, Q1

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Both are Half Right, Half Wrong

I have just arrived from the West—Paris—where I had heard about you and read some of your books. They touched me very deeply and one question arose in me:

How is your spiritual dimension and the work you do on a spiritual level capable of conducting and enlightening the behavior of a man involved in action on a materialistic level, for instance, urbanism, struggle against hunger, thirst and all other distresses?

Jacques Daumal, I do not divide existence into these old dichotomies, the materialistic plane and the spiritual plane. There is only one reality: matter is its visible form and spirit its invisible form. Just like your body and your soul— your body cannot be without your soul and your soul cannot be without your body.

In fact, the whole split of the past has been a heavy burden on the human heart — the split between body and soul. It has created a schizophrenic humanity. As I see it, schizophrenia is not a disease that happens once in a while to a person. The whole humanity up to now has been schizophrenic. It is very rarely, only once in a while, that a man like Jesus, or Buddha, or Mahavira, or Socrates, or Pythagoras, or Lao Tzu, has been able to escape from this schizophrenic pattern of our living.

To divide reality into antagonistic, inimical realism is dangerous because it is dividing man. Man is a miniature universe; if you divide the universe the man is divided, if you divide the man the universe is divided. And I believe in the undivided, organic unity of existence.

To me there is no distinction between the spiritual and the material. You can be spiritual and function on the materialistic plane—and your functioning will be more joyous, your functioning will be more aesthetic, more sensitive. Your functioning on the materialistic plane will not be tense, will not be full of anguish and anxiety.

Once a man came to Buddha and asked, “The world is in such a distress, people are in so much misery — how can you manage to sit silently and so joyously?”

Buddha said, “If somebody is suffering from fever, has the doctor also to lie down by his side and suffer? Has the doctor out of compassion to get the infection and lie down by the side of the patient and be feverish? Is that going to help the patient? In fact, whereas there was only one person ill, now there are two persons ill — the world is doubly ill! The doctor need not be ill to help the patient; the doctor has to be healthy to help the patient. The healthier he is, the better; the healthier he is, the more help is possible through him.”

I am not against working on the material plane. Whatsoever work you are doing — urbanism, struggle against hunger, struggle for ecological balance, struggle against poverty, exploitation, oppression, struggle for freedom — whatsoever your work on the material plane; it is going to be benefited, tremendously benefited, if you become more spiritually rooted, centered, calm, quiet, cool, because then the whole quality of your work will be changed. Then you will be able to think in a more cool manner, and you will be able to act more gracefully. Your understanding of your own inner being will be of tremendous help to others.

I am not a spiritualist in the old sense and I am not a materialist either in the old sense. The Charvakas in India, Epicurus in Greece, Karl Marx and others, they are materialists. They say only matter is true and consciousness is only an epiphenomenon, a by-product; it has no reality of its own. And then there are people like Shankara, Nagarjuna, who say just the same thing in a reverse manner. They say the soul is real and the body is unreal, *maya*, illusion, an epiphenomenon, a by-product; it has no reality of its own.

To me, both are half right, half wrong. And a half-truth is far more dangerous than a whole lie — at least it is whole. A whole lie has a certain beauty, but a half-truth is ugly — ugly and dangerous too — ugly because it is half. It is like cutting a man into two parts.

Just the other day I was reading a story:

It was very hot, and a man with his young daughter was passing by the side of a swimming pool of an intercontinental hotel. It was so hot, the girl said, "I would like to go in the pool and cool myself."

The father said, "Okay, I will sit underneath the tree, and you go ahead."

But she was stopped immediately by the guard and he said, "This pool is restricted. It is not allowed here for Jews . . . and you look Jewish."

The father said, "Listen: I am Jewish. My daughter's mother is not Jewish, she is a Christian, so my daughter is half Jew, half Christian. Can you allow her to take a bath only up to the waist?"

Dividing man is dangerous because man is an organic unity. But this is how down the ages it has been done, and now it has become almost a routine thinking, a conditioning.

Daumal, you are still thinking in the old categories. I don't belong to any school — the school of the materialists or the school of the so-called spiritualists. My approach is total, it is holistic. I believe that man is both together, spiritual and material. In fact, I have to use the words "spiritual" and "material" just because they have always been used. In fact, man is psychosomatic, not material *and* spiritual, because that "and" creates duality. There is no "and" between the material and the spiritual, not even a hyphen. Man is materialspiritual — I use it as one word, materialspiritual. And both the sides . . .

Spiritual means the center of your being and the material means the circumference of your being. The circumference cannot be there if there is no center, and the center cannot be there if there is no circumference.

My work here is to help your center become a clarity, a purity. Then that purity will be reflected on the circumference too. If your center is beautiful, your circumference is bound to become beautiful, and if your circumference is beautiful, your center is bound to be affected by that beauty.

My sannyasin is a total man, he is a new man. The effort is that he will be beautiful from both the sides. […]

We are trying to create a harmony, a new synthesis.

From ***The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, V.3***, Discourse #2

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Light in the Seed

How can I become a light unto myself?

Shraddho Yannis, these were the last words of Gautam the Buddha, his parting message to his disciples:

"Be a light unto yourself." But when he says, "Be a light unto yourself," he does not mean become a light unto yourself. There is a great difference between being and becoming.

Becoming is a process, being is a discovery. The seed only appears to become the tree, that is an appearance. The seed already had the tree within itself; it was its very being. The seed does not become the flowers. The flowers were there un-manifest, now they are manifest. It is not a question of becoming; otherwise a pebble could become a flower. But that doesn't happen. A rock cannot become a rose; that doesn't happen because the rock has no potential for being a rose. The seed simply discovers itself through dying into the soil: dropping its outer shell, it becomes revealed in its inner reality.

Man is a light in the seed. You are already buddhas. It is not that you have to become buddhas, it is not a question of learning, of achieving, it is only a question of recognition – it is a question of going within yourself and seeing what is there. It is self-discovery.

Yannis, you are not to become a light unto yourself, it is already the case. But you don't go in; your whole journey is outward. We are being brought up in such a way that we all become extroverts. Our eyes become focused on the outside; we are always seeking and searching for some goal "there," far away. The farther the goal, the more challenging it appears to the ego. The more difficult it is, the more attractive it appears. The ego exists through challenges; it wants to prove itself. It is not interested in the simple, it is not interested in the ordinary, it is not interested in the natural, it is interested in something which is neither natural, nor simple, nor ordinary. Its desire is for the extraordinary. And the reality is very ordinary, it is very simple.

The reality is not there but here, not then but now, not outside but in the innermost sanctum of your being. You have just to close your eyes and look in.

In the beginning it is difficult because the eyes only know how to look out. They have become so accustomed to looking out that when you close them, then too they continue to look out – they start dreaming, they start fantasizing. Those dreams are nothing but reflections of the outside.

So it is only in appearance that you seem to be with closed eyes, your eyes are still open to the outside world, you are not in. In fact, every meditator comes across this strange phenomenon: that whenever you close your eyes, your mind becomes more restless, your mind becomes more insane.

It starts chattering in a crazy way: relevant, irrelevant thoughts crisscross your being. It is never so when you are looking outside. And naturally you become tired, naturally you think it is better to remain occupied in something, in some work, rather than sit silently with closed eyes because nothing seems to happen except a long, long procession of thoughts, desires, memories. And they go on coming, unending.

But this is only in the beginning. Just a little patience, just a little awaiting . . . if you go on looking, watching these thoughts silently, with no judgment, with no antagonism, with no desire even to stop them – as if you have no concern with them – unconcerned – just as one watches the traffic on the road or one watches the clouds in the sky, or one watches a river flow by, you simply watch your thoughts. You are not those thoughts; you are the watcher, remembering that "I am the watcher, not the watched." You cannot be the watched; you cannot be the object of your own subjectivity. You are your subjectivity, you are the witness, you are consciousness. Remembering it . . . It takes a little time, slowly, slowly the old habit dies. It dies hard but it dies, certainly. And the day the traffic stops, suddenly you are full of light. You have always been full of light; just those thoughts were not allowing you to see that which you are.

When all objects have disappeared, there is nothing else to see, you recognize yourself for the first time. You realize yourself for the first time. It is not becoming; it is a discovery of being. The outer shell of the thoughts of the mind is dropped, and you have discovered your flowers, you have discovered your fragrance. This fragrance is freedom.

Hence, Yannis, don't ask, "How can I become a light unto myself?" You are already a light unto yourself, you are just not aware of it. You have forgotten about it – you have to discover it. And the how of discovery is simple, very simple: a simple process of watching your thoughts.

To help this process you can start watching other things too because the process of watching is the same. What you are watching is not significant. Watch anything and you are learning watchfulness.

Listen to the birds, it is the same. One day you will be able to listen to your own thoughts. The birds are a little farther away; your thoughts are a little closer. In the fall watch the dry leaves falling from the trees. Anything will do that helps you to be watchful. Walking, watch your own walking. Buddha used to say to his disciples: "Take each step watchfully." He used to say: "Watch your breath."

And that is one of the most significant practices for watching because the breath is there continuously available for twenty-four hours a day wherever you are. The birds may be singing one day, they may not be singing some other day, but breathing is always there. Sitting, walking, lying down, it is always there. Go on watching the breath coming in, the breath going out.

Not that watching the breath is the point; the point is learning how to watch. Go to the river and watch the river. Sit in the marketplace and watch people passing by. Watch anything; just remember that you are a watcher. Don't become judgmental, don't be a judge. Once you start judging you have forgotten that you are a watcher, you have become involved, you have taken sides, you have chosen: "I am in favor of this thought, and I am against that thought." Once you choose, you become identified. Watchfulness is the method of destroying all identification.

Hence Gurdjieff called his process the process of non-identification. It is the same, his word is different. Don't identify yourself with anything, and slowly, slowly one learns the ultimate art of watchfulness.

That's what meditation is all about. Through meditation one discovers one's own light. That light you can call your soul, your self, your God – whatsoever word you choose – or you can remain

just silent because it has no name. It is a nameless experience, tremendously beautiful, ecstatic, utterly silent, but it gives you the taste of eternity, of timelessness, of something beyond death.

From ***Walking in Zen, Sitting in Zen***, Discourse #13, Q1

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Meditation Will Make You Awake

Meditation will make you awake, strong and humble. Meditation will make you awake because it will give you the first experience of yourself. You are not the body; you are not the mind – you are the pure witnessing consciousness. And when this witnessing consciousness is touched, a great awakening happens – as if a snake was sitting coiled up and suddenly it uncoils, as if somebody was asleep and has been shaken and awakened. Suddenly a great awakening inside: for the first time you feel you are. For the first time you feel the truth of your being.

And certainly, it makes you strong; you are no longer fragile, not like a frail tree that any wind can overturn. Now you become a mountain! Now you have a foundation, now you are rooted – no wind can overturn a mountain. You become awake, you become strong, and still you become humble. This strength does not bring any ego in you. You become humble because you become aware that the same witnessing soul exists in everybody, even in animals, birds, plants, rocks.

These are only different ways of sleeping! Somebody sleeps on the right side, and somebody sleeps on the left side, and somebody sleeps on the back . . . these are only different ways of sleeping. A rock has its own way of sleep, a tree a different way of sleep, a bird still a different way – but only differences in the ways and methods of sleeping; otherwise deep down at the core of every being is the same witnessing, the same God. That makes you humble. Even before a rock you know you are nobody special because the whole existence is made of the same stuff called consciousness. And if you are awake, strong, and humble, this gives you a mastery over yourself.

From ***The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, V. 1***, Discourse #1

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14 Wakefulness is the Way to Life

Wakefulness is the Way to Life

One of the most important things to be understood about man is that man is asleep. Even while he thinks he is awake, he is not. His wakefulness is very fragile; his wakefulness is so tiny it doesn't matter at all. His wakefulness is only a beautiful name, but utterly empty.

You sleep in the night, you sleep in the day; from birth to death, you go on changing your patterns of sleep, but you never really awake. Just by opening the eyes don't befool yourself that you are awake. Unless the inner eyes open, unless your inside becomes full of light, unless you can see yourself, who you are, don't think that you are awake.

That is the greatest illusion man lives in. And once you accept that you are already awake, then there is no question of making any effort to be awake.

The first thing to sink deep in your heart is that you are asleep, utterly asleep. You are dreaming, day in, day out. You are dreaming sometimes with open eyes and sometimes with closed eyes, but you are dreaming, you are a dream. You are not yet a reality.

And, of course, in a dream whatsoever you do is meaningless, whatsoever you think is pointless, whatsoever you project remains part of your dreams and never allows you to see that which is. Hence Buddha's insistence . . . and not only Gautama the Buddha but all the buddhas have insisted on only one thing: Awake! Continuously, for centuries, their whole teaching can be contained in a single word: Be awake!

And they have been devising methods, strategies, they have been creating contexts and spaces, and energy fields in which you can be shocked into awareness. Yes, unless you are shocked, shaken to your very foundations, you will not awaken. The sleep has been so long, it has reached to the very core of your being; you are soaked in it. Each cell of your body and each fiber of your mind has become full of sleep. It is not a small phenomenon. Hence great effort is needed to be alert, to be attentive, to be watchful, to become a witness.

If on any one single theme all the buddhas of the world agree, this is the theme: that man as he is, is asleep, and man as he should be, should be awake. Wakefulness is the goal, and wakefulness is the taste of all their teachings. Zarathustra, Lao Tzu, Jesus, Buddha, Bahauddin, Kabir, Nanak — all the awakened ones have been teaching one single theme, in different languages, in different metaphors, but their song is the same. Just as the sea tastes of salt whether the sea is tasted from the north or from the east or from the west, the sea always tastes of salt — the taste of Buddhahood is wakefulness.

But you will not make any effort if you go on believing that you are already awake; then there is no question of making any effort. Why bother? And you have created religions, gods, prayers, rituals, out of your dreams — your gods are as much part of your dreams as anything else. Your politics are part of your dreams, your religions are part of your dreams, your poetry, your

painting, your art — whatsoever you do, because you are asleep, you make it according to your own state of mind.

The Bible says God created man in his own image — the truth seems to be just the opposite: man has created God in his own image. Your gods are false because you are false. Your religion is pseudo because you are pseudo. Your scriptures cannot have any significance because you don't have any significance.

Two priests are playing golf. The younger one misses an easy putt and says, "Shit!" The older one berates him for this, saying that if he continues to use profanity like that God will certainly blast him with a thunderbolt. They keep playing and the younger priest misses another putt, and again says, "Shit!"

The skies suddenly open: a thunderbolt flashes out and strikes the older priest dead. There is a pause, and the heavenly voice is heard saying in accents of thunder, "Shit!"

Your gods cannot be different from you. Who will create them? Who will give them shape and color and form? You create them, you sculpt them; they have eyes like you, noses like you — and minds like you! The Old Testament God says, "I am a very jealous God!" Now who has created this God who is jealous? God cannot be jealous. And if God is jealous, then what is wrong in being jealous? If even God is jealous, why should you be thought to be doing something wrong when you are jealous? Then jealousy is divine.

The Old Testament God says, "I am a very angry God! If you don't follow my commandments, I will destroy you. You will be thrown into hellfire for eternity. And because I am very jealous," the God says, "don't worship anybody else. I cannot tolerate it."

Who created such a God? It must be out of our own jealousy, out of our own anger, that we have created this image.

A Jew who has a long run of bad luck goes out into the woods and lifts his voice in prayer and recrimination. "Oh, God," he asks heaven tearfully, "haven't I always been a good Jew? Haven't I always given charity, even to those damn goyim? Didn't I bring up my family decent? Never drink, swear, gamble; no bad women, nothing! Why do you do this to me God? Why? Why?"

A dark cloud suddenly appears overhead, and a tremendous voice replies, "You piss me off!"

The God certainly cannot be different from you. It is your projection; it is your shadow. It echoes you and nobody else. That's why there are so many gods in the world. The Hindus have a certain idea about God — the Hindu idea — it reflects the Hindu mind.

If you go back into Hindu scriptures, you will be surprised. You will not be able to believe what kind of gods Hindus have created — very sexual. Adultery is very common amongst Hindu gods, and not only do they play their games of adultery in the Hindu paradise, they can't even leave the earth alone; they come to the earth too, to rape women, to seduce simple women. They don't even leave the wives of the great seers alone. And because they have infinite power they can even appear as the husbands; they can look like the husbands. And the women have no idea who is hiding behind the facade.

Who has created these gods? — it must have been deep down a very sexual mind.

And the same is the case with all other gods of all other religions. It is because of this that Buddha never talked about God. He said: "What is the point of talking about God to people who are asleep? They will listen in their sleep. They will dream about whatsoever is said to them, and they will create their own gods — which will be utterly false, utterly impotent, utterly meaningless. It is better not to have such gods."

That's why Buddha is not interested in talking about gods. His whole interest is in waking you up.

It is said about a Buddhist enlightened master who was sitting by the side of the river one evening, enjoying the sound of the water, the sound of the wind passing through the trees . . . A man came and asked him, "Can you tell me in a single word the essence of your religion?"

The master remained silent, utterly silent, as if he had not heard the question. The questioner said, "Are you deaf or something?"

The master said, "I have heard your question, and I have answered it too! Silence is the answer. I remained silent —that pause, that interval, was my answer."

The man said, "I cannot understand such a mysterious answer. Can't you be a little more clear?"

So, the master wrote on the sand "meditation," in small letters with his finger. The man said, "I can read now. It is a little better than at first. At least I have got a word to ponder over. But can't you make it a little more clear?"

The master wrote again "meditation." Of course, this time he wrote in bigger letters. The man was feeling a little embarrassed, puzzled, offended, angry. He said, "Again you write meditation? Can't you be a little clear for me?"

And the master wrote in very big letters, capital letters, "MEDITATION."

The man said, "You seem to be mad."

The master said, "I have already come down very much. The first answer was the right answer, the second was not so right, the third even more wrong, the fourth has gone very wrong" — because when you write "MEDITATION" with capital letters you have made a god out of it.

That's why the word "God" is written with capital "G." Whenever you want to make something supreme, ultimate, you write it with a capital letter.

The master said, "I have already committed a sin." He erased all those words he had written, and he said, "Please listen to my first answer – only then I am true."

Silence is the space in which one awakens, and the noisy mind is the space in which one remains asleep. If your mind continues chattering, you are asleep. Sitting silently, if the mind disappears and you can hear the chattering birds and no mind inside, a silence . . . this whistle of the bird, the chirping, and no mind functioning in your head, utter silence . . . then awareness wells up in

you. It does not come from the outside, it arises in you, it grows in you. Otherwise remember: you are asleep.

A husband and wife were asleep. About 3 am, the wife dreamt of secretly meeting another man. Then she dreamt she saw her husband coming.

In her sleep she shrieked, “Heavens, my husband!”

Her husband, waking suddenly, leapt out of the window.

And remember, it is not a laughing matter; it is the reality, it is how you are living. It is how man exists in his ordinary state.

A wife tries to win back her husband’s love, on the advice of a woman friend, by bringing him his slippers and pipe when he comes home late one night, giving him a tall drink, cuddling up in his lap dressed only in a silk dressing gown, and ending with the murmured offer, “Let’s go upstairs, darling!”

“I might as well,” says her bemused husband, “I’ll get hell when I get home anyway!”

We go on living absolutely inattentive to what is happening around us. Yes, we have become very efficient in doing things. What we are doing we have become so efficient in doing, that we don’t need any awareness to do it. It has become mechanical, automatic. We function like robots. We are not men yet; we are machines.

That’s what George Gurdjieff used to say again and again, that man as he exists is a machine. He offended many people because nobody likes to be called a machine. Machines like to be called gods; then they feel very happy, puffed up. Gurdjieff used to call people machines, and he was right. If you watch yourself, you will know how mechanically you behave.

The Russian psychologist Pavlov, and the American psychologist Skinner, are ninety-nine-point nine percent right about man: they believe that man is a beautiful machine, that’s all. There is no soul in him. I say ninety-nine-point nine percent they are right; they only miss by a very small margin. In that small margin are the buddhas, the awakened ones. But they can be forgiven, because Pavlov never came across a buddha — he came across millions of people like you.

Skinner has been studying men and rats and finds no difference. Rats are simple beings, that’s all; man is a little more complicated. Man is a highly sophisticated machine; rats are simple machines. It is easier to study rats; that’s why psychologists go on studying rats. They study rats and they conclude about man — and their conclusions are almost right. I say “almost,” mind you, because that point one percent is the most important phenomenon that has happened: a Buddha, a Jesus, a Mohammed. These few awakened people are the real men, but where can B.F. Skinner find a buddha? Certainly not in America.

I have heard:

A man asked a rabbi, “Why didn’t Jesus choose to be born in twentieth-century America?”

The rabbi shrugged his shoulders and said, “In America? It would have been impossible. Where can you find a virgin, firstly? And secondly, where will you find three wise men?”

And without a virgin mother and three wise men, how can Jesus be born?

I have heard:

In a church, the priest asked the audience, “Please stand up, all the women who are virgins!”

Just one woman with a small baby girl stood up. Certainly she was a mother, and the priest said, “Do you think yourself to be a virgin? You are a mother!”

She said, “Yes, I am — but this girl is a virgin, and she cannot stand on her own.”

Where is B.F. Skinner going to find a buddha? And even if he can find a buddha, his preconceived prejudices, ideas, will not allow him to see. He will go on seeing his rats. He cannot understand anything that rats cannot do. Now, rats don’t meditate, rats don’t become enlightened. And his conception of man is only a magnified form of a rat. And still I say that he is right about the greater majority of people; his conclusions are not wrong. And buddhas will agree with him about the so-called normal humanity: the normal humanity is utterly asleep. Even animals are not so asleep.

Have you seen a deer in the jungle — how alert he looks, how watchfully he walks? Have you seen a bird sitting on the tree — how intelligently he goes on watching what is happening all around? You move towards the bird — there is a certain space he allows; beyond that, one step more, and he flies away. He has a certain alertness about his territory. If somebody enters into that territory, then it is dangerous.

If you look around, you will be surprised: man seems to be the most asleep animal on the earth.

A woman buys a parrot at an auction of the furnishings of a fancy whorehouse and keeps the parrot’s cage covered for two weeks to make it forget its profane vocabulary. When the cage is finally uncovered, the parrot looks around and remarks, “Awrrk! New house. New madam.” When the woman’s daughters come in, he adds, “Awrrk! New girls.”

When her husband comes home that night, the parrot says, “Awrrk! Awrrk! Same old customers. Hello, Joe!”

Man is in a very fallen state. In fact, that is the meaning of the Christian parable of the fall of Adam, his expulsion. But why were Adam and Eve expelled from paradise? They were expelled because they had eaten the fruit of knowledge. They were expelled because they had become minds, and they had lost their consciousness. If you become a mind, you lose consciousness — mind means sleep, mind means noise, mind means mechanicalness.

If you become a mind, you lose consciousness. Hence, the whole work that has to be done is: how to become consciousness again and lose the mind. You have to throw out of your system all that you have gathered as knowledge. It is knowledge that keeps you asleep; hence, the more knowledgeable a person is, the more asleep.

That has been my own observation too. Innocent villagers are far more alert and awake than the professors in the universities and the pundits in the temples. The pundits are nothing but parrots; the academicians in the universities are full of nothing but holy cow dung, full of absolutely meaningless noise — just minds and no consciousness.

People who work with nature, farmers, gardeners, woodcutters, carpenters, painters — they are far more alert than the people that function in the universities as deans and vice-chancellors and chancellors. Because when you work with nature, nature is alert, trees are alert; their form of alertness is certainly different, but they are very alert.

Now there are scientific proofs of their alertness. If the woodcutter comes with an axe in his hand and with the deliberate desire to cut the tree, all the trees that see him coming tremble. Now there are scientific proofs about it; I am not talking poetry; I am talking science when I say this. Now there are instruments to measure whether the tree is happy or unhappy, afraid or unafraid, sad or ecstatic. When the woodcutter comes, all the trees that see him start trembling. They become aware that death is close by. And the woodcutter has not cut any tree yet — just his coming . . .

And one thing more, far more strange: if the woodcutter is simply passing by there with no deliberate idea to cut a tree, then no tree becomes afraid. It is the same woodcutter, with the same axe. It seems that his intention to cut a tree affects the trees. It means that his intention is being understood; it means the very vibe is being decoded by the trees.

And one more significant fact has been observed scientifically: that if you go into the forest and kill an animal, it is not only the animal kingdom around that becomes shaken, but trees also. If you kill a deer, all the deer that are around feel the vibe of murder, become sad; a great trembling arises in them. Suddenly they are afraid for no particular reason at all. They may not have seen the deer being killed, but somehow, in a subtle way, they are affected — instinctively, intuitively. But it is not only the deer which are affected — the trees are affected, the parrots are affected, the tigers are affected, the eagles are affected, the grass leaves are affected. Murder has happened, destruction has happened, death has happened — everything that is around is affected.

Man seems to be the most asleep . . .

These sutras of Buddha have to be meditated on deeply, imbibed, followed.

Wakefulness is the way to life.

You are alive only in the proportion that you are aware. Awareness is the difference between death and life. You are not alive just because you are breathing, you are not alive just because your heart is beating. Physiologically you can be kept alive in a hospital, without any consciousness. Your heart will go on beating and you will be able to breathe. You can be kept in such a mechanical arrangement that you will remain alive for years — in the sense of breathing and the heart beating and the blood circulating. There are now many people around the world in advanced countries who are just vegetating in the hospitals because advanced technology has made it possible for your death to be postponed indefinitely — for years, for centuries, you can be kept alive. If this is life, then you can be kept alive. But this is not life at all. Just to vegetate is not life.

Buddhas have a different definition. Their definition consists of awareness. They don't say you are alive because you can breathe, they don't say you are alive because your blood circulates; they say you are alive if you are awake. So except for the awakened ones, nobody is really alive. You are corpses — walking, talking, doing things — you are robots.

Wakefulness is the way to life, says Buddha. Become more wakeful and you will become more alive. And life is God — there is no other God. Hence Buddha talks about life and awareness. Life is the goal and awareness is the methodology, the technique to attain it.

Excerpt from ***Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, V.1,*** Discourse #5

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Three Steps of Vipassana

How to become more aware?

Pankaj, by becoming more aware, one *becomes* more aware. There is no other method to it. It is a simple process. Whatsoever you are doing, do it with such consciousness as if it is a question of life and death; as if a sword is hanging over you.

There is an ancient story in India:

A great sage sent his chief disciple to the court of King Janak to learn something which was missing in the young man.

The young man said, “If you can’t teach me, how can this man, this Janak, teach it to me? You are a great sage; he is only a king. What does he know about meditation and awareness?”

The great sage said, “You simply follow my instructions. Go to him, bow down to him; don’t be egoistic, thinking that you are a sannyasin and he is only an ordinary householder. He lives in the world, he is worldly and you are spiritual. Forget all about it. I’m sending you to him to learn something; so for this moment, he is your master. And I know, I have tried here, but you cannot understand — because you need a different context to understand it. And the court of Janak and his palace will give you the right context. You simply go, bow down to him. For these few days, he will represent me.”

Very reluctantly, the young man went. He was a Brahmin of high caste, and what was this Janak? He was rich, he had a great kingdom, but what could he teach a Brahmin? Brahmins always think that they can teach people. And Janak was not a Brahmin, he was a Kshatriya, the warrior race in India. They are thought to be second to Brahmins; the brahmins are the first, the foremost, the highest caste. To bow down to this man? This has never been done. A Brahmin bowing down to a Kshatriya is against the Indian mind.

But the master had said it so it had to be done. Reluctantly he went, and reluctantly he bowed down. And when he bowed down, he was really feeling very angry with his master because the situation in which he had to bow down to Janak was so ugly in his eyes.

A beautiful woman was dancing in the court and people were drinking wine. And Janak was sitting in this group. The young man had such condemnation, but still he bowed down. Janak laughed and said, “You need not bow down to me when you are carrying such condemnation in you. And don’t be so prejudiced before you have experienced me. Your master knows me well, that’s why he has sent you here. He has sent you to learn something, but this is not the way to learn.”

The young man said, “I don’t care. He has sent me, I have come. But by the morning I will go back because I can’t see that I can learn anything here. In fact, if I learn anything from you, my whole life will be wasted. I have not come to learn drinking wine and seeing a beautiful woman dance and all this indulgence.”

Janak still smiled and he said, “You can go in the morning. But since you have come and you are so tired . . . at least rest for the night, and in the morning you can go. And who knows — the night may become the context of the learning for which your master has sent you to me.”

Now, this was very mysterious. How could the night teach him anything? But okay, he had to be here for the night, so don’t make much fuss about it. He remained. The king arranged for him to have the most beautiful room in the palace, the most luxurious. He went with the young man, took every care about his food, his sleep and when he had gone to bed, Janak left.

But the young man could not sleep the whole night because as he looked up, he could see a naked sword hanging with a thin thread just above his head. Now, it was so dangerous that at any moment the sword could fall and kill the young man. So, he remained awake the whole night, watchful, so he could avoid the catastrophe if it was going to happen.

In the morning, the king asked, “Was the bed comfortable, the room comfortable?”

The young man said, “Comfortable? Everything was comfortable — but what about the sword? And why did you play such a trick? It was so cruel! I was tired, I had come on foot from the faraway ashram of my master in the forest, and you played such a cruel joke. What kind of thing is this, to hang a naked sword with so thin a thread that I was afraid that a small breeze . . . and I am gone, and I am finished. And I have not come here to commit suicide.”

The king said, “I want to ask only one thing: you were so tired, you could have fallen asleep very easily, but you could not fall asleep. What happened? The danger was great, it was a question of life and death. Hence you were aware, alert. This is my teaching too. You can go, or if you want, you can stay a few more days to watch me.

“Although I was sitting there in the court, where a beautiful woman was dancing, I was alert to the naked sword above my head. It is invisible; its name is death. I was not looking at the young woman. Just as you could not enjoy the luxury of the room, I was not drinking wine. I was just aware of death which could come any moment. I am constantly aware of death. Hence, I live in the palace and yet I am a hermit. Your master knows me, understands me. He understands my understanding too. That’s why he has sent you here. If you live here for a few days, you can watch on your own.”

You asked me, Pankaj, how to become more aware. Become more aware of the precariousness of life. Death can happen any moment. The next moment, it may knock on your door. You can remain unaware if you think you are going to live forever. How can you live unaware if death is always close by? Impossible! If life is momentary, a soap bubble — just a pin prick and it is gone forever — how can you remain unaware?

Bring awareness to each act. Walking on the road, walk fully alert; eating, eat with awareness. Whatsoever you are doing, don’t let the past and the future interfere. Be in the present. That’s what awareness is all about. Taking a shower, just take the shower. Don’t let the mind go far away, into the past, into the future. Don’t allow the mind these faraway excursions, these journeys. Taking a shower, just take the shower.

Bokuju, a great Zen master, was asked, “What is your fundamental teaching? What is your fundamental practice? How did you become enlightened?”

He said, “My teaching is simple: When hungry, eat; when sleepy, sleep.”

The man was puzzled. He said, “I have never heard of such a practice. I am asking about the fundamental practice and you are talking about ‘When hungry, eat and when sleepy, sleep.’ What kind of teaching is this?”

Bokuju said, “That I don’t know, but that’s how I became enlightened, and that’s how many of my disciples are becoming enlightened. You can go and ask them.”

But the man said, “That’s what we all do. Hungry, we eat. Sleepy, we sleep.”

Bokuju said, “No, there is a difference and a great difference. When I am eating, I am simply eating and doing nothing else. When you are eating, you are doing a thousand and one things in your head — except eating; you are doing everything else. Eating is done mechanically. When you are sleeping, are you really asleep? How can you be asleep when you are dreaming? Dreaming so many dreams, the whole night; waves upon waves of dreams go on coming. Only for a few minutes, here and there, dreaming stops and you fall into deep sleep; otherwise, dreaming continues. Dreaming is a sleep distraction: you are distracted by a thousand and one things. But you are not asleep. You are not doing one thing only.”

To be aware, Pankaj, one needs to do one thing at a time. And do it with full awareness, watchfulness.

A progressive kindergarten teacher wanted her charges to learn about life through firsthand experiences. So, after much red tape, she was able to persuade her superiors to let her take the class of all boys to a horse racing track to learn about the pitfalls of gambling.

After they had been there a while, several of the children asked to go to the boys’ room. She escorted them there under the guidance of a track employee who guarded the door for them. She saw to it that the boys had no problems and, in some cases, had to help them unbutton their trousers. As she moved helpfully down the line, she suddenly saw something that made her do a double take. “Are you only five years old?” she gasped.

The object of her contentions replied, “What do you mean, lady? I am riding Dandy Charger in the third race.”

People go on doing things almost in a sleep. Just become a little more alert. Do whatsoever you are doing, but bring the quality of consciousness to your actions — there is no other method. And you can bring that quality to small things and that is helpful. Sitting, just watch your breathing. The breath goes in, watch; the breath goes out, watch. Just go on watching your breathing. And it is of great help because if you watch your breathing, thinking stops.

This is something to be understood. Either you can think or you can watch your breathing. You can’t do both together. Breathing and thinking are such processes that only one can exist in you — in awareness. In unawareness, both can continue: you can go on breathing and you can go on thinking. But if you become aware, either you can think or you can breathe; and when you breathe with awareness, thinking disappears. Your whole consciousness becomes focused on breathing. And breathing is such a simple process: you need not do it; it is already happening. You can just bring your consciousness to it.

Buddha became enlightened through this simple method. He calls it vipassana, insight. Breathing brings great insight and when you are aware of breathing, the whole thought process simply comes to a stop — and great stillness arises. After watching your breathing, it will be easy to watch your thinking directly because breathing is a little gross.

Thinking is more subtle. Thoughts have no weight, they are weightless; they can't be measured, they are immeasurable. That's why the materialists cannot accept them. Matter means measure — that which can be measured is matter. So thought is not matter because it cannot be measured. It is, and yet it cannot be measured; hence it is an epiphenomenon. The materialist says, "It is only a by-product, a side effect, a shadow phenomenon" — just as you walk in the sun, a shadow follows you. But the shadow is nothing. You walk in life and thinking arises, but it is only a shadow. If you watch this shadow, this epiphenomenon, these thoughts and the processes of thought . . . it is going to be a more subtle phenomenon because it is not as gross as breathing.

But first, learn the process of awareness through breathing and then move to thinking. And you will be surprised: the more you watch your thinking . . . again, either you can watch or you can think. Both cannot be done simultaneously. If you watch, thinking disappears.

If thinking appears, watching disappears. When you have become alert enough to watch your thoughts and let them disappear through watching, then move to feeling — which is even more subtle. And these are the three steps of vipassana. First breathing, second thinking, third feeling. And when all these three have disappeared, what is left is your being.

To know it is to know all. To conquer it is to conquer all.

From ***The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, V.6***, Discourse #6

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Buddha's Way was Vipassana

Seek light! And the only way to seek light is to learn how to meditate, how to be aware, how to be more watchful.

The Buddha's way was *Vipassana* — vipassana means witnessing. And he found one of the greatest devices ever: the device of watching your breath, just watching your breath. Breathing is such a simple and natural phenomenon, and it is there twenty-four hours a day. You need not make any effort. If you repeat a mantra then you will have to make an effort, you will have to force yourself. If you say, "Ram, Ram, Ram," you will have to continuously strain yourself. And you are bound to forget many times. Moreover, the word 'Ram' is again something of the mind, and anything of the mind can never lead you beyond the mind.

Buddha discovered a totally different angle: just watch your breath — the breath coming in, the breath going out. There are four points to be watched. Sitting silently just start seeing the breath, feeling the breath. The breath going in is the first point. Then for a moment when the breath is in it stops — a very small moment it is — for a split second it stops; that is the second point to watch. Then the breath turns and goes out; this is the third point to watch. Then again when the breath is completely out, for a split second it stops; that is the fourth point to watch. Then the breath starts coming in again . . . this is the circle of breath.

If you can watch all these four points you will be surprised, amazed at the miracle of such a simple process — because mind is not involved. Watching is not a quality of the mind; watching is the quality of the soul, of consciousness; watching is not a mental process at all. When you watch, the mind stops, ceases to be. Yes, in the beginning many times you will forget, and the mind will come in and start playing its old games. But whenever you remember that you had forgotten, there is no need to feel repentant, guilty — just go back to watching, again and again go back to watching your breath. Slowly, slowly, less and less mind interferes.

And when you can watch your breath for forty-eight minutes as a continuum, you will become enlightened. You will be surprised — just forty-eight minutes — because you will think that it is not very difficult . . . just forty-eight minutes! It is very difficult. Forty-eight seconds and you will have fallen victim to the mind many times. Try it with a watch in front of you; in the beginning you cannot be watchful for sixty seconds. In just sixty seconds, that is one minute, you will fall asleep many times, you will forget all about watching — the watch and the watching will both be forgotten. Some idea will take you far, far away; then suddenly you will realize . . . you will look at the watch and ten seconds have passed. For ten seconds you were not watching. But slowly, slowly — it is a knack; it is not a practice, it is a knack – slowly, slowly you imbibe it, because those few moments when you are watchful are of such exquisite beauty, of such tremendous joy, of such incredible ecstasy, that once you have tasted those few moments you would like to come back again and again — not for any other motive, just for the sheer joy of being there, present to the breath.

From ***The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, V. 5***, Discourse #1

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15 Be Still and Know

You will Find the Christ

Can Buddha or Christ be created or developed out of every common human being? Or is Buddha or Christ only born as such? Every man is Buddha, every man is Christ: I feel it is not true.

The Buddha or Christ cannot be created because the Buddha is your intrinsic nature. It need not be created. It has not to be developed either; it is already there; it is already the case. It has only to be unfolded, it has to be discovered. The treasure is there; you have to find the key to unlock the door. The treasure is not to be created; the treasure is not to be developed; you only have to find the right key. You have forgotten about the key — the key is also with you. God provides you with everything that is needed on the journey; you come absolutely prepared. But society disturbs every child, distorts every child because a Buddha or a Christ is useless to the society; they don't serve any utilitarian purpose.

What can you do with a buddha? What purpose is he going to serve? He will be a beautiful flower, but flowers don't serve any purpose. Flowers have to be enjoyed, appreciated, loved. You can dance around them, you can drink their beauty, but they are not commodities in the marketplace. What can you do with the full moon? You cannot sell it, you cannot purchase it, you cannot be profited by it. You cannot have a bigger bank balance because of the full moon.

Hence the society is not interested in a buddha or a Christ. Buddha is a full moon, a buddha is a lotus flower; a buddha is a bird on the wing. The Buddha is a poem, the Buddha is a song, the Buddha is a celebration. Because they are utterly beyond utility, the society is not interested in them; it is really afraid of these people. It wants you to be slaves, to be cogs in the wheel of the society. It wants you to be servants to the vested interests. It does not want you to be rebels — and a buddha is bound to be a rebel.

A buddha cannot follow stupid commandments given by the politicians or the moralists or the puritans or the priests. And these are the people who are exploiting humanity, oppressing humanity. They start destroying every possibility of every human child ever becoming a buddha. They start crippling, they start poisoning. And down the centuries they have learnt many ways to poison. It is a miracle that once in a while a child has escaped — must have somehow been a mistake on the part of the priests and the politicians that a child escaped from the trap and became a buddha.

Bal Krishna, every man is born to be a buddha; every man has the seed of Buddhahood in him. But I can understand your question.

You say: *I feel it is not true*.

Yes, if you look at the masses it doesn't seem to be true. If it were true there would be many buddhas, but one rarely hears about a buddha. We only know that somewhere, twenty-five centuries ago, a certain Siddhartha Gautam became Buddha. Who knows whether it is true or not? It may be just a myth, a beautiful story, a consolation, an opium for the masses, to keep

them hoping that one day they will also become buddhas. Who knows whether Buddha is a historic reality?

And so many stories have been woven around the Buddha that he looks more like a mythological figure than a reality. When he becomes enlightened, gods come from heaven, play beautiful music, dance around him. Now how can this be history? And flowers shower on him from the sky — flowers of gold and silver, flowers of diamonds and emeralds. Who can believe that this is history?

This is not history, true, I agree. This is poetry. But it symbolizes something historical because something so unique has happened in Buddha that there is no other way to describe it than to bring poetry in. Real flowers have not showered on Buddha, but whenever somebody becomes enlightened, the whole existence rejoices — because we are not separate from it.

When you have a headache your whole body suffers, and when the headache goes your whole body feels good, a well-being. We are *not* separate from existence. And until you are a buddha, you are a headache — a headache to yourself, a headache to others, a headache to the whole existence. You are a thorn in the flesh of existence. When the headache disappears, when the thorn becomes a flower, when one man becomes a buddha, a great pain that he was creating for himself and others disappears. Certainly — I vouch for it, I am a witness to it — certainly the whole existence rejoices, dances, sings. How to say it? It is nothing visible; photographs cannot be taken of it. Hence the poetry; hence these metaphors, symbols, similes.

It is said that when Buddha was born his mother immediately died. It may not be a historical fact, it may be. But my feeling is that it is not a historical fact — because it is said that whenever a buddha is born, the mother immediately dies. That is not true. There have been many buddhas — Jesus's mother did not die, Mahavira's mother did not die, Krishna's mother did not die. Maybe Siddhartha Gautam's mother died, but it cannot be said that whenever a buddha is born the mother dies, not historically. But I know it has some significance of its own which is not historical. By "the mother" is not really meant the mother; by "the mother" is meant your whole past. You are reborn when you become a buddha, your whole past functions as a womb, the mother. And the moment a buddha is born, the moment you become enlightened, your whole past dies. That death is necessary.

Now, *this is* absolutely true. It happened with Mahavira, with Krishna, with Jesus; it has happened always. To say it, it is said that whenever a buddha is born the mother dies. You will have to be very, very sympathetic to understand these things.

I can understand that it is difficult; looking at the greater part of humanity, to see that there is any possibility of every human being becoming a Christ or a buddha. Looking at a seed, can you believe that one day it can become a lotus? Just looking at the seed, dissecting the seed, will you be able to infer, conclude, that each seed is going to become a lotus? There seems to be no relationship at all. The seed looks nothing, and when you dissect it, you find nothing in it, only emptiness. Still, each seed carries a lotus within it – and each human being carries the Buddha within him.

You ask me: *Can Buddha or Christ be created or developed . . .*?

No, they cannot be created, and they cannot be developed: they have to be discovered, they have to be uncovered. They are already there. You just have to reach your innermost core and you will find the Buddha enshrined, you will find the Christ. Christ and Buddha mean the same: the ultimate state of consciousness.

And you say: . . . o*ut of every common human being*?

I have never come across a single common human being. I have come across thousands of people, I have looked into the depths of thousands of different people, but I have never come across a common, ordinary man. Every human being is unique, extraordinary, uncommon, exceptional. God never creates common human beings; God only creates unique consciousnesses.

Drop this idea of a common human being. This is an insult to humanity.

And you say: *Is Buddha or Christ only born as such*?

No. Nobody is born as such. We are all born alike. That too is again a trick of the mind to avoid growing. If it is settled that a buddha is born as a buddha, and a Christ is the *only* begotten son of God, and Krishna is a reincarnation of God, this is a beautiful strategy to avoid: "Then what can we do? If we are not buddhas it is not our fault – we are not *born* like that. And if Buddha is a buddha, so what? He is *born* a buddha. No credit to him; he has not done anything special. If we were born like Buddha, we would be buddhas too. But we are born as *common* human beings."

This is a strategy. Very cunning is the mind, and subtle is its cunningness: beware of it. Nobody is born as a buddha, yet everybody brings the potential of being a buddha. And don't say, "I feel it is not true" — because how can you feel unless you have become a buddha? You can only infer, you can only think, you cannot feel.

Listen to me! I *feel* that everybody can become a buddha. And I feel it because I was also a common human being . . . and then suddenly this explosion, then suddenly this light, then suddenly this meditativeness blossomed. You can also become a buddha; it is your birthright. Don't be tricked by your mind — remain alert, aware.

From ***Be Still and Know***, Discourse #1

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In Prayer You Are Not

What is prayer?

Deva Tatva, prayer is one of the indefinables because prayer is the fragrance of love.

Even love is indefinable. Love is a flower, tangible, you can see it, you can touch it, you can smell it, you can feel it. You can close your eyes and you can touch the texture of the flower, the softness of it, you can see the beauty of it; it is visible. But prayer is the fragrance released to the winds, offered to the sky. It becomes even more indefinable because you cannot see it, you cannot touch it.

You can only have a very subtle relationship with it, not one of words, not one of philosophy, not one of theology – only the silence of your heart, the utter silence of your heart, can have a little glimpse of it, of what it is.

What goes on in the name of prayer is not prayer; it is desire disguised. You go to the temple or to the church and you pray to God; your God is part of your imagination. Your God is not true God; it is a Christian God, it is a Hindu God, it is a Mohammedan God. And how can God be Christian, Hindu or Mohammedan? It is a God that you have created, or your priests on behalf of you. It is a toy; it is not true.

Bowing down before a statue made by man, manufactured by man – and you think you are in prayer? You are simply being stupid; you are simply showing utter ignorance. This statue has been purchased in the marketplace, and God is not a commodity and God cannot be made. It is God who has made us – how can we make God? But we are worshipping, praying to man-made Gods.

And what are your prayers? They are also your desires. You want this, you want that; you are trying to use God as a means. You have been told certain prayers from your very childhood and you have crammed it all; you have been forced to cram it. It has become a habit, a mechanical routine; you go on repeating it but your heart is not in it. Your prayer is a corpse, it breathes no more.

Yes, when Jesus called God "Abba" he meant it. When you call God "Father" you don't mean anything. And between "Abba" and "Father" there is a great difference. "Father" is an institution, legal, social; "Abba" is a heart-to-heart relationship. Jesus looked at existence as the source of our life.

A disciple asks Jesus, "What is prayer?" Jesus falls on his knees and starts praying. The disciple says, "I am asking what prayer is, I am not asking you to pray!" And Jesus says, "There is no other way. I can pray, you can participate. I *invite* you to be a part of my prayer. I cannot say what prayer is, but I can go into prayer – because prayer is a state of being, not something that you do."

Leo Tolstoy has written a beautiful story:

Three men became very famous saints in Russia.

The highest priest of the country was very much disturbed – obviously, because people were not coming to him, people were going to those three saints, and he had not even heard their names. And how could they be saints? – because in Christianity a saint is a saint only when the church recognizes him as a saint. The English word "saint" comes from "sanction"; when the church sanctions somebody as a saint, then he is a saint. What nonsense! that a saint has to be certified by the church, by the organized religion, by the priests – as if it has nothing to do with inner growth but some outer recognition; as if it is a title given by a government, or a degree, an honorary degree, conferred by a university.

The high priest was certainly very angry. He took a boat because those three saints used to live on the far side of a lake. He went in the boat. Those three saints were sitting under a tree. They were very simple people, peasants, uneducated. They touched the feet of the highest priest, and the priest was very happy. He thought, "Now I will put them right – these are not very dangerous people. I was thinking they would be rebels or something."

He asked them, "How did you become saints?"

They said, "We don't know! We don't know that we are saints either. People have started calling us saints and we go on trying to convince them that we are not, we are very simple people, but they don't listen. The more we argue that we are not, the more they worship us! And we are not very good at arguing either."

The priest was very happy. He said, "What is your prayer? Do you know how to pray?"

They looked at each other. The first said to the second, "You say." The second said to the third, "You say, please."

The priest said, "Say what your prayer is! Are you saying Our Lord's Prayer or not?"

They said, "To be frank with you, we don't know any prayer. We have invented a prayer of our own and we are very embarrassed – how to say it? But if you ask, we have to say it. We have heard that God is a trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. We are three and he is also three, so we have made a small prayer of our own: 'You are three, we are three: Have mercy on us!'"

The priest said, "What nonsense! Is this prayer? You fools, I will teach you the right prayer." And he recited The Lord's Prayer.

And those three poor people said, "Please repeat it once more, because we are uneducated, we may forget."

He repeated it and they asked, "Once more – we are three, repeat it at least three times."

So, he repeated it again, and then very happy, satisfied, he went back in his boat.

Just in the middle of the lake he was surprised, his boatman was surprised: those three poor people were coming running on the water! And they said, "Wait! Please one more time – we have forgotten the prayer!"

Now it was the turn of the priest to touch their feet, and he said, “Forget what I have said to you. Your prayer has been heard; my prayer has not been heard yet. You continue as you are continuing. I was utterly wrong to say anything to you. Forgive me!”

Prayer is a state of simplicity. It is *not* of words but of silence.

Martin Buber, the great Jewish philosopher, has said that prayer is an I/thou relationship.

It is not. He does not know anything about prayer. An I/thou relationship? In prayer there is no I and in prayer there is no thou. A prayer is not a dialogue between I and thou; a prayer is a merger. The I disappears into the thou, the thou disappears into the I. There is nobody to say anything and there is nobody to say anything to.

The river disappearing into the ocean is prayer. The dewdrop slipping from the lotus leaf into the lake is prayer. Seeing the early morning sun and you are silent, and something starts rising in you too – that is prayer. A bird on the wing, and *you* are on the wing; you forget that you are separate – *that* is prayer. Wherever separation disappears, prayer appears. When you become one with the whole of existence, that is prayer.

Ego is a state of no-prayer: egolessness is a state of prayer. It is not a dialogue; it is not even a monologue. It has nothing to do with words; it is wordless silence. It is an open, silent sky; with no clouds, no thoughts. In prayer you are not Hindu or Christian or Mohammedan. In prayer you are not: in prayer God is.

From ***Be Still and Know***, Discourse #4

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Character is Stagnant, Consciousness is a River

Why don't you give your disciples a certain mode of conduct? Isn't a moral character necessary for a spiritual life?

Mahendra Singh, my whole effort is to give you a consciousness, not a character. Consciousness is the real thing, character the false entity. Character is needed by those who don't have consciousness. If you have eyes, you don't need a walking-stick to find your way, to grope your way. If you can see you don't ask others, "Where is the door?" Character is needed because people are unconscious. Character is just a lubricant; it helps you to run your life in a smooth way.

George Gurdjieff used to say character is like a buffer. Buffers are used in railway trains; between two compartments there are buffers. If something happens, those two compartments cannot clash with each other; these buffers prevent them from clashing with each other. Or it is like springs: cars have springs so you can move smoothly – even on an Indian road. Those springs go on absorbing the shocks; they are called shock absorbers.

That's what character is: it is a shock absorber. People are told to be humble. If you learn how to be humble, it is a shock absorber. By learning how to be humble, you will be able to protect yourself against other people's egos. They will not hurt you so much; you are a humble man. If you are egoistic, you are bound to be hurt again and again. The ego is very sensitive, so you cover up your ego with a blanket of humbleness. It helps, it gives you a kind of smoothness, but it does not transform you.

My work consists of transformation. This is an alchemical school: I want to transform you from unconsciousness into consciousness, from darkness into light. I cannot give you a character; I can only give you insight, awareness. I would like you to live moment-to-moment, not according to a set pattern given by me or given by the society, the church, the state. I would like you to live according to your own small light of awareness, according to your own consciousness. Be responsive to each moment.

Character means you have a certain ready-made answer for all the questions of life, so whenever a situation arises you respond according to the set pattern. Because you respond according to the ready-made answer it is not a true response, it is only a reaction. The man of character reacts, the man of consciousness responds: he takes the situation in, he reflects the reality as it is, and out of that reflection he acts. The man of character reacts, the man of consciousness acts. The man of character is mechanical; robot-like he functions. He has a computer in his mind, full of information; ask him anything and a ready-made answer rolls down from his computer.

A man of consciousness simply acts in the moment, not out of the past and out of the memory. His response has a beauty, a naturalness, and his response is true to the situation. The man of character always falls short because life is continuously changing; it is never the same. And your answers are always the same, they never grow – they can't grow, they are dead.

You have been told a certain thing in your childhood; it has remained there. You have grown, life has changed, but that answer, that was given by your parents or by your teachers or by your priests, is still there. And if something happens you will function according to that answer which

was given to you fifty years before. And in fifty years so much water has gone down the Ganges; it is a totally different life.

Heraclitus says: “You cannot step in the same river twice.” And I say to you: “You cannot step in the same river even once; the river is so fast-flowing.” Character is stagnant; it is a dirty pool of water. Consciousness is a river.

Mahendra Singh, that’s why I don’t give my people any code of conduct. I give them eyes to see, a consciousness to reflect, a mirror-like being to be able to respond to any situation that arises. I don’t give them detailed information about what to do and what not to do; I don’t give them Ten Commandments. And if you start giving them commandments then you cannot stop at ten because life is far more complex.

In Buddhist scriptures, there are thirty-three thousand rules for a Buddhist monk. Thirty-three thousand rules! For every possible situation that may ever arise, they have given a ready-made answer. But how are you going to remember thirty-three thousand rules of conduct? And a man who is cunning enough to remember thirty-three thousand rules of conduct will be clever enough to find a way out always; if he does not want to do a certain thing, he will find a way out. If he wants to do a certain thing, he will find a way out.

I have heard about a Christian saint: somebody hit him on his face because just that day in his morning discourse he had said, “Jesus says if somebody slaps you on one cheek, give him the other.” And the man wanted to try it, so he hit him, really hit him hard on one cheek. And the saint was really true, true to his word: he gave him the other cheek.

But that man was also something: he hit even harder on the other cheek. Then he was surprised: the saint jumped on the man, started beating him so hard that the man said, “What are you doing? You are a saint, and just this morning you were saying that if somebody hits you on one cheek, give him the other.”

He said, “Yes – but I don’t have a third cheek. And Jesus stops there. Now I am free; now I will do what I want to do. Jesus has no more information about it.”

It happened exactly like that in Jesus’s life also. Once he told a disciple, “Forgive seven times.”

The disciple said, “Okay.”

The way he said, “Okay,” Jesus became suspicious; he said, “Seventy-seven times I say.”

The disciple was a little disturbed, but he said, “Okay – because numbers don’t end at seventy-seven. What about seventy-eight? Then I am free, then I can do what I want to do!”

How many rules can you make for people? It is stupid, meaningless. That’s how people are religious, and still, they are not religious: they always find a way to get out of those rules of conduct and commandments. They can always find a way through the back door. And character can, at the most, give you only a skin-deep, pseudo mask – not even skin deep: just scratch your saints a little bit and you will find the animal hidden behind. On the surface they look beautiful but only on the surface.

I don’t want you to be superficial; I want you to really change. But a real change happens through the center of your being, not through the circumference. Character is painting the circumference; consciousness is transformation of the center.

Once a carpenter was working in a church and he hit his thumb with a hammer. “Fuck’s sake!” he yelled.

The Vicar happened to be passing and heard him. “You cannot use that kind of language here. This is a house of God,” he admonished.

“Pardon, Vicar, but what’s a man to say when he whacks his thumb with a hammer?”

“You can say, ‘God preserve me,’ or ‘Jesus help me,’” suggested the Vicar.

Later, when the carpenter was sawing a piece of wood, he sawed right through his finger, which dropped to the floor. “God preserve me!” cried the carpenter, and the finger jumped back upon the hand and healed itself.

“Fuck’s sake!” exclaimed the Vicar.

From ***Be Still and Know***, Discourse #6

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Be Still and Know

What exactly do you mean by saying "Be still and know" and also "seek the strength of no-desire"?

Be still and know is one of the most fundamental sutras of the inner alchemy. But by being still is not meant that you have to force stillness upon yourself. A forced stillness is not true stillness. One can sit like a buddha, almost like a statue, absolutely still, and yet deep down there may be great turmoil, a thousand and one thoughts rushing. There may be great traffic in the mind. The body can be forced to sit silently for hours, and you can also learn tricks to still the mind.

For example, if you chant any mantra for hours, any name of God, if you simply go on chanting "Allah, Allah, Allah," it functions like a tranquilizer. Repetition of a single word or a single mantra creates a certain melody in your mind soothing, very soothing, very calming. And a kind of stillness will be felt which is not the true kind – because the sound of a certain mantra is simply changing the chemistry of your mind. The change is not alchemical, it is chemical.

Sound is chemistry. Hence music can help you to become still. And, moreover, when a certain word *or* a mantra is repeated constantly, you become hypnotized by it. That's the secret of all hypnosis. You look at a flame, a candle flame, constantly – what are you doing? You are repeating the flame through the eyes, again and again and again. It is a repetition; it is a mantra – through the eyes. Or you can repeat a mantra inside yourself; that is through the ear, through the sound. Any sense can be used. Perfume, incense can be used; the same incense can hypnotize you.

Hypnosis means going into deep sleep, artificial sleep. That's exactly the meaning of the word "hypnosis": a sleep deliberately created. It can be through a tranquilizer, it can be through a soothing silence, sound, music, perfume, incense – there can be a thousand and one ways, but you will become hypnotized. And, hypnotized, you will feel a kind of stillness which is not true.

And also, if you repeat a certain mantra again and again, you will feel bored. Boredom also brings sleep. That's why doctors suggest to people who cannot sleep that they count sheep from one to a hundred, and then backwards from a hundred – ninety-nine, ninety-eight, back to one – and then go up the ladder again . . . go on coming up and down. How long can you do it? Somewhere after going three or four times up and down the ladder you will fall asleep. It is the most ancient formula for falling asleep: count sheep from one to a hundred and then come back – because it is such a boring job that you lose all interest in it. And the moment you lose all interest in it, there is nowhere to escape except in sleep.

Mothers know it perfectly well. Hence the lullaby: the mother goes on repeating a single note again and again and the child falls asleep. And children have their own mantras: they can suck on their thumbs – that is a mantra. The child goes on sucking on the thumb; it is very consoling, soothing. He believes that it is the breast of the mother, and he falls asleep. Children invent their own methods – the teddy bear, or just the corner of the blanket, and the child holds it; if you take the blanket away from him, he cannot sleep.

Even grown ups are not really grown ups; they have their own ritual of going into sleep. For example, if every day you clean your teeth before going to sleep, try it one day without cleaning the teeth and you will be surprised: you cannot fall asleep. Something is missing. You have

created a mantra. You change the dress, a different dress than you use in the daytime . . . you go into a subtle ritual.

A few people who are religious, so-called religious, they will do some prayer. That too is a ritual. Grown ups are not really grown ups; they have grown in age but not psychologically, not spiritually. The world is full of children of many ages: one year, two years, up to seventy, eighty, ninety – all children.

I am not talking about their stillness. When I say "Be still and know" I mean a stillness that comes out of understanding, not out of any kind of hypnosis. And out of understanding, the first thing that happens is: "Seek the strength of no-desire." The more you look into your life, [the more] you will find your life is in a mess because of desiring. Why are you in such a storm continuously? It is because of the desire – not only one desire but a thousand and one desires. And no desire can ever be fulfilled; no desire has ever been fulfilled. Desire as such is incapable of being fulfilled, intrinsically it is unfulfillable. Hence each desire creates turmoil, expectation, hope, then frustration, hopelessness. And you have a thousand and one desires surrounding you, and you go on supporting your own enemies.

When you look in, when you watch, you become aware that desire is the cause of your whole misery. Seeing it, desiring *disappears – just by seeing it,* desiring disappears. Seeing that desire never leads anywhere, but that you go on moving in circles and desire goes on goading you in the same repetitive patterns, seeing this – not because I am saying it, but seeing it on your own – desire disappears. And the disappearance of desire is the stillness, the real stillness, I am talking about.

It brings two things to you: great strength because all the energy that was involved in a thousand and one desires is released. Now energy no more leaks from you; you don't have any holes for it to leak from. You become a reservoir of great energy. And the second thing: because now there is no noise of desires clashing, conflicting with each other, there is no civil war going on . . . what to do? To be or not to be? To do this or to do that? When there is no conflict, no desire, when all the storm is gone, the silence that follows the storm, that is the stillness I am talking about.

Be still and know.

And I am not saying that by being still you will be ready to know – no. Just by being still you will know. Being still and knowing are the same phenomenon, because when you are still like a mirror, a still lake, no ripples, then the whole firmament, the whole sky, is reflected in the lake. The stars come down, and the moon, and the clouds – all are reflected in tremendous beauty in the lake. When your consciousness becomes a still mirror, a still lake, a silent reservoir of energy, God is reflected in it.

You will not attain to knowledge, remember. You will become wise; you will become a buddha. You will not become a great scholar, a great pundit, a great theologian or a philosopher. You will be a buddha. You will have an innocent kind of knowing: you will know how to live, you will know how to die, you will know how to love – you will know the real art of life. And the real art of life consists only of three things: how to live, how to love, how to die. And these things you will not know from scriptures; these things you will know from your innermost core.

I call this education. “Be still and know, seek the strength of no-desire.” It is desire that is making you weak; it is no-desire that will make you strong. It is desire that is creating continuous storms in you, it is no-desire that will bring stillness – and a stillness that comes on its own is authentic; it is not a kind of hypnosis. It is not through mantra, it is not through any device, it is not through any trick. You are not trying to pretend to be still: you are simply still. This will give you a new birth, you will be reborn. Jesus says: “Unless you are born again, you shall not enter into my kingdom of God.” I say the same to you – but the rebirth is a state of no-desire, a state of no-mind, a state of total stillness.

From ***Be Still and Know***, Discourse #10

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Does Witnessing Always Bring Joy?

Does witnessing always bring joy? The moments that I call witnessing sometimes feel distant – almost cold in their neutrality. Other times it is like sprouting wings and soaring in joy over the open sea.

Deva Abhiyana,

The state of witnessing is neither cold nor hot. It is neither happiness nor unhappiness. It is neither dark nor light. It is neither life nor death. The Upanishads say *neti neti* — neither this nor that.

If you feel joy, you have already become identified; witnessing is gone. If you feel sad, you are no more a witness; you have forgotten witnessing, you have become involved. You are colored by your psychology of the moment. Joy, sadness, all these qualities, are part of your psychology. And witnessing is a transcendence; it is not psychological.

The whole art of meditation consists in witnessing. Then what does it bring? At the most, we can say it brings total peace; it simply brings eternal silence. You cannot define it as joy. The moment you define it as joy you have fallen into the world of duality again. Then you have become part of what is passing, you have started clinging to it.

The state of witnessing remains indefinable. That's why Buddha has not used the word "bliss" at all because it can give you a wrong idea – because in your mind bliss will mean happiness. That's how you are going to translate it, to interpret it. Buddha has not used the word "bliss"; he has not used the word "God."

The word that he has used is "absolute void" – *shunyam*. There will be nothing left, just absolute silence, absolute emptiness – but not emptiness in the English meaning of the word. *Shunyam* has a totally different connotation; it has been translated and can only be translated as emptiness. But emptiness is negative, emptiness means something is missing, emptiness means loneliness. Emptiness is not a life quality but a death quality.

Shunyam is not negative; it is not even positive, how can it be negative? It simply means you are alone – not lonely, but alone. You are not missing anything. You are spacious, there is great space in you, but it is not empty of something. On the contrary, it is utter plenitude. It is full of emptiness – if you allow me the expression It is *full* of emptiness, but one is fulfilled.

Shunyam is blossoming in you. There is great peace but not joy because joy becomes positive; but not sadness because sadness becomes negative. Peace is exactly the middle, neither cold nor hot. It is not neutrality; it is not indifference. It is not a state where you turn your back towards something, you are no more interested. No, there is no question of disinterest, indifference or neutrality. You are utterly there, absolutely there, totally there but like a mirror, just reflecting whatsoever is the case.

Joy passes by and the mirror reflects it, but the mirror does not become joy itself; it never becomes identified. And sadness comes like a cloud, a dark cloud, and passes by, and the mirror reflects it. The mirror has no prejudice against it. The mirror is not favorable to joy and unfavorable to sadness. The mirror has no liking, no disliking; it simply reflects whatsoever is

the case. It is not neutral, otherwise it will not reflect; it does not turn its back towards things. It is not indifferent because indifference again means you are already prejudiced; you have a certain conclusion. It is not disinterested and you cannot say it is interested either. It is a transcendence.

Abhiyana, don't get identified with the joy that comes – watch it. Remain a watcher on the hills, a mirror. Reflect it but don't cling to it. A bird on the wing . . . and the lake reflects it.

The Zen people say this is the state of Buddhahood. The bird has no mind to be reflected in the lake and the lake has no mind to reflect the bird, but the bird on the wing . . . and the lake reflects it. You see the point: the bird has no mind to be reflected and the lake has no mind to reflect the bird, but the bird *is* reflected. It simply happens that the lake is there, and the bird is on the wing . . . the reflection is bound to happen — it is natural! The bird is gone; the lake does not miss the bird, it does not hanker for it, it does not long for it, it does not hope that it will come again. It does not go into the past, into the memories, or into the future projections. The bird has flown; it never thinks of the lake again, it never desires to be there again. One day it may be there again, and again it will be reflected, but no relationship is created. The *happening is* there but no relationship is there.

This is what I call relating, not relationship. It is a fluid phenomenon. This is witnessing.

From ***Be Still and Know***, Discourse #2

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16 What is Herenow?

What is Herenow?

What is Herenow?

Does ‘thought’ form part of it? If so, then all-time and all-things are now. Or . . . is herenow only in no-mind?

Divya, thought is the capacity of not being here – so thought cannot exist in the herenow, it cannot be part of it. That is impossible. Thought can only be either of the past, or of the future. Thought can never be of the present. In the very process of thinking, that is implied; it is intrinsic to it.

The moment you think, either you think of the past or you think of the future. It may be the immediate past, but it is still past – it is never the present, it cannot be the present.

Thought needs space. And the present moment has no space in it. Thought creates the past and the future to live in. The bigger the past, the more easily thought can move; the bigger the future, again, the more easily thought can move. The present is not capable of giving that space for thought to move.

The present moment is a moment of no-mind. Whenever you are in the present you don’t function as a mind. Your body is in the present, but your mind is never. Your body is always in the present – that’s why the body is so beautiful, and mind is so ugly.

And, down the ages, you have been taught to be with the mind and against the body. That has been the greatest calamity humanity has suffered up to now. If a new humanity is to be, we will have to put things right – you have to be with the body and not with the mind.

Use the mind but never get identified with it. The mind is a good slave, but a very bad master. The body is wiser.

When you are hungry, you are hungry herenow; you cannot be hungry in the future, and you cannot be hungry in the past. When you are feeling thirsty, your throat is feeling it right now – it is immediate, it has a presence. But your mind is running in all directions . . . so your body and mind never meet. That’s how you have become split, that’s how schizophrenia has entered into the very being of man.

Get out of the mind and get into the body. The more you are in your body, the more natural you will be. The more you are in the body, the closer to God you will be.

Mind is just a device. Good! Helpful! Can be used in a thousand and one ways! But it is from there that the problem arises – because it can be used in so many ways, you start becoming dependent on it and by and by you lose consciousness of the present and you become focused with the mind. Then your life will be dry, a wasteland.

And suddenly questions will arise: What is the meaning of life? – because mind cannot supply any meaning. Mind cannot give you any end. Mind cannot help you to live. It cannot give you life! It can give you technology, it can give you bigger machines, it can give you more affluence – but it cannot give you more life, more being.

So riches go on growing. Technology goes on becoming more and more sophisticated . . . and man becomes more and more poor. This is strange! that outside riches go on accumulating and inside man becomes a beggar. Never before in the history of man was there such inner emptiness, such inner meaninglessness, such inner poverty.

The reason is: significance comes from the body – the body is the body of God. Mind is man created: body is still in God, it still exists in God, it still breathes God.

You ask: What is herenow?

Now, if any mind answer is given to you, that won't be the right answer – because anything that the mind can say as a definition of herenow will be wrong; anything whatsoever, it will be wrong. Mind knows nothing of herenow! How can it define it? Just be silent; for a moment, just be . . . and it is there.

This is herenow! I will not give you a definition, because definitions come from the mind, and definitions will be taken by the mind, and herenow is an existential experience . . . these trees, this bird calling, and the traffic noise, and the train, and the sun and the trees . . . and you, and me . . . and this silence, this presence . . .

When not even a single thought is stirring in you, when the screen is utterly empty, not even a single picture moves . . . this is . . . and this cannot be defined. You can experience it; it is available. It is everybody's right to experience it, but how to define it? If you try to define it you will have to bring past and future. Go to the dictionaries, go to the Encyclopedia Britannica – what will they say? They will say the present is a moment between the past and the future – that's the only way to define it! Now can there be a more wrong way to define the present? If you have to bring past and future into the definition, if you cannot define the present without bringing past and future into it, how are you going to define it?

The present is neither past nor future – and it is not between the two! It cannot be between the two, because the past is no more, and the future is not yet. How can the present be between two non-existentials? The present is existential; how can existence be defined by something which is not? That is utter absurdity! But that's where logic moves. Logic appears very logical but remains rooted in absurdity.

The present is not between the past and the future: the present is beyond past and future. The present is eternity. The present is not even part of time! And it is not that the time passes: we pass, time remains; we come and go, time remains. It is not that the moment that was here just a moment before has become past, no. It is a single moment, utterly one. It is eternity. It is not passing; it is not going anywhere.

Have you not observed some time, sitting in a train, waiting on a station, and your train starts moving and you feel the other train has started moving which is just on the other track? Or the other train starts moving and you feel your train has started moving, and then you look closely, and you find that, no, your train is not moving, the other train is moving.

Time remains there – we go on moving, we change. The ocean of time is there – the fish goes on moving. The movement is in our minds. Mind is movement. Truth is unmoving; it is always the same.

Just see: when you were born . . . have you changed since then? Yes, on one level you have changed, certainly – your body has grown, you are young or old, and so many things you have lived through, and experiences, and frustrations, and ex-citements, and ecstasies, and all that life gives . . . But go deep down: have you really changed on that plane? at the very core of your

being? Are you not the same? There nothing has changed. It is where you were, and it is where you will ever be – it is always the same there, it is one climate.

On the surface things go on changing. The wheel of the cart goes on moving, but it moves on something which remains unmoving: the axle. You are both the circumference and the axle, the center. Even the cyclone is not there at the center – there is silence. Nothing ever moves there.

That is your being! What name you give to it matters not. That center of the cyclone . . . that center of the cyclone is herenow; it is not part of time. It is eternity.

You ask me: What is herenow?

Feel it! Experience it! That's what we are doing here! What is meditation? – getting into here . . . now. What is love? – getting into herenow. What is celebration? – getting into herenow. But no definition is possible.

Getting-into is possible, because in fact you have never got out of it. It is there! You can again turn and face it.

While making love to a woman or to a man, have you not felt the herenow? If you have not felt it then you have not loved. Making love to a woman, have you not forgotten the past? has not the past utterly disappeared in that moment? In that moment do you have a past, a history, an autobiography? If you have, then you don't know how to love. Then you have been just playing the game of love not knowing exactly what it is – you have not loved.

While making love, your autobiography simply disappears. There is no more any past – as if you had never existed. You are not old – in that moment you are virgin newness; in that moment you are born for the first time; in that moment there is rebirth. Love is resurrection. And there is no future. Is there tomorrow? While making love to your woman, are you thinking of the tomorrow? what you are going to do tomorrow? Then you are not with the woman and you are not in love either. All thinking stops – that's the joy of love!

That's why I say that sex and samadhi are joined together. Sex is the lowest rung, samadhi is the highest rung, of the same ladder. They belong to the same ladder – sex the lowest rung, samadhi the highest rung. But the ladder is the same. There is an affinity.

Man got the idea of samadhi from two things: sex and sleep. Deep sleep is also on the same ladder. Man became alert to the phenomenon of samadhi, became excited, intrigued, by the phenomena of love and sleep – because in both these moments, time disappears, time stops, mind stops, thinking no longer functions – and because thinking no longer functions and time stops, there is such ecstasy and such joy. Then man became intrigued: Is it possible to attain this joy without falling into sleep? – because in sleep it happens, but you are not aware of it; it is very unconscious. Only in the morning do you hear the distant sound of it, or the later effects. If you slept deeply in the night, in the morning you feel renewed, rejuvenated – but you had not been there exactly while it was happening. What was it?

In sex, you are more aware, but then the sex moment is so small that rather than satisfying you it leaves you very much frustrated. The greater the experience of love, the greater will be the frustration that comes in its wake. Remember: only great lovers are frustrated with love; ordinary lovers are not frustrated with love – because the higher the peak, the greater will be the fall. And the peak exists only for a single moment. It comes and it is gone . . . it is like lightning.

And when the peak is gone, you have known the taste of it and now nothing will taste better and everything will look ordinary compared to it, and everything will look mundane. You have

experienced something of the sacred. You have experienced something of God – God flashed like lightning, but you could not catch hold of His face, you could not figure it out, how He looks, and He was gone. It was so fast and so sudden.

Man became interested: Is it possible to prolong that experience? Is it possible to remain in that experience a little longer? Is it possible to go into it a little deeper? Is it possible to have that experience without moving into sex? – because sex by its very nature depends on the other. It is a kind of dependence, and all kinds of dependence destroy your freedom. That's the eternal fight between the lovers.

They are giving something to each other which is immensely valuable but mixed with poison. They cannot live separately, and they cannot live together. If they are separate, they start missing the joy that was happening through the other; if they are together, the poison is too much – and one starts thinking: Is the joy worth it? Because you have to depend on the other! When you depend on the other, your freedom is destroyed, your freedom becomes defined, confined, limited. You cannot open yourself as you would like to open. You have always to look to the other and the other's feelings. You feel prevented, hindered. And the other starts possessing you, the other starts becoming powerful over you – because the other knows that it is through him or her that you feel joy.

Man started looking for the same experience without becoming dependent on the other. Then, if it depends only on sexual experience, it cannot last forever. You can have sex once in a while – and what about the other times? All other times you will remain dull and dead. Is it possible to have that joy continuously, as a continuum, like a river flowing always?

These were the speculations of man, but they came from sleep and love. In love sometimes it happens, and that is the moment which is called orgasm. If time stops, if thinking stops, and you are utterly herenow, it is orgasmic.

This orgasmic experience will give you the taste. I cannot define it, but I can indicate ways how to feel it.

If you have some aesthetic sense, then some aesthetic experience will give you the taste. Seeing a sunset, if you have the heart of a painter, the heart stops; you start missing beats. The sun is setting, just falling and falling . . . and a moment more and it will be gone. And all that color in the clouds, and all that sublime beauty! And the birds returning back to their homes, and the silence settling on the earth, and the trees getting ready to go to bed, and the whole of nature saying goodbye to the sun . . . If you have the aesthetic heart, if you are a poet or a painter or a musician, if you know what beauty is, if you are affected by beauty, not so-so but tremendously, if beauty gives you awe – then you will know what herenow is.

Or listening to music it happens sometimes. There is nothing more meditational than music. Or if you can play some instrument yourself, then it is far better – because listening you remain on the periphery; playing you are at the center. If playing some instrument – playing a flute or sitar or guitar – and you are lost into it, absolutely lost into it, time stops, mind is no more there, a Buddha moment arrives, and you know what herenow is.

Or if you can dance – which seems to me the most profound experience – if you can dance and dance so deeply that the dancer disappears, only the dance remains, then again you will be herenow.

I cannot define it, but I can indicate a few things. You will have to experience it. It is a taste! If you ask me how sugar tastes, how can I define it? I can say it is sweet, but that will not make

much sense – it will be a tautology. You were asking what sweet is; I have simply substituted another word for it. If I say to be herenow means to be in the present, I am not saying anything – I am simply substituting another word for it. That's what dictionaries go on doing.

All dictionaries live on tautologies. And if you look into the dictionary, you will be surprised: ask the philosopher or the philologist, "What is mind?" and he says, "Not matter"; and then ask him, "What is matter?" and he says, "Not mind" – but what is the point of it? You don't know either. When it comes to defining matter you use 'mind' as if you know mind, and you say, "Not mind"; and when it comes to defining the mind you start using 'matter' as if you know matter, and you say, "Not matter" – but you don't know either. Now, two things themselves undefined, how can they define each other? – that is not possible.

Ask the philologist who knows words and languages – what does he go on saying? You ask one word; he substitutes another word for it – but the real problem remains.

A Zen Master was dying and the disciples had gathered. And his whole life he had been talking about herenow – that's what Masters have been doing down through the ages. The disciples asked again, "Master, you are leaving us, and we will be left in darkness. Is there any last message so that we can cherish it and remember it forever? We will keep it as a sacred memory in our hearts."

The Master opened his eyes . . . at that moment on the roof of his hut, a squirrel ran making noise – tit tit, teevee, tit tit – and the Master raised his hand and said, "This is it!" and died.

What is he saying, "This is it"? He is simply indicating. He-is simply saying there is nothing to say – there is much to see, but there is nothing to say.

You ask: Does thought form part of it?

No, thought cannot form part of it. It is asking: Does darkness form part of light? Just like that. Darkness cannot form part of light. When light is present, dark-ness is absent; when light is absent, darkness is present – they never meet. So is the state of mind and herenow – they never meet.

Herenow means no-mind. No-mind means no thought. And you know it! Many times, it happens to you: there are moments, small, but they are there, when you suddenly see no thought stirring in you, no ripple arising – those are Buddha moments! You just have to get more in tune with them, you just have to get deeper into them, you just have to change your emphasis.

For example, you read a book. Naturally, you read the words printed on the paper; you don't see the paper. The paper remains in the background. The words written with the black ink, they are the figure, and the white paper is the background. You may not even see the white paper while you are reading – although it is there! Without it, those words -cannot exist; they exist because of it, against it, in contrast to it.

It happened: a psychologist did a small experiment. He fixed a big piece of white paper over the whole blackboard, and the students watched. Then he brought his pen and on that big sheet of white paper he made just a small dot, a black dot – just a small one, barely visible. The students had to look very, very closely, only then could they see it. And then he asked, "What do you see?" They all said, "A small dot." And nobody had seen the white paper – nobody, not a single student out of the fifty, said "We see a big white sheet of paper over the whole blackboard." Not a single student said! They all said, "A black dot." And he had simply asked, "What do you see?"

What happened?! Emphasis. Continuously reading, you emphasize the dots, the black marks on the paper; you don't see the white paper.

Just change the emphasis. Start looking at the white paper rather than at the black dot – and that brings great revolution.

When two thoughts are moving in you, between the two thoughts there is a gap, an interval, a pause. When two-words move-in you, between these two words there is a gap again. Just look-into the gaps more; become negligent of the words – look at the gaps.

Just standing on the road, try one experiment: you are standing on the road and cars are passing; maybe it is an international car rally and cars are passing. One car has gone, another car has gone, another car, but between two cars there are gaps . . . the road remains empty. Just change the emphasis! Just change the gestalt, as the Germans would like to say – change the gestalt, change the pattern.

Start looking between one gap and another gap. Rather than thinking one car has passed, another car has passed, another car has passed, start looking at the one gap that has passed, another gap, another gap – forget about the cars, start counting the gaps, how many gaps are passing. And you will be surprised – so many gaps are passing, and you had never seen them before!

Just a change of emphasis: move from the figure to the background. Thoughts are figures, conscious-ness is the background. Mind consists of figures and no-mind is the background. Just start looking into the gaps. Fall in love with the intervals! Go deeper into them, search more into them – they have real secrets in them. The mystery is hidden there. It is not in the words that pass in your mind; those words are trivia, impressions from the outside. But see on what they pass, those ripples; look into that conscious-ness. And it is infinite. It is your being.

That consciousness is called no-mind.

That is the meaning of the English expression 'reading between the lines.' Read between the lines and you will become a wise man. Read the lines and you will become an ugly scholar, a pundit, a parrot, a computer, a memory – a mind. Read between the lines and you will become a no-mind.

And no-mind is herenow.

From ***Walk Without Feet, Fly Without Wings***, Discourse #3, Q1

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Life is Always Fresh

If my find still controls and blocks my feelings, how do I discover what is the next appropriate step for me?

Listen to this question again, very carefully: *If* . . . It is not a true question; it starts with ‘if’. It is as if you are asking a hypothetical thing. You are supposing a question.

Never ask such questions. At least be honest about your questions. If they *are* there, then ask. And I know the question is there, but you don’t even want to take the responsibility for it. The question is valid – but you start by an ’if’? Can’t you say that “this is my problem”? You want it to appear theoretical? You want it to appear impersonal? Then you will miss the answer – because I don’t give answers to theoretical questions.

This is not a philosophy class – I am not teaching you philosophy – I am teaching you life. *not* a philosophy of life, but life itself.

Remember: when you ask a question, let it be true. Don’t camouflage it, don’t cover it. Don’t try to be clever with me, otherwise you will be at a loss.

It may have happened unconsciously; I am not saying that you have put that ’if’ consciously. You are not that conscious, I know. It must have happened mechanically. You may have learnt the trick of how to ask questions – and remain aloof, and detached, and out of them.

This is not the way to write or ask a question! – with me at least. You have to be in your question. I am going to be in my answer, and if you are not in your question, where and how shall we meet? If I am in my answer, I am absolutely there.

You have to be in your question – only then is the meeting possible. And the meeting is the solution – not the answer, not the question: the meeting. The point where my consciousness touches your consciousness. But if you are not in your question and I answer it, how am I going to touch your consciousness? You will be absent! I will be knocking on a door where you are not.

Don’t be so much afraid of the answer. Be authentic. Be existential! Let the question have the flavor of your being! Let the question have a *life* – it should have a heart which beats, it should *breathe*! Then only is there some possibility . . .

You kill the question from the very beginning: ‘if’?

If my mind still controls . . . as if it is not controlling and you are asking for others’ sake.

If my mind still controls . . . and just watch how many times in such a small sentence ‘I’, ‘my’, ‘mine’, have come.

If my *mind still controls and blocks my feelings, how do I discover what is the next appropriate step for* me *to take*?

With so much ‘I’, whatever step you take will be wrong. With so much ‘I’, a right step cannot be taken at all. The ‘I’ is the poison. It will destroy whatsoever you do.

With so much ‘I’, if you love, your love will turn into hatred. With so much ‘I’, if you meditate, your meditation will be nothing but a madness inside. With so much ‘I’, if you look at the flowers, you will not see the beauty.

The ‘I’ is ugly, and it creates ugliness all around it.

In fact, the very question: . . . *What* is the next appropriate *step*? Is because of the 'I'. The 'I' wants to control not only *this* step but the next too. It has been controlling all your past steps, it is controlling your present step, it wants to control the next step too. What do you mean by *appropriate*? That which fits with your ideas of right, true; that which fits with your idea of religion, spirituality. And what do you know of religion and spirituality? What do you know of truth? How can your next step be adequate? appropriate?

Any step which is in accordance with the truth, any step which has the quality of suchness in it, is appropriate. But what do you know about suchness? You have lived in the mind – with the 'I', 'me', 'mine'. All that you know is just rubbish. And out of that rubbish, you want to take an appropriate step? Remember: out of mind there is no appropriate step; out of mind all steps are inappropriate. Why? What do I mean when I say that?

Let us move slowly into this phenomenon.

Life brings a situation. Those situations are always new. Life is immensely creative; it never repeats. Even if you feel it is a repetition, it is not. There are vital differences, subtle differences . . . may not be available to you on the surface, but have you seen two mornings exactly the same? Have you ever come across two rose flowers exactly the same? Have you come across two human beings exactly the same? What to say about human beings? – you cannot find two pebbles exactly the same. You can search the whole earth . . .

Life is always fresh. That is the *meaning* of being alive – life is always moving into new spaces. And your mind is always old; it knows nothing of the new. It knows only of the past. It knows only of that which has happened. It accumulates experiences. 'Experience' means it has happened. And remember: life is never going to repeat the same situation in which that experience happened. And you act out of the mind, hence there is always a gap between you and life – and nothing is appropriate. How can it be appropriate?

You act out of the past experiences and life is always creating new spaces. You never meet with life, you never merge with life. You are always inappropriate. Your answers don't fit the questions that life raises. Your responses are not responses but reactions.

To be appropriate means to me to be spontaneous. Not to act out of the mind is to be appropriate: to act in *this* moment, to act utterly in this moment, to see the situation and to act, respond to the situation.

Don't search in your memory for what is appropriate, because the memory will supply you with answers which are *not* appropriate and cannot be appropriate. The memory is always irrelevant. You have to put the memory aside. You have to be in a kind of absolute exposure to the reality, to the situation that is.

And let your total being respond. Don't decide about it. Don't rehearse it. Don't prepare for it. Let it respond! And then it will be appropriate.

When you are not, it will be appropriate. When the mind is not brought in, it will be appropriate. When it is spontaneous, it will be appropriate. Bring a little preparation in it, just a little bit, and you have poisoned it, then it is never appropriate.

Life is not a school examination where you go prepared. That's why schools are so ugly – they don't prepare you for life, they destroy all possibilities of life. Schools have to disappear from the world, and the colleges and the universities. They are anti-life. They believe in rehearsals. They believe in giving you fixed answers – as if there are fixed challenges! – the basic fallacy.

And one third of the life is wasted in the university. By the time you are ready with a Ph. D. one third of the life has gone down the drain. And what are you ready for? You have simply bookish answers crammed into your head; you have become a computer. And now, with all that knowledge, whatsoever you do will be *inappropriate*!

A knowledgeable man has never been known to be appropriate – never. He always goes on missing the train; he is always late. He is never to the point – he cannot be. His arrows never reach the target – they cannot reach, because the target is moving! and his ideas of it are fixed.

Education no longer prepares you for life: it prepares you for death. Your universities are cemeteries where the past lives and goes on killing the present – and the future too. Education, as it is in the world now, is very reactionary. A totally different kind of education is needed – not that which simply goes on helping you to cram answers, but that which helps you to be open, which helps you to function from a state of not knowing.

Mm? – that's what meditation is all about: a state of not knowing. Then whatsoever you do is going to be appropriate, because then you are no more the doer – then God is the doer. Then life itself is responding.

Just try to observe a few moments when you are spontaneous – they will give you such joy.

For example: somebody is drowning in the river, and you stand there and you think about it – "What should I do? What is appropriate?" If you are a Christian missionary, you will think this is a great opportunity to help and serve humanity – this is a way to reach heaven and be special there. And you repeat in your head all the quotes from the Bible, what Jesus has said – that service is the way to God . . . and you jump! You are not concerned with this poor human being who is drowning: you are concerned with your ego trip you call spirituality. You want to be virtuous.

This is so ugly! This spirituality, this religiousness, this service, is so ugly. It is not a spontaneous act, it is not out of your heart it is out of your head.

And if your head has been prepared in a different way, for example, if you had been born in another religion . . . there exists a religion in India, a sect of Jains – *Terapanth*: if you had been born into that sect, then these ideas wouldn't come to you. A follower of *Terapanth* will stand there on the bank, he will also think just like you are thinking, but he will think . . . his scriptures say: Everybody suffers according to his karmas. Now, this man is drowning, he must have done some bad karmas in the past. And his scriptures say: 'Don't come in the way of anybody's karmas. Now, he is being punished by his own karmas – you need not jump and save him. That will not be a help; you will be hindering; you will be delaying! If you get him out of the river and you save him, someday he will again have to fall into the river and drown. Mm?' the mathematics of karma: he *has* to. Maybe he killed his wife in some past life by drowning her in water – now he *has* to suffer!

Now think! From these two different minds: the Christian thinks this is the opportunity to go to God and the Jain thinks this is the opportunity not to get emotional – mm? – this is foolish to jump; it is emotional, sentimental. He has to control himself not to jump and not to save this human being, because he is suffering his karmas – let him suffer so that he can be finished with it. Next life he will be born in a better life, in a better way.

Now both these people are acting out of their memories. Can't you see a third possibility: just acting out of the spontaneity of the moment, on the spur of the moment – neither a Hindu, nor a

Christian, nor a Mohammedan, nor a Jain, nor a Buddhist . . . nobody? Just acting out of the situation itself? Then it is appropriate.

That is my definition of 'appropriate'. Act out of the mind and it is inappropriate; it is not true to the situation. Act without mind and it is appropriate.

Now I will read the question again:

If my mind still c0ntrols and blocks my feelings, how do I discover what is the next appropriate step for me to take?

Don't think of the morrow. Just be in this moment, spontaneous, and out of the spontaneity of this moment the spontaneity of the next will follow of its own accord. You are not to plan for it.

But we have become great planners. You come from the office and you start planning on the way what your wife will ask and how you will answer, and you prepare everything. You go to the office from the house and you know what your boss is going to say and what you are going to answer.

You go on preparing! You don't trust life.

To trust life is to be appropriate. What do I mean by trusting life? I mean let the moment come . . . let it happen . . . you be there present . . . you be available! And then whatsoever happens through you is good, is virtue.

Virtue is not a decision on your part. Sin is a decision on your part. Whatsoever you decide becomes a sin. The word 'decision' is beautiful. It is made of two words: 'de', 'cision' – it means 'cut off'. Every decision cuts you off from life. When you act out of decisions, you act against life. When you allow life to take possession of you, everything is appropriate.

-Osho

From ***Walk Without Feet, Fly Without Wings, Think Without Mind***, Discourse #4, Q2

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Wake Up Here Now

The Ancients said:

"(Self)-cultivation takes an unimaginable time (while) Enlightenment in an instant is attained."

Enlightenment is attained in a single moment. Why? — because you are already enlightened. You have simply forgotten it. You have to be reminded, that's all.

The function of the Master is to remind you, not to give you a path but to give you a remembrance; not to give you methods of cultivation, not to give you a character, virtue, but only awareness, intelligence, awakening.

In a single moment it can be attained because you have never lost it in the first place. You are dreaming that you are unenlightened. You can dream you are in heaven; you can dream you are in hell. And you know! – you dream sometimes you are in heaven and sometimes in hell. In the morning you can be in heaven and by the evening you can be in hell. One moment you can be in heaven, another moment you can be in hell. It all depends on you. It is something to do with your psyche; it is not something outside you.

A man died, arrived at the Pearly Gates, and was shown by St. Peter to a waiting room. He sat there, naturally anxious to know whether he would be sent to Heaven or to Hell. The door opened and a famous saint walked in.

The man rejoiced, "I must be in Heaven!"

Just then the door opened again and a famous prostitute walked in. The man was confused. "In that case I must be in Hell!" he thought.

While he was still wondering, the saint grabbed the prostitute and started making love to her. The man, flabbergasted, ran to St. Peter and asked, "You *must* tell me: is this Heaven or Hell?"

"Can't you see?" answered St. Peter. "It is Heaven for him and Hell for her!"

Heaven and hell are not geographical; they are not something outside you, they are something that belongs to your interiority. If you are awake, then you are in a totally different universe; it is as if in your awakening the whole existence becomes awakened. It takes a new color, a new flavor, a new fragrance. When you are asleep, the whole existence sleeps with you. It all depends on you.

So the question is not of cultivating any character, of becoming virtuous, of becoming a saint. The question is how to come out of dreams, how to come out of the past and the future, how to be just here now.

That's what enlightenment is . . . "*Ah, This*!"

When Alice was at the Mad Hatter's tea party, she noticed that no jam was available. She asked for jam, and the Mad Hatter said, "Jam is served every other day."

Alice protested, “But there was no jam yesterday either!”

“That’s right,” said the Mad Hatter. “The rule is: always jam yesterday and jam tomorrow, never jam today . . . because today is not every other day!”

And that’s how you are living: jam yesterday, jam tomorrow, never jam today. And that’s where jam is! So you only imagine; you go on in a drugged, sleepy state. You have forgotten completely that this moment is the *only* real moment there is. And if you want to have any contact with reality, wake up here now!

From ***Ah This***, Discourse #7

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17 Man – The Greatest Problem, the Only Solution

Man - The Greatest Problem, the Only Solution

Osho, what is the greatest problem in the world?

The greatest problem or the smallest problem, it is the same: man. And when I say man, I do not mean something abstract. I mean I, you, he, she. There exists no man as such, separate from human beings.

There exists no humanity; it is only a name. The reality is the individual. And the problem arises because the reality has not been accepted. The real has been denied expression; and the unreal, the abstract, has been imposed upon it.

You have been told continuously, "Live for humanity." Where is humanity? Have you ever come across humanity? Do you think you are ever going to have an encounter with humanity? It is just like all those big, bombastic, bogus words: God, motherland, fatherland, Holy Ghost. They don't exist, they are only projected. "Live for humanity" means don't live for yourself.

Nobody has the guts to say to you directly, "Don't live for yourself." So they have found a cunning, clever, indirect way of saying the same thing: Live for God, live for humanity, live for man, live for the universe. Live for anything – XYZ – but please don't live for yourself. And here is the root of the whole problem.

Your life is your life, and it can be lived only one way; there is no other alternative. And the only way that it can be lived has to be found by you. It is not all ready like a superhighway, ready-made, with millions of people moving on it, going toward their goal, and you have just to join the crowd.

No, there is no superhighway to existence.

There are only small footpaths which are walked in total aloneness. [...]

Man is consciousness.

Consciousness cannot have any destiny.

Consciousness has freedom.

Destiny is just the opposite of freedom; that is its implication. Destiny means you are a born slave. Even before you were born, your stamp of slavery was completely sealed; you were finished before you were born. That's the meaning of destiny as far as implication is concerned. In fact, you were never born because before birth death had happened; that is your destiny. You are programmed.

Because of this idea of destiny, astrologers, palmists, and all kinds of future predictors go on exploiting man. They would not have been able to exploit you if you were not carrying the idea that you have a destiny. If you have a destiny, then there may be some ways to find out what it is: perhaps in the lines of your hands, perhaps in the lines of your head, perhaps in the lines of your feet, or perhaps in your birth chart, in the combination and position of stars, planets. Some way must be there to read the program.

And the strangest thing is that you feel happy with astrologers telling you about your future. You are really too curious to know about the future, without ever thinking that to have a future means you are dead. If the future is already settled, then how is freedom possible? If tomorrow something is going to happen, then it is going to happen; I am just a victim in the hands of some unknown force – I am not my own master.

To have a destiny means you are not your own master.

You cannot do anything about your life.

These are the implications of that simple word, destiny. It leaves you dead. It leaves you a slave. It leaves you without any excitement because all is determined. It leaves you without any hope because what can you hope? Whatever is going to happen is going to happen whether you hope or not. You are no longer significant in any way in your own life. Even to call it your own life is not right: Destiny has taken all juice out of you.

This is what has made man into a problem. […]

If man has a destiny, then there is no possibility of turning off anywhere. And we have been told for millions of years, "You have a built-in program." Now from where are you going to know what this built-in program is? Somebody has to tell it to you. Those are the manipulators, all around you; like an octopus, they go on sucking your blood from every possible side. And they go on filling you with ideas that you have to become this, you have to become that, you have to become somebody who has nothing to do with your nature. This is what has made man a problem.

In fact, man can be the solution, not only of himself, but of the whole existence, because he is the highest peak of consciousness.

Man lives a problematic life, and dies a problematic death. From the very beginning to the end, he is just a long, long problem. That creates anxiety, anguish, tension, suffering, and a constant feeling that something is being missed. And that feeling is true. Not only something, everything is being missed.

But if you just stand a step back and look at the whole situation, and see how the problem is being created, then to solve it is just a child's game.

I am reminded of a story. Gautam the Buddha one day comes into his morning discourse; ten thousand sannyasins are waiting for him, just like every day. But today there is something surprising.

Everybody is puzzled and looking at each other because Buddha is coming with a handkerchief. It is very costly – perhaps some king has presented it to him.

But he does not accept that kind of thing, so everybody is looking, thinking, what is the matter?

And why should he bring it just in his hand ahead of himself almost saying to everybody, "Look, look well"? And then he comes and sits; and keeping the handkerchief in his hand, says to his sannyasins, "Look very carefully."

They all look. There is nothing to look at, just a beautiful silken handkerchief. And then Buddha starts putting knots in the handkerchief; he puts five knots in it. There is immense silence . . . everybody is simply watching what he is doing. Then Buddha asks them, "Is this the same handkerchief the same that I had brought with me, or is it a different handkerchief?"

Sariputta, one of his chief disciples, stands up and says, "Why are you joking with us? You have never done such a thing. This is the same handkerchief." Buddha says, "Sariputta, think once again – because the handkerchief that I brought had no knots, and this has five knots. How can this be the same?"

Sariputta could see the point. He said, "I am sorry. I do understand. Although it is the same handkerchief now it is in a very knotted condition – such as a man in anguish. He is the same man; a man in suffering is the same man but in knots."

Buddha said, "Exactly right. That's what I want to show to you: that the man who is in suffering is not different from Gautam the Buddha. I am just a handkerchief without knots. You are a handkerchief with five knots." Of course, Buddha has his philosophy of five basic problems that trouble man: violence, greed, untruthfulness, unawareness, and the ego. You can find many more knots; these are just the main ones according to him.

Secondly, he said, "I would like to ask you one thing more. I am trying to open these knots. Look at me – will this help to open the knots?" He pulled both the ends of the handkerchief; the knots became smaller and tighter. Somebody shouted, "What are you doing? This way those knots will never open. Such fine silk and you are pulling so hard! The knots are becoming so small that it will become almost impossible to open them again."

Buddha said, "You can understand about this handkerchief so clearly – can't you understand yourself? Can't you see yourself in the same, understanding way? Have you been pulling your knots or not? Otherwise, why do they go on becoming smaller and smaller, and tighter and tighter?

"A child is loose, relaxed. Look at the old man, just knots and knots. Certainly, whatever you are doing is wrong. You are pulling the handkerchief. You are trying hard; your intention is good, you want to open the knots. You are taking much trouble – but your doing is your very undoing. You are making things more and more complicated, worse and worse. And the more complicated they become, the harder you pull, because you think, what else to do?"

Buddha asked, "Then I would like to ask you, what do you suppose I should do?"

One monk stood up and he said, “I would like to come close, and first I would like to see how the knots have been put together.”

Buddha said, “That’s a scientific way. Before you can undo something, you have to know how it has been done, because if you know how it has been done, you have already known all that is needed to undo it; you have just to reverse the process.”

The monk looked at the handkerchief and he said “The knots have been done in such a way that if we relax the handkerchief and allow the knots to become looser rather than tighter, and help them to become loose, it is not going to be very difficult. They are simple knots.”

Buddha gave the handkerchief to him and the man opened the knots one by one. Buddha said, “Today’s sermon is finished. I am not going to speak anymore today. Just go and meditate about your knots, and how you have managed to make them so tight. And just do the reverse.”

Any small problem, just look at it, at how you have been trying to solve it, and it goes on becoming worse and worse. Certainly in your doing there is something which is becoming nourishment to it rather than a killer. You are not poisoning it, you are nourishing it, feeding it. And don’t try to work on so many knots together. Just choose one small knot, the smallest you can find in yourself; by smallest, I mean the most insignificant.

People have the tendency to choose the most significant; even when they are choosing to solve their problems, they choose the greatest problem first. Now, that is simply foolish. Just become a little aware, alert. Start from the small things, very small things.

In one sermon Buddha was speaking, and a man sitting in front of him was moving his toe continuously. Buddha was not like me; otherwise he would have stopped him immediately. He tolerated it, tolerated it, tolerated it – but it was too much – because the man was just in front of him and he went on, went on, went on.

At the end Buddha said, “What is wrong with your toe?” The moment he said, “What is wrong with your toe?” the man stopped. Buddha said, “This is what is wrong with your toe: you are not aware of it. You were not doing it; it was happening almost unconsciously. It is just a habit; you must be doing it everywhere you are sitting. Now it goes on doing it by itself knowing that the master needs it. The master is not even aware that it is happening, because the moment I asked you about it, it stopped immediately. That means the moment your awareness went to the toe there was a complete break.”

Now, start with such small things which have not much investment in them. People start with their ego – they want to become egoless. Now, you are taking on such a big problem. You are so small and the problem is so big that you are going to fail.

In fact, that’s why you have chosen the big problem, because you want to fail, you don’t want to succeed. Perhaps this too is the way of the ego, to choose the biggest problem. You are no ordinary man trying to change small things here and there; when you want to change, you want to change the real problem. Perhaps this is the ego coming in from the back and deceiving you.

Now choose something very insignificant, which makes not much difference. But the beauty is, the smallest problem has the same properties as the biggest problem, the same ingredients as the biggest problem and the same solution as the biggest problem.

All problems are one problem.

If you can solve a small problem – dissolve it, get rid of it, be finished with it – you know the master key.

Now you can go on opening all the locks in your house. And there is not going to be any trouble.

The basic key is awareness.

And while solving a small problem, you are starting to learn the ABC of awareness.

Choose something meaningless with no investment; it will be easier to work with. And once you have worked with it, you will be surprised: you have the secret, the whole secret of your puzzled, knotted life.

Solve it, then man is born in you.

Before that, you are only a problem.

From ***From Misery to Enlightenment***, Discourse #19

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A Sunrise That Never Sets

I ask you a question because I want your attention, and the only question that occurs to me in the two years I have been here is about the dark night of the soul. You said sometimes that we have to dance and celebrate so that we can go through it easily. In the back of my mind there is a question: what is that dark night of the soul? Am I missing something?

You are not missing anything, not even the dark night of the soul: You are already in it! To be unconscious of your actions, your thoughts, your feelings create your dark night of the soul.

The moment you are aware of all these three layers of your being . . . Thought is the most superficial, feeling, a little deeper, and then being – the last thing that you have to lose into the ultimate. The process is simple, the process is the same.

Watch, witness, observe your thoughts – without any judgment, without any condemnation or evaluation . . . because the moment you make any judgment for or against, you are no longer a witness; you have already become part of the thought process. Remain silent, and just see whatsoever is passing on the screen of your mind, the way you see a film. Just remember that you are only a seer.

And the same process when you have succeeded on the first layer will make you capable of seeing your feelings which are more subtle. But the person who can see thoughts and remains silently a witness automatically becomes capable of the second step. Soon you will be able to see your feelings, sentiments, moods, emotions.

Once you are beyond the second, then the third . . . it is the deepest in you, the feeling of "I," the separation of you from the universe. Actually, you are not separated for a single moment, you cannot exist in separation. You are in tune in every possible way. There are thousands of bridges between you and the existence around you.

Now watch this silence, this is-ness, this feeling of am-ness; simply watch. There is nothing else to watch, just a small boundary around you.

As you watch thoughts, thoughts disappear. As you watch feelings, feelings disappear. As you watch being, you are no longer separate. Only the witness remains, which is your eternal reality. And it has nothing to do with you; it is universal.

Your witness and my witness are not separate.

Wherever witnessing happens, it is the same. It knows no distance in space and no distance in time. For the witness there is no space and no time; it has no limits.

Before you arrive at this point, all else is the dark night of the soul. Your arrival at this witnessing starts the beautiful day of the soul. It is a sunrise which never sets.

But just listening to me will not help. You will have to practice this as much as possible. And it needs no separate time – that you have to sit for one hour, or twenty minutes, and witness. If you have time, you can sit silently and witness, but there is no necessity. You can go on doing your work and still be witnessing.

The whole thing is how to make your witness stronger and stronger, so that it is capable of losing all identities. Only a strong person can lose all identities.

And to be in utter silence . . . there is light, a light that never began and never ends. And it is yours just to claim. And the effort is not so difficult as religions have been telling you.

Walking on the road, what is the problem? Why can't you simply watch your walking? The question is not of the object that you witness, the question is that you witness. Anything helps to strengthen your witnessing energies.

Looking at a beautiful sunset, don't just get lost, don't forget yourself. Remember that you are only a seer. It can go on twenty-four hours a day without anybody knowing that you are doing something.

Religion is not something that the world has to know about. It is something that you have to do within yourselves.

Start from this very moment.

This immense silence – thousands of people, but it is as if there is no one . . . just witness. The faraway sound of an airplane . . . You remain only a witness.

And then go on practicing the same thing whatever you are doing – eating, taking a shower, doing some work in the garden, in the field. It does not matter what you do, what matters is that your witness is always present.

In the beginning you will forget many times, because for many lives you have never been a witness, you have always been a doer. So it is just an old habit. Old habits die hard, but they certainly die.

And it all depends on you. The more you make it a process almost like breathing . . . You go on doing everything, still you are breathing. You don't stop your breathing because you are digging a hole in the earth.

Witnessing has to become just like breathing. It is, in fact, the breathing of the universal soul in you.

And once you have tasted just a moment of being universal, the morning has come. The dark night of the soul is over.

From ***From Death to Deathlessness***, Discourse #30

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Mentors in Meditation

You have often said that no improvement is needed; no goal is there to be achieved. And you have also spoken about how, in the Buddhafield, a person can be helped by those who are further along the path who can help those who are a few steps behind them. Are there different stages of spiritual growth? And if so, can you talk to us about them, and how people in these different stages can be helpful to each other?

In one sense, it is an indivisible reality. Because what it is on the first step, so it is on the last step. It is pure witnessing. But on the first step, you are witnessing only the activities of the body. On the second step, you are witnessing the activities of the mind. On the third step, you are witnessing the activities of the heart. And on the fourth, you are simply witnessing your witnessing itself.

So, if you look at witnessing, it is just the same reality — indivisible. But if you look at the objects of witnessing, then you can divide it into steps. The person who is witnessing only his bodily activities can be immensely helped by the person who has passed that stage and is witnessing his mind, thoughts, dreams, imaginations — all the activities that mind is capable of. The person who is on the third stage can help both — the first stage person and the second stage person — because now he is witnessing very subtle moods, feelings, emotions — very fine, very subtle, very slippery. And the person who has come to the fourth and the last stage can help all the three.

The help is a kind of encouragement. First, he can explain to you that whatever hindrances you are feeling are natural. He has experienced them himself, so don't be worried. Go on working on them, however hard they look. They may be rocks, and your witnessing may be as soft as water, but in the long run, the water wins and the rock simply disappears into sand. At the first glance it seems that there is no way for the water to win. How can it win over the rock? But finally, that's what happens. Just somebody who has seen it happen has to help you, that says, "Don't be discouraged by the rock and its strength. It is nothing before the water."

Lao Tzu used to call his way the watercourse way — a beautiful name, so soft, so liquid, no rigidity. You can put it into any form. It is always ready, gives no resistance. If you put it in a bottle, it takes the shape of the bottle. If you put it into a jar, it takes the shape of the jar, with no resistance at all. Such a nonresistant element finally destroys the rock. But somebody has to say to you, "I have faced the same situation. Don't be discouraged. The rock will disappear, will have to disappear. That is the way of existence."

So as far as objects are concerned, you can divide the way into three steps: the body, the mind, the heart. The fourth happens on its own accord. Nobody can do it. If you can fulfill three steps totally and completely, suddenly there is a quantum leap. You find yourself at the very center of your being. The seer is there, but there is nothing to see. The awareness is there, but there is nothing to be aware of. When awareness has nothing to be aware of, it turn upon itself. It becomes its own object. And this is what we call realization. You have known thousands of things; for the first time, you know your knowing. You have been conscious of many things; for the first time you become conscious of consciousness itself. You have arrived home.

So remember, whenever I say that it is indivisible, I mean witnessing. Whenever I say that people can be more advanced, less advanced, I mean that their objects of witnessing can be

gross, can be subtle, can be very subtle — or, there may be nothing as an object. That is the moment of revolution; and that is the only revolution there is. It opens the doors of all the mysteries of existence. It allows you to feel deathlessness, eternity. It gives you the taste of pure existence. Yes, it is a taste — that's why there is no way to say it, no way to explain it — one can only experience.

From ***The Last Testament, V.1,*** Talk #19

Question asked by Ma Yoga Pratima, Rajneeshpuram, Oregon

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The Three Steps of Enlightenment

I am seeing that within the experience of pleasure there arises a deep longing to know something which is more total. Pleasure-pain, happiness-sadness, seem to be one, and I feel there must be something which transcends them. Is my longing for what you call bliss?

Yes. Pleasure and pain are not two things: happiness and sadness – just two sides of the same coin. That's why every happiness can turn into sadness, every pleasure can turn into pain. [...]

All polar opposites are parts of each other. They are complementary and can change into each other. So, your feeling is perfectly right: there is something beyond the polarities. And that's what I call enlightenment.

Enlightenment has no polar opposite to it.

Unenlightenment is not the polar opposite of enlightenment; it is only the absence of enlightenment.

It is just like darkness and light. You ordinarily think they are opposites, but that is not true. Darkness simply does not exist; it is only the absence of light.

If darkness has its own existence, then first you will have to bring the light in the room and then push the darkness out of the room; but it has no existence. The moment you bring the light in, the darkness is not found.

Enlightenment is the light of your innermost core. Once you experience it, all darkness in your life disappears.

Blissfulness also has no opposite to it.

Truth also has no opposite to it.

Anything that has not any opposite to it, is part of the experience of enlightenment. It is beyond the polarities, far away from the polarities. You cannot change it into anything else. It is what it is.

Now, don't just go on longing for it because just longing will not help. Start the first step toward it, and the first step automatically leads you to the second step, the third step, and you are home.

I call these three steps the whole science of meditation.

The first step is, become aware of your body.

See it as if it is covering you like clothes. It is around you, but it is not you. That is the first step: to disidentify yourself with the body.

The second step is to disidentify with your mind.

Your thoughts are not you. There is a constant traffic. On the screen of the mind so many thoughts are moving, but you are not one of them. You are a witness, you are outside; you are seeing those thoughts moving.

Anything that you can see is not you. That should be the criterion: anything you can witness is not you. You are the witness.

And the third step is witnessing, watching your feelings, your moods.

These three steps, and you are home.

Then there is only the witness, and nothing to be witnessed.

You are there in your total glory, luminosity, and all around you there is pure nothingness. This is the state of the awakened one, the enlightened one.

So when you do your *gachchhamis* and you say, "I go to the feet of the Awakened One, His commune, His truth," it is not a prayer, it is simply a reminder to yourself. And you are not going to the feet of anyone else: you are going to your own awakened self.

If your master is awakened, he simply represents you. He is just a mirror in which you can see yourself.

But you are going toward the discovery of the awakened one within yourself. And when the disciple finds the master within himself, the journey is complete.

From ***From Death to Deathlessness***, Discourse #36, Q4

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18 Two Hundred Torches can Give Fire to Millions

Two Hundred Torches Can Give Fire to Millions

You have just been saying that the words of the Master become mere words after the Master is gone. What will happen after you are gone?

Do you think my words are not already dead for you? First, think of that. The master is there, his words are there, but are those words alive for you? If they are alive for you, don't be worried. You know the secret.

It is not the words. The master can be there, and the words can be dead. So why can't it happen the other way around? – The master is dead, but the words are still alive. It all depends on you. It is not a question of the master's life or death, but how you relate to those words.

Yes, it is simpler when the master is there, only in one way. Because those words are spoken, they carry some flavor of the master's heart. They carry a few beats of the master's heart towards you. It is simple in this way. But on the other hand, when the master is alive, perhaps the words will never become alive to you, because you start taking the master for granted. Then the words are dead.

It happened in the Second World War that Adolf Hitler declared that he was going to destroy the Tower of London. Millions of people rushed towards the tower – they had passed the tower thousands of times in their lives but had never taken the trouble to see it. People come from all over the world to see the Tower of London, but Londoners take it for granted. The moment Hitler said he was going to destroy it, suddenly those people who had lived their whole lives in London became aware that the Tower of London could not be taken for granted anymore. They rushed to see it before this madman, Adolf Hitler, destroyed it.

The master is alive – but the disciple can take him for granted. You can take me for granted. Then those words are already dead because your aliveness is not available. If you are capable of being alert, alive, responsive, it makes no difference: the master may be dead, but his words will go on resounding in you. Even the written words, which are dead, can become alive in you; you just have to open your heart.

The question is not of the master's life and death, the question basically is of your response.

So don't be worried about when I am gone. Those who are missing me now will be missing me then too – no loss. Those who are living my message now, they will go on living it. And if they go on living it, they cannot help but spread it. I am not depending on books – all the religions have depended on books – I am depending on you!

George Gurdjieff used to say – very sadly, of course – that if even two hundred people are enlightened, they can make the whole world full of light, full of life. Just two hundred people can transform the whole character of humanity. He could not manage it, but what he said is true.

I am going to manage it! I will not leave you unless I have made enough people enlightened so that they can make the whole world afire, alive. I am depending on you, not on any books. Those books may be helpful in some way to bring people to you, but my word will be throbbing in your heart; only then can you help anybody who comes to you.

And it is so simple. I have more than half a million sannyasins in the world, and more than one million people who are just on the borderline – a little push and they will be sannyasins. One million more who are lovers but cannot drop their camelhood . . .

On this big a scale, a worldwide scale, nobody has worked before. Gautam Buddha remained confined to the small state of Bihar in India – not even the whole of India. India has thirty states; Buddha remained confined to one space, one state. He did great work, but it was impossible to transform the whole quality of consciousness on the earth. The same is true about Jesus, Moses – anybody who has been trying.

For a simple reason I have been able to contact millions of people around the world: I am not confined to any tradition. I am not burdened by the past; I am completely weightless. So anybody who is burdened – and who is not burdened? – becomes interested in me, particularly the young people who are fed up with all the nonsense that is being taught in the churches and the synagogues, in the temples, in the mosques.

All these people, these churches, synagogues and mosques, are trying to bridge the gap. You have heard the phrase "generation gap." Between you and the church, between you and the synagogue, there is not just a generation gap; there is a gap of hundreds of generations. And in trying to bridge it, they are proving themselves buffoons because truth never compromises. It cannot – with whom will it compromise? Compromising truth means compromising with lies.

And all these people have become afraid that young people are no longer interested; they don't come to the synagogue, they don't come to the church, so something should be done that can attract young people. Their whole business is going down.

I have heard about three rabbis . . . And by the way, don't let me drift. Whenever I come across the word "rabbi" I immediately associate it with rubbish. These three rabbis were meeting, discussing, talking about great things. One rabbi said, "My synagogue is the most modern because we allow people to smoke in the synagogue. There is no harm in it."

The second rabbi said, "This is nothing, my synagogue is even more modern: we even allow people to make love in the synagogue. What is wrong with it?"

The third rabbi said, "This is nothing. My synagogue is the most avant-garde."

The two rabbis said, "Just tell us what you have done."

He said, "My synagogue remains closed for Jewish holidays!"

They are trying hard, but it is just foolishness. They cannot catch hold of the new spirit of man.

I don't give you any tradition.

I don't give you any scripture.

I don't give you any discipline.

Those are all non-essentials. I simply concentrate my whole work on making you more conscious. Consciousness is the key to transform the whole of humanity.

And yes, Gurdjieff is right: if even two hundred people are aflame, enlightened, the whole world will become enlightened because these two hundred torches can give fire to millions of people.

Those people are also carrying torches but without any fire. They have everything, just the fire is missing. And when fire passes from one torch to another, the first torch is not losing anything at all.

The enlightened consciousness is an infinite reservoir: it can give to you and yet it remains the same. Its quantity does not decrease because it is not a question of quantity at all; it is a question of quality. Qualities can be shared without losing anything.

You can love as many people as you want – that does not mean one day you will go bankrupt, and you will have to declare, "Now I have no love." You cannot go bankrupt as far as love is concerned. Yes, you can go bankrupt as far as money is concerned. Money is a quantity; love is a quality. What to say of enlightened consciousness? It is the highest quality possible; there is nothing higher than that.

Don't be afraid, worried that if I am gone, then what will happen to my words. I will not be gone before I have sown the seeds of those words in you. They are not mine! They are nobody's. They are coming out of existence itself – I am simply a vehicle. You can become a vehicle. Everybody is capable of becoming a vehicle. Hence, I am not depending on old strategies; they have all failed. I am depending on living human beings.

And that is the only way to save humanity without becoming a savior, to save humanity without creating in them greed for heaven and fear of hell. The only way to save humanity is to give them some taste of what it means to be enlightened, a little fragrance, so they can feel the invisible.

And I am absolutely certain, utterly happy, that I have got the right people: people who are going to be my books, my temples, my synagogues. This is the reason I call this the first religion because it depends on living human beings, not on dead holy scriptures, traditions, beliefs.

I am giving you the taste of my being and preparing you to do the same, on your part, to others. It all depends on you, whether my words will remain living or will die. As far as I am concerned, I do not care.

While I am here, I am pouring myself into you. And I am grateful that you are allowing it to happen. Who bothers about the future? There is nobody in me who can care about the future. If

existence can find me as a vehicle, I can remain assured that it can find thousands of people to be its vehicle. I am simply giving you a little opportunity to become vehicles of the whole.

From ***The False to the Truth***, Discourse #16, Q2

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Being is Not Doing

Being with you I feel so blissful and liberated, and there seems to be no end to it. You must have tricked me. What is your secret?

I am a simple man without any secret. I am just an open book, and a book in which nothing is written. If you like to call it a secret it is your choice, but it is a very open secret.

If you want to be, learn the art of being: not to be.

Let me repeat it because I know you are deaf. If you want really to be, the only way is to learn not to be. Disappear. Just as God disappears from existence, you have to disappear from your life. Let life flow of its own accord.

It is the simplest art in the world, to be silent. It is not a doing, it is a non-doing. How can it be difficult?

I am showing you the way of enlightenment through laziness. Nothing has to be done to attain it because it is your nature. You have already got it. You are just so busy with outer business that you cannot see your own nature.

Deep within you is exactly the same as outside you: the beauty, the silence, the ecstasy, the blissfulness. But please, sometimes be kind to yourself: just sit down and don't do anything, either physically or mentally. Relax, not in an American way . . . because I have seen so many American books titled *How to Relax*. The very title says that the man knows nothing about relaxation. There is no "how."

Yes, it is okay – *How to Repair a Car;* you will have to do something. But there is no doing as such as far as relaxation is concerned. Just don't do anything. I know you will find it a little difficult in the beginning. That is not because relaxation is difficult, it is because you have become addicted to doing something. That addiction will take a little time to disappear.

Just be and watch. Being is not doing, and watching is also not doing. You sit silently doing nothing, witnessing whatsoever is happening. Thoughts will be moving in your mind; your body may be feeling some tension somewhere, you may have a migraine. Just be a witness. Don't be identified with it. Watch, be a watcher on the hills, and everything else is happening in the valley. It is a knack, not an art.

Meditation is not a science. It is not an art; it is a knack – just that way. All that you need is a little patience.

The old habits will continue; the thoughts will go on rushing. And your mind is always in a rush hour, the traffic is always jammed. Your body is not accustomed to sitting silently – you will be tossing and turning. Nothing to be worried about. Just watch that the body is tossing and turning, that the mind is whirling, is full of thoughts – consistent, inconsistent, useless – fantasies, dreams. You remain in the center, just watching.

All the religions of the world have taught people to do something: stop the process of thought, force the body into a still posture. That's what yoga is – a long practice of forcing the body to be

still. But a forced body is not still. And all the prayers, concentrations, contemplations of all the religions do the same with the mind: they force it, they don't allow the thoughts to move. Yes, you have the capacity to do it. And if you persist you may be able to stop the thought process. But this is not the real thing, it is absolutely fake.

When stillness comes on its own, when silence descends without your effort, when you watch thoughts and a moment comes when thoughts start disappearing and silence starts happening, that is beautiful. The thoughts stop of their own accord if you don't identify, if you remain a witness and you don't say, "This is my thought."

You don't say, "This is bad, this is good," "This should be there . . ." and "This should not be there . . ." Then you are not a watcher; you have prejudices, you have certain attitudes. A watcher has no prejudice, he has no judgment. He simply sees like a mirror.

When you bring something in front of a mirror it reflects, simply reflects. There is no judgment that the man is ugly, that the man is beautiful, that, "Aha! What a good nose you have got." The mirror has nothing to say. Its nature is to mirror; it mirrors. This is what I call meditation: you simply mirror everything within or without.

And I guarantee you . . . I can guarantee because it has happened to me and to many of my people; just watching patiently – maybe a few days will pass, maybe a few months, maybe a few years. There is no way of saying because each individual has a different collection.

You must have seen people collecting antiques, postal stamps. Everybody has a different collection; the quantity may be different, hence the time it takes will be different – but go on remaining a witness as much as you can. And this meditation needs no special time. You can wash the floor and remain silently watching yourself washing the floor.

I can move my hand unconsciously, without watching, or I can move it with full awareness. And there is a qualitative difference. When you move it unconsciously it is mechanical. When you move it with consciousness there is grace. Even in the hand, which is part of your body, you will feel silence, coolness – what to say about the mind?

With your watching and watching, slowly the rush of thoughts starts getting less and less. Moments of silence start appearing; a thought comes, and then there is silence before another thought appears. These gaps will give you the first glimpse of meditation and the first joy that you are arriving home.

Soon the gaps will be bigger, and finally the gap is always with you. You may be doing something; the silence is there. You may not be doing anything; the silence is there. Even in sleep the silence is there.

For a meditator there are no dreams; dreams and thoughts are cousin-brothers, there is not much difference. If thoughts disappear, dreams disappear. And if for twenty-four hours a day you are surrounded by silence, you will come to know what my secret is.

If you go near a lake, you start feeling cool. There is no secret in it – it is the milieu. You go to the forest and you feel the difference in the atmosphere. You are the same but the atmosphere around you is different.

When you come closer to me . . . and to come closer to me you are not to walk and sit by my side. To come closer to me is to be not a Christian, not a Hindu, not a Mohammedan, not a Buddhist, not a communist. To come close to me means that you don't cling to any ideology, you don't go on holding onto the past. To come close to me means you start living moment to moment.

Neither the past means anything to you, nor are you worried about the future. This very moment becomes the only reality. In fact, it is the only reality. And if you can be in this moment, you can be on a faraway star, but you will be close to me, and you will feel a serenity, a silence, a lovingness such as you have never known.

I am not doing anything, remember, so don't be grateful to me. I am a non-doer – I am just being available. That is not much of a doing. I am available, like the trees in the forest and the lakes and the ocean, and the sun and the moon. I am available. Now it is up to you to come close to me, or go away from me.

If you can come close to me you will start feeling things that have been unknown to you, and soon you will realize that what you are feeling close to me you can feel yourself wherever you are. That is the greatest moment of happiness for a master, when his disciple can be on his own.

You must know the meaning of being a disciple, people have forgotten; it comes from "discipline."

And all the religions have corrupted the meaning of discipline; its root meaning is learning.

Coming close is learning.

What I have got, you have got.

I am aware of it; you are not aware of it.

From **From the False to the Truth**, Discourse #3, Q2

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I Teach the Religion of Here and Now

This is the time for everybody to meditate. This is the time that, except for meditation, nothing can help you to get out of your misery. And meditation is a simple phenomenon. Just whenever you have time, sit silently, doing nothing. Relax, close your eyes, watch your thoughts as if you are watching a movie on the screen. You are just a watcher. And you are in for a great surprise, perhaps the greatest surprise of life. If you can watch your thoughts just as if they are moving there on the screen, and you are not involved in them, they start dispersing. It is your involvement that gives them life energy. When you withdraw yourself and become just a witness, thoughts start falling, like leaves which are dead start falling from the trees. Soon you will be surprised, the screen is empty.

The moment the screen of the mind is empty, a miracle happens. Your consciousness, which was focused on the screen of the mind, finding nothing there, turns upon itself. The circle is complete. It went from you up to the screen, but there is nothing there to stop it, and it comes back to the original source. Consciousness coming back to the original source is what I call enlightenment. You have become awakened; you have opened your eyes for the first time. Now for you there is no death, no misery, no pain; for you there is only blissfulness. And this blissfulness is not something that you will attain after death. This blissfulness is something that happens here and now.

I teach the religion of here and now.

From ***The Last Testament, V.5***, Talk #25

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Never Forget that You are a Watcher

. . . Just the last thing to remember – because that is so absolutely essential, I should not be forgiven for forgetting it: *live watchfully*.

Whatsoever you are doing – walking, sitting, eating, or if you are not doing anything, just breathing, resting, relaxing in the grass, never forget that you are a watcher.

You will forget it again and again. You will get involved in some thought, some feeling, some emotion, some sentiment – anything will distract you from the watcher. Remember, and run back to your center of watching. Make it an inner process continuously . . . You will be surprised at how life changes its whole quality. I can move this hand without any watchfulness, and I can also move this hand absolutely watching from inside the whole movement. The movements are totally different. The first movement is a robot movement, mechanical. The second movement is a conscious movement. And when you are conscious you feel that hand from within; when you are not conscious you only know the hand from without.

You have known your face only in the mirror, from the without, because you are not a watcher. If you start watching, you will feel your face from within – and that is such an experience, to watch yourself from within. Then slowly, strange things start happening. Thoughts disappear, feelings disappear, emotions disappear, and there is a silence surrounding you. You are just like an island in the middle of the ocean of silence . . . just a watcher, as if a flame of light at the center of your being, radiating the whole of your being.

In the beginning it will only be an inner experience. Slowly you will see that radiation spreading out of your body, those rays reaching other people. You will be surprised and shocked that other people, if they are a little bit sensitive, will immediately become aware that something has touched them which was not visible.

For example, if you are watching yourself . . . Just walk behind somebody, watching yourself, and it is almost certain the person will turn and look back suddenly, for no reason. When you are watching yourself, your watchfulness starts radiating, and it is bound to touch the person who is ahead of you. And if he is touched by something which is invisible, he is going to look back: "What is the matter?" And you are that far away, you cannot even touch him with your hand.

You can try that experiment: somebody is sleeping and you can sit by their side, just watching yourself, and the person will suddenly wake up, open his eyes and look all around as if somebody has touched him.

Slowly you will also become able to feel the touch through the rays. That is what is called the vibe. It is not a non-existential thing. The other person feels it; you will also feel that you have touched the other person.

The English word, being "touched," is used very significantly. You may use it without understanding what it means when you say "I was touched" by the person. He may not have said a single word to you. He may have just passed by. He may have just looked once at your eyes, and you feel "touched" by the person. It is not just a word – it actually happens. And then those rays go on spreading to people, to animals, to trees, to rocks . . . and one day you will see, you are touching the whole universe from within.

Your aloneness remains absolutely as it was. It becomes bigger, vast. This is the experience I call the experience of godliness.

Excerpt from ***Unconsciousness to Consciousness,*** Discourse #30, Q1

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19 Blessed are those who Doubt

Blessed are those who Doubt

Can you say something about doubt and negativity? What is the difference?

The difference between doubt and negativity is great. They look alike; on the surface they have the same color, but deep down the difference is unbridgeable. First, doubt is not negativity; neither is it positivity.

Doubt is an open mind, without any prejudice. It is an inquiring approach.

Doubt is not saying anything, it is simply raising a question. That question is to know, to find what the truth is.

Doubt is a pilgrimage.

It is one of the most sacred values of human beings.

Doubt does not mean no. It simply says, "I do not know, and I am prepared to know. I am ready to go as far as possible, but unless I myself come to know, how can I say yes?"

Negativity has already said no. It is not inquiry. It has come to a conclusion, the same way somebody has come to the conclusion to say yes. One man says God is; his statement is positive. The other says there is no God; his statement is negative. But both are sailing in the same boat, they are not different people. They have not inquired. Neither the theist has doubted nor the atheist has doubted; both have accepted borrowed knowledge.

Doubt says that, "I myself would like to know, and unless I know for myself, it is not knowledge. Only my experience is going to be decisive." He is not arrogant, he is not denying anything. He is just open for inquiry.

Doubt is not disbelief – that's how religions have been confusing people. They confuse doubt with disbelief. In fact, disbelief and belief are exactly the same. Both accept knowledge from others, from books, from masters. And remember, anything that you do not know, yet you have started believing or disbelieving in it... you have missed a great opportunity for inquiry. You have closed the doors already, by yes or by no. You have not traveled.

It is easier to say yes, it is easier to say no, because there is nothing you have to do.

But to doubt needs guts.

To doubt needs courage to remain in the state of not-knowing, and go on questioning everything till the moment you yourself arrive at the reality. When you come to the reality there is no negativity, no positivity. You simply know – it is your experience. I will not say it is

positivity because positivity always has the other pole of negativity. An experience goes beyond both; the whole world of polarities is transcended. That is true wisdom.

Doubt is the way to truth.

No or yes are not ways, they prevent you.

It will look very strange, that yes does the same thing as no. In dictionaries they are opposites, but in reality, they are not. They look opposite only, but both have not asked the question. Both have not tried to find out what the case is.

The communist believes, exactly as the catholic believes. The communist believes that there is no God. You can call it disbelief, but it is his belief. He has not inquired, he has not meditated; he has done nothing to find out that there is no God. The theist says there IS God. He has also done nothing. Both have chosen without moving an inch towards truth. That's why a very strange thing happens: the person who is a theist, a believer, can become a disbeliever, an atheist, in a single moment; and vice versa. […]

Doubt is against both. Doubt is the insistence of the individual that he wants to taste, to experience the truth. He is not ready to accept it from anybody else, this way or that.

They are very, very rare people who doubt.

But let me say to you: Blessed are those who doubt, because they shall inherit the kingdom of truth.

It is arduous to doubt, it is risky, it is dangerous. One is going into the unknown, with no preparation, with no prejudice. He is entering into the dark hole, not even believing that there will be the other end of the tunnel, and he will again come out of Darkness. There is no belief; he simply takes the challenge.

There is only a quest, a question.

He himself becomes a question. […]

Doubt is simply a question, and doubt says, "I want to *know*."

It has no ideology.

Doubt is absolutely pure quest.

You have asked, "What is the difference between doubt and negativity?"

Negativity and positivity are both the same.

Doubt is different from both.

It does not make you a theist, it does not make you an atheist.

Positivity makes you a religious believer, a theist; negativity makes you an unbeliever, irreligious, an atheist.

Doubt does not make you anything. It simply makes you an inquirer.

And that is the dignity of man.

I teach you doubt because I know if you can doubt to the very end, you will realize the truth of your own being, and simultaneously the truth of the whole existence. And that will be liberation, that will be freedom.

Doubt is neither Christian nor Hindu, nor American nor German. Yes may be Hindu, yes may be Mohammedan, yes may be Christian; no may be communist, no may be fascist – but doubt is simply a quest, an individual quest.

Yes and no both belong to the crowd.

Doubt makes you assert your individuality.

You start finding your path on your own. You don't accept the maps given you by others. […]

I would like my sannyasins neither to be negative nor to be positive, but open, available, with a quest, a question mark, and to go on searching.

Many times, your mind will say it is good to believe – because the journey is arduous, and one never knows where one is going, whether one is going to find anything or not. But don't listen to the mind.

Mind has created all these "yes" philosophies, "no" philosophies.

Doubt has never created any philosophy; doubt has created science.

And doubt is going to create religion.

They are exactly the same – the same application of doubt in different fields. About objects, the outside world that spreads to millions of stars, doubt has given tremendous insight just within three hundred years. You are carrying another world within yourself, which is in no way smaller than the world you see outside; perhaps it is bigger.

Why do I say that perhaps it is bigger? I am including the word 'perhaps' so that you should not believe. I know it is bigger, for the simple reason that you know the stars, you know the sun, you know the moon – but the moon does not know you, the sun does not know you. The stars are great, the universe is vast, but you are the only knower. You have something more than the whole universe.

That's why I say inside you are carrying something bigger than the universe, more than the universe. Just inquire.

One of the most beautiful men of this century was Maharishi Raman. He was a simple man, uneducated, but he did not accept the ideology, the religion in which he was born. When he was only seventeen years of age he left his home in search of truth. He meditated for many years in the hills of Arunachal in south India, and finally realized himself.

After that his whole teaching consisted only of three words, because those three words had revealed to him the whole mystery of existence. His philosophy is the shortest. What are those three words? Whoever came to him – because as he became slowly, slowly known, people started coming to him from all over the world – his whole teaching was to sit silently and ask only one question: "Who am I?" and go on asking that question.

One day the question will disappear, and only you will be there. That is the answer.

Not that you will find the answer written somewhere; you will find yourself. You just go on digging with this question – this question is like digging – but do you see the question? It is a doubt: Who am I? It does not accept the spiritualist who says you are a soul. It does not accept the materialist who says there is nobody, don't waste time; eat, drink and be merry. He doubts. Those three words are followed by a question mark: Who am I?

And he says this is enough. If you can go on and on and on patiently, one day the question suddenly disappears and what is left is your reality. That is the answer.

And the moment you know yourself you have known everything that is worth knowing.

From ***From Death to Deathlessness***, Discourse #24

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Religion - A Simple Phenomenon

Religion is a very simple phenomenon. Theology has nothing to do with religion. It makes things unnecessarily complex. Religion is a simple awareness of whatever you are doing, wherever you are. And when this awareness surrounds you always like a luminous aura you for the first time, become aware of the universe – its beauties, its music, its eternal song. And to me that is the religious experience. In religious experience you don't encounter a God. There is nobody there, just this pure existence. But it is all alive – these flowers, these birds on the wing, these stars – everything is alive, but because you are asleep you cannot experience the aliveness that surrounds you.

And we are not islands. No man is an island. We are part of this whole living, infinite continent. Those flowers are part of us just as we are part of them. Those faraway stars are within us as we are within the universe. That experience of unity, of at-onement, is liberation.

So my teaching is very simple: meditation is the key, becoming totally aware is the result. Experiencing oneness with the whole is the reward. [...]

This is my trinity: meditation, awareness, oneness.

Excerpt from ***The Last Testament, V. 2****,* Talk #7

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There is a Way to be Sane

Q: You say the whole world is a mess. What is it that you're trying to create in man, in the world?

I'm simply saying that there is a way to be sane. I'm saying that you can get rid of all this insanity created by the past in you.

Q: How?

Just by being a simple witness of your thought processes. That's my method of meditation. It is not a prayer because there is no God to pray to. It is simply sitting silently, witnessing the thoughts passing before you. Just witnessing—not interfering, not even judging, because the moment you judge you have lost the pure witness. The moment you say this is good, this is bad, you have already jumped into the thought process. It takes a little time to create a gap between the witness and the mind. Once the gap is there, you are in for a great surprise: you are not the mind; you are the witness, a watcher.

This process of watching is the very alchemy of real religion, because as you become more and more deeply rooted in witnessing, thoughts start disappearing. A moment comes when there is no thought at all. You are, but the mind is utterly empty. That is the moment of enlightenment. That is the moment when for the first time you become unconditioned, sane, a really free human being.

From ***The Last Testament, V.1***, Talk #1

An interview with Ken Kashiwahara, ***Good Morning America, ABC Network USA***

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Watching is Not a Doing

I say to you that now is the time for the first religion to happen.

For three hundred years the pseudo-religions have been fighting against science. Now they are tired, fed up, and know perfectly well that science is going to win; it has already won.

So the old religions have lost their ground. You have to understand it. What you see in the churches and in the synagogues and in the mosques and in the temples, is the dead body of the religion that once was alive. It is only a corpse. But they are pretending that it is alive, hoping against hope that some miracle is going to happen. But no miracle ever happens. And no miracle is going to happen. Science has taken firm roots.

Now, if you want anything in the world to be called religion, then you have to start from ABC, from the very scratch: a religion which is a science, and not a fiction.

Just as science discovers in the objective world, outside, religion discovers in the inner world. What science is to the objective existence, religion is to the subjectivity.

Their methods are exactly the same. Science calls it observation; religion calls it awareness. Science calls it experiment; religion calls it experience. Science wants you to go into the experiment without any prejudice in your mind, without any belief. You have to be open, available. You are not going to impose anything on reality. You are just going to be available to the reality whatsoever it is, even if it goes against all your ideas. You have to drop those ideas – but the reality cannot be denied.

The scientific endeavor is risking your mind for reality, putting your mind aside for reality. Reality counts, not what you think about it. Your thinking may be right or may be wrong, but the reality will decide it. Your mind is not going to decide what is right and what is wrong.

The same is the situation of an authentic religion, a scientific religion.

If I am allowed, I would like to describe science as two dimensions, the outer and the inner. The word religion can be dropped. You have two sciences: one, objective science; another, subjective science.

And that's what is going to happen; whether you call it a religion or science does not matter – names don't matter, but the methodology is exactly the same: you should not go in with a belief. No believer is ever going to know the truth. To believe is to miss.

You have to put aside your ideology. Howsoever beautiful it looks, howsoever systematic it looks, howsoever philosophical you have made [it] and decorated it, you have to put it aside and see within. That's the whole method of meditation, awareness, watchfulness. Meditation, in short, is putting your mind aside. […]

Remember, concentration is not meditation because concentration is a discipline of the mind and meditation is putting the mind aside.

In fact, the English word meditation is not the right word because in the West nothing like meditation has ever happened. The Sanskrit word is *dhyana*. […]

"Meditation" gives again the wrong idea, as if you are meditating upon something – as if it is an activity – not much different from concentration. You are concentrating on something, you are contemplating on something, you are meditating on something, but you are always concerned with something. And what dhyana is, is dropping all objects, dropping anything on which you can concentrate, contemplate, meditate; dropping everything, nothing is left – only the one who was concentrating, only the one who was contemplating.

That pure awareness is dhyana.

In English there is no right word, so you have to understand that we are using "meditation" for dhyana.

Dhyana means a state of being where there is no thought, no object, no dream, no desire, nothing – just emptiness. In that emptiness you come to know your self. You discover the truth. You discover your subjectivity. It is perfect science. […]

The pseudo-religion depends on disciplining the mind. The real religion's first work is to put the mind aside. And it is, in a way, very simple. Those disciplines are very difficult. To train the mind for concentration is very difficult because it goes on revolting; it goes on falling back into its old habits.

You pull it again, and it escapes. You bring it again to the subject you were concentrating on and suddenly you find you are thinking of something else, you have forgotten what you are concentrating upon. It is not an easy job.

But to put it aside is a very simple thing – not difficult at all. All that you have to do is to watch.

Whatsoever is going on in your mind, don't interfere, don't try to stop it. Do not do anything because whatsoever you do will become a discipline.

So do not do anything at all. Just watch.

Watching is not a doing. Just as you watch the sunset or the clouds in the sky or the people passing on the street, watch the traffic of thoughts and dreams, nightmares – relevant, irrelevant, consistent, inconsistent, anything that is going on. And it is always rush hour. You simply watch; you stand by the side unconcerned.

The pseudo-religions don't allow you to remain unconcerned because, they say, greed is bad. So if a thought of greed comes, you jump to prevent it; otherwise, you will become greedy. Anger is bad; if an angry thought passes by, you immediately jump – you have to change it, you have to be kind and compassionate, and you have to love your enemy just like yourself. If something against your neighbor comes up . . . no, you have to love your neighbor just like yourself. So all the old religions have given you ideas of what is right and what is wrong – and if the wrong thing is passing by, you certainly have to stop it. You have to interfere; you have to jump in and pull that thing out. You miss the point.

That's why I don't say to you what is right and what is wrong. All that I say is: to watch is right; not to watch is wrong.

I make it absolutely simplified: Be watchful.

It is none of your business – if greed is passing by, let it pass; if anger is passing by, let it pass. Who are you to interfere? Why are you so much identified with your mind? Why do you start thinking, "I am greedy . . . I am angry"? There is only a thought of anger passing by. Let it pass; you just watch.

There is an ancient story . . . A man who has gone out of his town comes back and finds that his house is on fire. It was one of the most beautiful houses in the town, and the man loved the house. Many people were ready to give double the price for the house, but he had never agreed to any price, and now it is just burning before his eyes. And thousands of people have gathered, but nothing can be done.

The fire has spread so far that even if you try to put it out, nothing will be saved. So he becomes very sad. His son comes running and whispers something in his ear: "Don't be worried. I sold it yesterday, and at a very good price – three times . . . The offer was so good I could not wait for you. Forgive me."

But the father said, "Good, if you have sold it for three times more than the original price of the house." Then the father is also a watcher, with other watchers. Just a moment before he was not a watcher, he was identified. It is the same house, the same fire, everything is the same – but now he is not concerned. He is enjoying it just as everybody else is enjoying.

Then the second son comes running, and he says to the father, "What are you doing? You are smiling – and the house is on fire?"

The father said, "Don't you know, your brother has sold it."

He said, "He had talked about selling it, but nothing has been settled yet, and the man is not going to purchase it now." Again, everything changes. Tears which had disappeared have come back to the father's eyes, his smile is no more there, his heart is beating fast. But the watcher is gone. He is again identified.

And then the third son comes, and he says, "That man is a man of his word. I have just come from him. He said, 'It doesn't matter whether the house is burned or not, it is mine. And I am going to pay the price that I have settled for. Neither you knew, nor I knew that the house would catch on fire.'" Again the father is a watcher. The identity is no more there. Actually, nothing is changing; just the idea that "I am the owner, I am identified somehow with the house," makes the whole difference. The next moment he feels, "I am not identified. Somebody else has purchased it, I have nothing to do with it; let the house burn."

This simple methodology of watching the mind, that you have nothing to do with it . . . Most of its thoughts are not yours but from your parents, your teachers, your friends, the books, the movies, the television, the newspapers. Just count how many thoughts are your own, and you will be surprised that not a single thought is your own. All are from other sources, all are

borrowed – either dumped by others on you, or foolishly dumped by yourself upon yourself, but nothing is yours.

The mind is there, functioning like a computer; literally, it is a bio-computer. You will not get identified with a computer. If the computer gets hot, you won't get hot. If the computer gets angry and starts giving signals in four letter words, you will not be worried. You will see what is wrong, where something is wrong. But you remain detached.

Just a small knack . . . I cannot even call it a method because that makes it heavy; I call it a knack. Just by doing it, one day suddenly you are able to do it. Many times, you will fail; it's nothing to be worried about . . . no loss, it is natural. But just doing it, one day it happens.

Once it has happened, once you have even for a single moment become the watcher, you know now how to become the watcher – the watcher on the hills, far away. And the whole mind is there deep down in the dark valley, and you are not to do anything about it.

The most strange thing about the mind is, if you become a watcher, it starts disappearing. Just like the light disperses darkness, watchfulness disperses the mind, its thoughts, its whole paraphernalia. So meditation is simply watchfulness, awareness. And that reveals – it is nothing to do with inventing. It invents nothing; it simply discovers that which is there.

And what is there? You enter and you find infinite emptiness, so tremendously beautiful, so silent, so full of light, so fragrant, that you have entered into the kingdom of God.

In my words, you have entered into godliness. And once you have been in this space, you come out and you are a totally new person, a new man. Now you have your original face. All masks have disappeared. You will live in the same world but not in the same way. You will be among the same people but not with the same attitude and the same approach. You will live like a lotus in water: in the water, but absolutely untouched by water.

Religion is the discovery of this lotus flower within.

From ***From Unconsciousness to Consciousness***, Discourse #19

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Three Steps of Awareness

There are three steps of awareness.

First, become aware of your body – walking, chopping wood or carrying water from the well. Be watchful; be alert, aware, conscious. Don't go on doing things like a zombie, like a somnambulist, a sleepwalker.

When you have become aware of your body and its actions, then move deeper – to your mind and its activity, thoughts, imagination, projections. When you have become deeply aware of the mind, you will be surprised.

When you become aware of your bodily processes, you will be surprised there too. I can move my hand mechanically; I can move it with full awareness. When I move it with full awareness, there is grace, there is beauty.

I can speak without awareness. There are orators, speakers . . . I don't know any oratory; I have never learned the art of speaking because to me it looks foolish. If I have something to say, that is enough. But I am speaking to you with full awareness, each word, each pause . . . I am not an orator, not a speaker.

But when you are aware of speaking, it starts becoming art. It takes on the nuances of poetry and music. […]

When you become aware of the mind, you are in for a greater surprise. The more you become aware, the less thoughts move on the track. If you have one-hundred percent thoughts, there is no awareness. If you have one-percent awareness, there are only ninety-nine percent thoughts – in exact proportion. When you have ninety-nine percent awareness, there is only one-percent thought – because it is the same energy.

As you become more aware, there is no energy available for thoughts; they die out. When you are one-hundred percent aware, the mind becomes absolutely silent. That is the time to move still deeper.

The third step: to become aware of feelings, moods, emotions. In other words, first the body – its action; second, the mind – its activity; third, the heart and its functions.

When you move to the heart and bring your awareness there, again a new surprise. All that is good grows, and all that is bad starts disappearing. Love grows, hate disappears. Compassion grows, anger disappears. Sharing grows, greed disappears.

When your awareness of the heart is complete, the last surprise, and the greatest surprise: you don't have to take any step. A quantum leap happens on its own accord. From the heart, you suddenly find yourself in your being, at the very center.

There you are aware only of awareness, conscious only of consciousness. There is nothing else to be aware of, or to be conscious of. And this is the ultimate purity. This is what I call enlightenment.

And this is your birthright! If you miss, only you are responsible. You cannot dump the responsibility on anybody else.

And it is so simple and natural, that you just have to begin.

Only the first step is difficult. The whole journey is simple. There is a saying that the first step is almost the whole journey.

From ***From Bondage to Freedom***, Discourse #3, Q4

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20 You Become a Blessing

You Become a Blessing

Western psychologists say that meditation is a subjective phenomenon and therefore much psychological research is not possible. Do you agree?

I do not agree because no research is possible. You are saying, "Much psychological research is not possible." That's why I do not agree.

Man's interiority, his subjectivity, cannot be trespassed. There is no way to make it an object of study. Research is absolutely impossible – even search has not been done, and you are thinking of research.

Man can experience his subjectivity on his own, but he cannot invite a researcher to go into him and to find out who he is. This is, by nature, impossible. And it is very fortunate that it is impossible – that your subjectivity, at least, is always private, always your freedom. No trespass is possible.

Yes, one can study one's own interiority, and one can make an effort to explain in words what he has found within himself. Perhaps that may give you some idea of your own subjectivity – not exactly the same, but some glimpse, or at least the possibility that there is some inner essence in you which needs to be discovered; an encouragement that if somebody else can do it, why cannot you do it? Perhaps his methods of his own inner journey may help you to find methods suitable for yourself. Maybe a little bit modified, changed, but the same methods may be applicable.

But one hundred and twelve methods of going inward are available, have been for ten thousand years. Not a single method more can be added. The science of inner search is complete. You can just look at those one hundred and twelve methods, and it is my experience and many of my sannyasins' experience that when you come to the method that will be suitable for you, something immediately rejoices in you – as if something in your heart has been touched, some bell starts ringing within you.

So just going through those one hundred and twelve methods – and each method is described in two lines – you just go slowly and see which method synchronizes with you. Then give it a try. Most probably that will be the method. If by chance you don't succeed in it, then look again. Some other method may be even more striking. But for the whole of humanity all the methods are there.

Symptoms can be told to you: when you come to the method that is going to be your journey, something immediately is lit up in your being. Your mind falls silent, you know – not from any outside authority, but by your own heartbeats – that "This is the method for me."

And as you start working on the method you will see how relaxing it is and how simple, smooth.

And on each step, you will feel yourself more grounded, more rooted – no more phony, no more American, no more plastic. For the first time, you will feel you are real, authentic. And as

you go deeper with the method, the sense of joy, sensitivity, goes on increasing. Love, for no reason at all, unaddressed to anybody – just a lovingness surrounds you. And when you reach to the very center of your being, there is an explosion of immense light, and a fragrance that you have never known.

Those who are a little receptive may even become aware that something great has happened to you because your face will take on a certain quality which you can find in the statues of Gautam Buddha. Your eyes, for the first time, will have a magnetism; your gestures will have a grace. Your whole being will be a beauty and a benediction to you and to all. As this experience ripens, you become a blessing to the whole existence.

It is true that no objective research can be done on it, but that does not mean that this subjective world does not exist. That will be a stupid conclusion. It will be like a blind man who cannot see the light hence he concludes that the light does not exist.

There are things which are objectively available to be studied, but they are always things – not life, not love, not consciousness. All that is great is subjective. And it is one of the greatest misfortunes of humanity that scientists go on insisting that unless you can study something objectively, it does not exist. That means that in the lab of Albert Einstein, everything exists except Albert Einstein.

Then who is doing all these experiments? Who is watching and researching, and who is finding electrons and protons and neutrons? They all exist because they are objective. Albert Einstein does not exist because his consciousness is not available to objective study. This is sheer stupidity.

Your eyes cannot hear music; that does not mean music does not exist. Your ears cannot see light. That does not mean light does not exist. It simply means you are using wrong means – ears to see, eyes to hear.

The method of objective study is for things, matter. And the inward journey – because it is not research into matter but into consciousness – needs different methods. Those are the methods I am calling meditations.

For the objective world, observation, experiments – these are methods. For the subjective world, witnessing, experiencing – these are the methods.

And one of the fundamental rules of science is that everything exists with its polar opposite. The polar opposite is not contradictory; it is complementary. If love exists, hate exists; if beauty exists, ugliness exists. And if objective reality exists, you cannot deny subjective reality; otherwise, you will be going against the fundamental rule of science itself. Objective reality needs, as a polar opposite to it, a subjective reality. And certainly, the same methods cannot be applied to both. Different methods are needed.

Meditation will not help you to find atomic energy, nuclear weapons; otherwise, the East would have discovered all this nonsense long ago. And objective methods will not allow you to discover man's real being. And without knowing man's real being, you can have all the riches of the world, but deep inside you will remain a pauper, miserable. East and West – the objective

approach and the subjective approach – both are half. My own effort is that they should become one. There is no need to divide.

Rudyard Kipling has stated, “West is West and East is East, and ne’er the twain shall meet.” He is dead, but sometimes I think to drag him out of his grave and ask him, “Where is the line which divides East from West? They are meeting everywhere.” You are, in comparison to some place, East, in comparison to another place, West. And what nonsense is this, that “ne’er the twain shall meet”? The twain are always meeting on each point, because the same point can be called West and the same point can be called East. Calcutta is east of Bombay; Bombay is west of Calcutta. But Calcutta itself is west of Rangoon, and Rangoon is east of Calcutta.

Rudyard Kipling was the poet laureate of the British Empire. To me, he is simply an idiot. East and West are meeting everywhere, except in man. Things become easier; it is only a question of man’s mind. In reality there is no division; the division is only mental.

And in my sannyasins that division has dropped. My sannyasins don’t belong to East or to West.

They claim the whole Earth as their own.

They claim the objective reality as their own. They claim the subjective world as their own.

To represent this, I have called the new man Zorba the Buddha. Zorba represents the materialist, objective approach. Buddha represents the subjective, spiritual approach.

Divided, both are poor. Neither of them is a full circle. Joined, they become immensely rich. Joined together, they experience the greatest ecstasy that is available to humanity.

From ***From Bondage to Freedom***, Discourse #43, Q2

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Witnessing Has a Beauty

How do I come to know when I am really witnessing my body, feelings and thoughts, or when it is only my mind pretending to be a witness?

The question is only intellectual; you have not even tried to pretend. When you are witnessing and you start feeling that it may be just the pretense of the mind, then it is certainly a pretense of the mind . . . because who is thinking about it as pretense of the mind? – Something behind the pretense.

You can never get confused about witnessing because behind witnessing there is nothing. You cannot witness witnessing. Anything that you can witness is part of the mind. So if you witness that it is a pretense, it is a pretense. Witness the pretense, don't get identified with it.

Witnessing has a beauty: it cannot be reduced to an object; you cannot witness it. It is irreducible, it always slips back; it remains only witnessing. So whatever you feel – that means you are getting identified with the mind. You have not tried it – the question is simply intellectual. If you had tried it, the question would not have arisen.

I witness my hand: that means I am not the hand. I witness the mind: that means I am not the mind. You go on witnessing anything that comes to you – feelings, moods – you are not it. Finally, there is nothing to witness: this is it!

Only the witness is there but nothing to witness, just nothingness all around. You have come to the witness. Nobody has ever been deceived about it.

But never make intellectual questions; they won't solve existential problems. This is something existential – you have to do it. It is like swimming. You cannot be taught swimming on a comfortable mattress in your room. You can be told how to throw your hands and your legs about, and you can do much exercise, but that is not swimming. You have to go in the water.

There was one famous logician in India. Because he was a logician, he said, "I cannot enter the water until I have learned swimming. That is absolutely clear. Without knowing swimming, how can I enter the water?"

His swimming teacher told him, "It is not a question of logic. If you want to learn swimming, you will have to enter water without knowing swimming because entering the water is the beginning. And that's the only way to learn it. If you decide that you will enter the water only when you have learned swimming – which is very logical thinking – then it is impossible, you will never enter the water. So either be logical or be existential."

And whatever I am telling you has nothing to do with logic. Try witnessing. And whatever you find, it is not the witness. The witness is always standing behind; otherwise, who is finding these things? – the pretense, the mind, anything.

When you cannot find anything, when all is silent, then there is only the witness. It is a very strange situation. When there is nothing to witness, you come to experience the witness in its purity. When there is something to witness, the witness is involved with some object.

It is like the mirror. If you want to know the purity of the mirror, then the mirror should be empty; nobody should be standing in front of the mirror. If somebody is standing in front of the mirror, then the mirror is polluted by the reflection.

Your witness is the ultimate mirror.

Anything that passes pollutes your witness. But if you go on struggling, remembering that whatever you see is not you – just a simple maxim: "the object of my knowing is not me" – soon the objects will disappear because you have broken the identity. And any moment, suddenly out of nowhere, you find yourself absolutely alone without any object. The seer is there, but there is nothing to be seen. Awareness is there, at its very peak, but there is nothing to be aware of. The witness is there, but there is nothing to be a witness of.

So, this should be the criterion of whether your witness is a reality or just a projection, just imagination or an authentic reality. […]

From ***From Bondage to Freedom***, Discourse #39, Q2

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The Science of Interiority

Quantum physicists are using the term "consciousness." Are they using this word in the same sense that you do? If not, what is the difference between the consciousness they are talking about, and the consciousness you are talking about?

There is a great difference. The physicists are talking about a consciousness which they have not experienced within themselves; it is only a hypothesis. It is their objective observation that consciousness exists: people are conscious – you cannot deny it. Because it is an objective observation, they are bound to be defining it in a wrong way, because basically consciousness is your subjectivity. It is irreducible into an object. You cannot study it from outside.

From outside you can study only behavior, you cannot study consciousness, hence there is a school of psychology called behaviorism. People are behaving as if they are conscious. The physicist's consciousness is "as if" – a hypothesis, because people are not behaving consciously.

So, the first basic mistake is they are simply taking an objective view of something which can never become an object, which is always the subject. There is no way to make it an object. And because they are studying it as an object, they are falling into many pitfalls. One is that consciousness is a by-product of biology, physiology, chemistry – of all that man is made of. It is simply a by-product; it is not an independent entity in itself.

It is just like a clock: the hands move, but that movement does not show that inside there is life that is moving them. It is mechanical; you can separate the parts and the movement will stop. You can put them back together again and the movement will start. You cannot do that to man. Take his physiology, chemistry, biology apart, and then try to put them together again – you will have just a corpse, no consciousness. Consciousness is not a by-product.

Consciousness experienced subjectively needs some inward journey. No scientist is doing that. He wants to study consciousness in white mice, in guinea pigs. This is very strange. The scientist has the consciousness in himself, what is the need to go to a white mouse? Go inward!

And that's what I call the science of interiority, religio, meditation. You move deeper, leaving your body, your mind, your heartbeat far behind – and you are still. And you are more than you have ever been because you had known yourself filtered through the heart, through the mind, through the body – thick layers. So you had felt your consciousness in a very slight way.

But when you have reached to your own center – which is neither chemical nor physical nor biological– you experience a totally new reality. Immediately you become aware that it is not a by-product, that it has its own existence. The body may die, but this consciousness is so separate from the body that there is no possibility of its dying with the body. The heart may stop, but you are so far away from the heart, you are no longer identified with the heart. You are part of an eternal life.

So when I talk about consciousness, I am talking about my own experience of diving deep into my being. And when the physicists talk about consciousness, they are talking not about experience but about experiments that they are doing with white mice, guinea pigs. Strange people! You have consciousness, the white mouse is in a very backward state of life; why not find it within yourself?

Man is the highest expression of consciousness.

Science can never know the real being, the real soul, the real consciousness, for the simple reason that it is object oriented. Hence, a totally different approach is needed, a science which is subject oriented.

You cannot put consciousness in a test tube. Consciousness is not something material; it is not something like a commodity. It is not something that you can dissect and find out what elements it is made of. It is a single, indivisible life. And the only way to know it is to go within yourself.

That is the purpose of the commune. It is not a religion; it is the science of subjectivity.

So there is a total difference. What they are talking about is absolutely irrelevant. What I am talking about is the real thing. And you need not go anywhere because it is within you. No lab is needed, no instruments are needed. All that is needed is that you learn how to relax, how to be silent, how to be just a witness. And slowly, slowly your mind stops its unnecessary chattering, your heart stops its moods, feelings.

And suddenly you are your reality, your consciousness.

And it reveals all the mysteries. It is the golden key, the master key, because it makes you aware not only of your consciousness; it makes you aware that your consciousness is not separate from other consciousnesses.

Consciousness is almost like an ocean. We are all in it, we are all sharing the same consciousness. The trees, the animals, the birds – they are all sharing the same consciousness in different stages of growth.

You are fortunate to be a human being because this gives you an opportunity to turn in.

From ***From Bondage to Freedom****,* Discourse #24, Q4

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Witnessdogs

Is there a difference between watching and witnessing?

There is a difference. You watch television, you don't witness it. But, while watching television, if you start witnessing yourself watching television, then there are two processes going on: you are watching television, and something within you is witnessing the process of watching television. Witnessing is deeper, far deeper. It is not equivalent to watching. Watching is superficial.

So remember that meditation is witnessing.

Otherwise, there are the "One Thousand Friends of Oregon," who call themselves "watchdogs" – they will all become enlightened! And I don't think you have heard the word "witnessdogs." Nothing like that exists. Watchdogs are possible, watching can be done even by dogs. Witnessing is a very deep and higher quality only man is capable of.

From ***From Bondage to Freedom***, Discourse #36, Q3

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21 My Approach is Individual

My Approach is Individual

Many small groups of sannyasins are forming around the world. Would you comment on Gurdjieff's words, that people who want to wake up, and who are living together in a group, can function as alarm clocks for each other?

George Gurdjieff is right, but right only about his own system. It is true: if you are following Gurdjieff's ideology and his methods, then a group is an absolute necessity; you cannot work alone.

Then people can function as alarm clocks to each other. If somebody starts falling asleep, somebody can shake him up. When you are starting to fall asleep, somebody else can shake you up and wake you.

Gurdjieff's method is a school method. He himself was trained in different schools of the Sufis. They are all school methods. School methods have a difficulty – that you have to depend on the group, that if the group is not the right group, they can function in just the opposite way: rather than being alarm clocks, they can all become drugs for each other. You may have watched it: if one person starts falling asleep, immediately something in you also starts falling asleep.

Sleep is contagious.

Awakening is not.

It is possible that twenty people may remain asleep and one person awake, but his awakening is not going to be contagious. Most probably, seeing twenty people asleep he will himself fall asleep. So unless you have a very awakened master, the group method is not going to help much.

But in Gurdjieff's system the group is absolutely necessary; alone you cannot do it. For example, he had his school near Paris . . . He told one of the new disciples to dig a trench. The whole day, from the morning – from sunrise to sunset – he was not allowed to go to eat or leave for anything; he had to dig the trench. That was the most important thing.

Now, it needs somebody to watch; otherwise, the man may rest sometimes. The whole day is a long time, a hot day . . . he may go to have a drink or to eat something; or under the tree there is such beautiful shade and coolness . . . he may fall asleep.

Gurdjieff himself walked continuously the whole day, just by the side of the man. Now, when Gurdjieff himself was walking by his side continuously, the whole day, of course the man could not leave. By sunset he had made the big trench. And Gurdjieff said, "This is only half the work: now you fill it, and then you can go and sleep."

This was too much. Through great effort the whole day, against all temptations to leave it, he managed, because of Gurdjieff's presence, to continue, knowing one thing, that it could not kill

him: “I cannot die by just not eating for one day or not drinking water. I cannot die – that much is certain. So let us try.”

Now Gurdjieff says, “It is only half the work – you have now to fill it completely, as it was before you started digging. Then you can go and do whatsoever you want.” And Gurdjieff remained there. It took a few hours for the man again to fill the trench – by midnight he was freed.

That new disciple remembers that that night was the most precious in his life; and only after that night could he understand Gurdjieff’s methods.

Man’s energy has layers. The first layer is for day-to-day work. It is soon exhausted, and you start feeling tired. If you don’t listen to this tiredness, and you continue, then the second layer of energy – which is an emergency reservoir of energy – starts functioning. Suddenly you will feel an onrush of new energy becoming available to you, which refreshes you continuously. You cannot believe what has happened: all tiredness is gone. You are more fresh than you were before you started the work.

But the emergency reservoir also is not very big; it is only for emergency situations which don’t last for long. So for one hour or two hours you will be full of energy, more than ever; then again, the tiredness comes – and this is a greater tiredness than the first one.

If you don’t listen to this tiredness . . . it is really difficult not to listen to it, almost impossible. But if you manage not to listen – and that’s what Gurdjieff wants, that you continue – then you touch the third layer, which is vast, which is universal. And once that layer becomes available to you, you are a new man. Just within a day Gurdjieff could take you to the emergence of the basic power, of the basic energy, the universal energy in you.

But for this kind of method, you need a group. If twelve persons are working, then everyone is watching you. Then each person is watched by eleven persons; you cannot escape easily. Alone, it is impossible; you will stop after your day-to-day energy is finished, and you will feel immensely tired, hungry . . . That will be the stoppage because there is nobody who can prevent you or whose presence can prevent you; nobody is watching you. So for Gurdjieff’s methods it is perfectly true that groups are needed.

My method can be used in a group but the group is not necessary; you can use it alone. Any group can become a dependence – so that you can work only in the group. Out of the group, you are back to your usual self. When you are in the group you are a certain person; when you leave the group you are a different person.

I don’t want my sannyasins to be dependent.

It is perfectly good to have small groups but the methods I have given to you are individual; you can work alone. You don’t need anybody to watch you because my method is that you have to be the watcher.

Under somebody’s watching eye, out of fear of somebody – and of course when Gurdjieff himself is watching you, you cannot escape – but it is something like slavery. Although he is

taking you toward deeper layers of your energy, there is some kind of violence, some kind of enforcement, enslavement.

It is possible for you to do almost the impossible in such a situation. But once Gurdjieff is not there, you will become an ordinary person as you have been before. That has happened to almost all his disciples. Even though they have small groups, they are all mediocre, the same.

Rather than helping each other to be awake, they help each other to fall asleep. When one starts snoring, rather than being an alarm clock, he helps you to snore too.

It can function both ways. The group can be a space where you can become more alert; it can be a space where you can become more asleep. And because people started becoming more asleep in Gurdjieff's groups after Gurdjieff's death, those groups have disappeared. People have moved alone. But alone you cannot do those methods.

This is a very spiritual kind of slavery.

The master cannot guarantee to be with you forever; sometime he will be leaving. Then you should not be left in a space where you cannot function without him. And for that, a preparation is needed: from the very beginning you work alone. Even if you are working in a group, you are not dependent on the group; your work, your method, is basically individual.

So my approach is individual.

I am not giving you school methods: I am giving you individual methods, which can be done together with friends, which can be done alone. So you have freedom.

But there is nothing wrong if sannyasins are making small groups because those small groups cannot hinder the methods that I have given to you or the work that you have to do upon yourself. It is available in both situations – alone or in groups.

But Gurdjieff had no idea – because he was trained always in schools. Sufis don't have individual methods; all the methods are group methods. He was trained by Sufis, and he went from one school to another; he learned much from those schools, and he developed and polished many methods which had become old and were not contemporary.

But he could not help many people for the simple reason that he was the only person who was really awake. All the persons were working under him, under pressure – not out of freedom and joy – working with the motivation that someday they will become awakened like Gurdjieff.

He was certainly a very strange and powerful man. When he was dying, he got up from his bed and started walking in the corridor. His disciples said, "What are you doing? You are so sick – it is better to rest."

He said, "It is not sickness, it is death – and I don't want death to find me a weak person. I want to meet death not lying on the bed but walking on the veranda."

He died walking. To the last moment he was still working. And he was certainly very awake because he could see death, he could see it was very imminent. But he was a very proud man – he did not like to die like every ordinary man, in the bed, he wanted to die in his own way. [...]

All his methods are to bring you to the basic source of power. If that basic source of power becomes available to you continuously, it will transform your whole being. But it was not continuously available even to him. [...]

This is a totally different path than what I am teaching to you. It is a path of power.

What I am teaching to you is the path of awareness.

. . . Because the path of power has great dangers in it. It can crystallize your ego. It can make you feel very egoistic because you have so much power – you can do this, you can do that – and that is a danger.

To avoid the ego even in ordinary life is so difficult. If you get in touch with extraordinary sources of power, it will become more and more difficult to get rid of the ego, because the ego will take possession of all your powers.

My work is totally different: you have to be aware. And awareness is not a power. You have to be aware even of your powers. If you come across them, you have to be aware, and you have to remain detached, only a watcher.

That's where Gurdjieff and I use different words. His methods can be described as "self-remembering." That's what he uses – the word "self-remembering." I do not want to use that word. It is dangerous because the self can be just the ego – it is playing with fire. I simply use the word "witnessing," with no place for self, ego, or even a faraway cousin.

Just to avoid the most probable possibility, you have just to be a witness. It may not lead you to power – there is no need – but it will lead you to understanding. That is what is needed.

Gurdjieff's disciples became power oriented and forgot completely about just being watchful. But he was not telling them to be just watchful. There is a possibility of somebody becoming enlightened through his path also, but it goes in a very zigzag way, with more possibility of being lost than of reaching.

What I have been telling you is something which cannot be misused in any way by you.

And witnessing is a purely individual phenomenon.

From ***Light on the Path***, Discourse #29, Q2

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In The Gap Descends the Witness

You describe witnessing as a knack. Often, late at night, when I am in a very relaxed state, witnessing happens. At other times though, it just seems to be mind watching mind watching mind. Please comment on this knack.

The moment I say that witnessing is a knack, it implies that there is no way to explain it, no way to teach someone about it, no way to train someone in it.

That's the whole meaning of the word "knack."

I can say things which are close enough, but they can never be exact descriptions of the knack. It is not an art, not a craft that can be explained in detail, step by step. But if it is happening to you, there is no problem. You should know what it is; you should know the taste of it.

The problem is arising because you must be trying to do it; not allowing the knack to happen but trying to make an art of it, so that you can control it. Man wants to control everything; it is part of his basic ego.

The knack cannot be controlled. Either you know it or you don't know it. You can play around it, and sometimes by chance you stumble upon it: suddenly you have come to know it. That is the moment when you have to be aware in what situation it is happening.

In the night, when you are relaxed, you find it happening. That gives you a clue that relaxation, not an effort to attain witnessing, allows the knack to happen. At other times when you are trying, making an effort, an endeavor to get it, then it is mind watching mind watching mind. It is always the mind.

Mind cannot get the knack.

Mind can learn any art, any technique, any craft: a knack is beyond it. It is not its language; it is not its world. A knack is something beyond mind.

So you have to be clearly aware: the thing is happening to you, the failure of the mind is happening to you. Whenever you are trying, you watch – then you find that it is mind watching another part of the mind. And then you find the one who has found this is also another part of the mind. And this can go on ad infinitum.

Mind is capable of dividing itself infinitely. But finally you will find only mind – you will not come to meditation, you will not come to witnessing.

So your failure is helpful. It says, "Don't make the effort, don't try." Your success indicates that it happens when you are relaxed, when you are not trying. In relaxation, mind is no longer functioning.

The mind is going to be in sleep, it is ready to go into sleep; it is not going into an effort because effort will keep you awake. You cannot fall into sleep by effort.

Sleep and witnessing have something in common.

You cannot make the effort – one thing. Every effort is going to be a failure – another thing. Unless you learn that every effort fails, you cannot get the knack. But once in a while when your mind is getting ready to go to sleep – in between, when you are still awake, and the mind is relaxing to go into sleep – suddenly, witnessing happens. You have got the knack!

Now don't ask me what it is. That may destroy even your night witnessing because you may start trying it. Just let it happen as it is happening in the night. You can, at the most, create the same atmosphere whenever you want it to happen and wait. You cannot force it.

One has to learn a great lesson – that there are things beyond you which you cannot force; you can only remain open, available, waiting, and they come. The moment you become tense to get hold of them, they slip away. It is just like in the open fist you have all the air possible. With the closed fist all the air disappears.

You may be thinking that with a closed fist you are catching hold of the air. No, it has slipped out. It does not belong to the closed fist, it belongs only to the open hand – and it is easily available. You just have to see when it happens, what the surroundings are.

The surroundings mean you are going into sleep, you are tired of the whole day's work – you don't want to work anymore. In the gap, before the mind slips into sleep and you lose consciousness – the mind is preparing, is getting ready to go into sleep, but you are still awake – in that minute gap, witnessing happens.

Now, you cannot try the knack. You can simply create the outer situation. In the day, anytime, let the mind go into relaxation. Don't try – as if you are going to create witnessing: you are simply allowing mind to rest. And at a certain point, that same gap will appear, and in the gap descends the witness.

This is the mystery of a knack – its strangeness and its simplicity too.

From ***Light on the Path***, Discourse #32, Q1

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I Don’t Have Any Disciples Anymore

What is the difference between a disciple and a friend? Has the transformation amongst the sannyasins already happened?

The distinction between a disciple and a friend has two sides to it. First, from the side of the master it has happened. I don’t have any disciples anymore. You can relax.

From the disciples’ side it is going differently for different people. A few are relaxed – the transformation has taken place. A few are getting to be relaxed; a few are thinking to relax.

A few are unwillingly accepting the idea because to be a disciple was better: the master was responsible. Now the whole responsibility is thrown on you – and nobody wants to be responsible. Everybody wants to get rid of responsibility.

There are a few who have not even heard it. They have listened to me, but it has not reached to their hearts. They still remain disciples.

So it will be different with different people, but sooner or later it has to be with every disciple, as far as I am concerned. He will have to come to drop the idea of disciplehood, and just be a friend.

Your mind may give many arguments against it. You have to see through those arguments, that they are phony. For example, the mind may give very valid looking arguments, such as, in going from being a disciple to a master to becoming his friend, you are losing reverence for the master.

That is not true. In fact, a master who allows you to be his friend is worthy of more reverence than any master who does not allow you to be his friend, who keeps you on a lower level – almost in a spiritual slavery as a disciple – and demands of you that you surrender, that you be committed. He asks you to trust him, but he does not trust you; otherwise, there is no need to say, “Trust me.”

If I trust you, why is there a need to ask? My trust is enough: and my trust will know your trust because trust creates a synchronicity, just as love creates a synchronicity.

The masters who ask for surrender may be playing a game of spiritual ego. If they ask for commitment only to them, that means they are still living with the idea of possessiveness, monopoly, and they are afraid of losing you: you may get interested in somebody else. To avoid all those fears they want you to be committed so that you start feeling guilty if you feel some affinity with somebody else too.

A friend has no possessiveness.

A friend wants you to be happy, wants you to be free, wants you to have all the joys of life, and has no conditions. But a friend cannot take responsibility for you: he cannot be your savior.

He can help you on the path, he can show you the path, but you have to be strong enough to follow the path, to go alone like a lion.

Disciples go like sheep in a crowd. The bigger the crowd, the better the disciples feel; it is cozier, warmer, more comfortable. Just seeing that there are six hundred million Catholics, the pope feels that he must be a man of God; otherwise, why should six hundred million people be following him?

It is a strange game of the ego. The crowd of sheep makes the so-called master feel that he is the shepherd. And then he starts making the crowd bigger because a bigger crowd will make him a bigger shepherd, who owns more people. That becomes his number, his trip.

But these are not real masters. If the crowd leaves them, they will suddenly see themselves reduced to ordinary men – which in reality they are. It was the crowd which had given them a very magnified idea of themselves.

If a master allows the disciples to be friends, he is dispersing the crowd. He is making a personal contact. He is giving you equal status spiritually although he knows that much is still only potential in you, and much work has to be done so that it becomes actual. But whether it is potential or actual, your spiritual status is not lower.

That is the meaning when a master changes disciples into friends. He is giving you the recognition that you are as capable as himself. You may not be aware – that does not make any difference. At least to him it does not make any difference. To you it makes a difference that you are not aware, but that is the work that you have to do. And the work can be done more lovingly in friendship, in love, than it can be done in a certain relationship in which you are lower, inferior, a sinner – and somebody else is higher, superior, a saint.

I don't think the reverence for such a man who makes you his friends will be less. It will be more. So don't listen to your arguments which will try to keep you in the old relationship.

It has never been done, it is true, but you can see the result: the whole humanity is proof – so many masters and so many disciples . . . and the world is just in a mess. People are as mad as ever. No basic change in humanity has happened.

Something in the fundamentals has to be changed. And this is one of the fundamentals: the relationship between the master and the disciple. It has to be changed. A new dimension has to be given to it. And once it becomes a transforming force, in the future, no master will be able to go on playing the old game.

This can become a milestone.

But as far as I am concerned, it is absolutely a fact. As far as you are concerned, there are degrees. But it has to be in you too – a one-hundred percent change from disciplehood to friendship. And you will see a miracle happen because love has never been praised so much, friendship has never been raised so high; and my whole effort is to make everything that is mundane sacred.

From ***Light on the Path***, Discourse #32, Q3

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Meditate for Forty-Eight

Can a person meditating an hour a day gain enlightenment in this life?

It has been found by all the great meditators of the world that just forty-eight minutes, exactly forty-eight minutes, are enough to make you enlightened. But to meditate for forty-eight minutes – I'm not even making it sixty, I'm giving you the exact time – is not an easy thing.

Even to meditate for a single minute, a whole single minute, sixty seconds, is a difficult thing – but not impossible. You can try it to check. Just put a small watch in front of you with a second hand and start looking at the second hand the moment it moves from twelve. Just keep watching the second hand and see how long you can manage watching it.

At the most, somewhere between ten to twelve seconds you will have missed, you will have gone somewhere else. And by the time you come back, a few seconds are lost, the hand has moved. If you do it daily, then in a few days it is possible to remain for sixty seconds silently watching.

The same is the process of vipassana. You have to watch your breathing – that is the method that Buddha used, a very simple and very scientific method. You just watch the breath going in, you go with it; it is coming out, you come out with it. You don't forget at any time the watching; you don't go astray.

If you can manage it for forty-eight minutes, that very day you will become enlightened, in this life!

There is no need to wait for another life, and there is no need even to wait for one hour. Those twelve extra minutes may be too difficult. Just forty-eight is the exact right time.

To attain those forty-eight minutes may take years, but it need not be postponed for another life, it can happen in this life.

It all depends on your intensity.

It all depends how much you are ready, willing, open, receptive, vulnerable.

From ***The Sword and the Lotus***, Discourse #11, Q3

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Consciousness Cannot be Divided into Male or Female

Do we need special meditations for women?

No. Meditation is concerned with your consciousness – and consciousness is neither man nor woman. This is one of the fundamentals I want the world to be aware of.

All the religions have denied the woman any possibility for spiritual growth, thinking that her body is different, her biology is different: she will not be able to reach to the ultimate flowering of consciousness.

But it is strange that nobody down the centuries ever enquired: Who reaches the ultimate flowering – the body, the mind or consciousness?

The body is different. If the body was going into meditation, then there would be certainly a need of different meditations for women than for men. Because the body is not involved in meditation, there is no question of any difference.

For example, in yoga, where the body is very important – all the yoga postures are basically rooted in physiology – there are many postures which are not suitable for a woman's body, and there are many which are more suitable for a woman's body than for a man's body. So yoga can make a distinction: yoga for men, yoga for women.

Mind is also different. Man thinks logically, linguistically. The woman is more affected by emotions, sentiments, which are nonverbal. That's why she tends to be not willing to argue. Rather, she would like to scream and fight, cry and weep. That's the way she has been for centuries, and she wins in it – because the man simply feels embarrassed. He may be right logically, but the woman does not function logically.

So if meditation was concerned with mind, then too there would be a different kind of meditation for women than for men. But meditation is concerned with the very essential core of your being which cannot be divided into male and female.

Consciousness is simply consciousness.

A mirror is a mirror.

It is not male; it is not female.

It simply reflects.

Consciousness is exactly like a mirror which reflects. And meditation is allowing your mirror to reflect, simply to reflect the mind in action, the body in action. It does not matter if the body is a man's or a woman's; it does not matter how the mind functions – emotionally or logically. Whatever the case, the consciousness has simply to be alert to it. That alertness, that awareness, is meditation.

So there is no possibility of any difference in meditation between man and woman.

From ***Light on the Path***, Discourse #35, Q1

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22 Self-Remembering vs Witnessing

Enlightenment: The By-Product of Staying in the Present

Before I came to know you, I had never heard about enlightenment. But I was searching for something. Now, after years of living in a commune, I feel further away from reaching somewhere than ever before. I'm grateful to be here and to feel your friendship and compassion. Is enlightenment still the goal? Is there any goal at all?

This is a troublesome question.

Enlightenment has never been the goal. Its very nature prohibits making it a goal. The goal is always in the future somewhere; and enlightenment is always now and here. Enlightenment is an experience in the present.

But this is one of the troubles of the mind, that it makes goals out of everything. If you love the idea of enlightenment, then immediately the mechanism of the mind makes it a goal: you have to achieve it – and that's where you go on the wrong path.

Enlightenment is a by-product of the understanding that to live in the past is foolish, because it is simply memory. But millions of people are wasting their time in memories. Millions of others are living in the future. You cannot live in the future; it is making castles in the air.

To understand that past and future are both nonexistential . . . all that you have got is a very small moment: this very moment. You don't even get two moments together. When one moment is gone, you get another moment. You always have only one moment in your hands; and it is so small and so fleeting, that if you are thinking of the past and the future, you will miss it. And that is the only life and the only reality there is.

Understanding this whole process, one thing becomes certain: why the mind avoids the present, which is the real, and why it tries to get involved with past and future, which are not real. As one tries to understand that, one thing becomes clear: that in the present moment, mind cannot exist.

Mind is simply a collection of memories of the past, and – out of those memories – imagination about the future.

Mind does not know three tenses. It knows only two: past and future.

Present is nonexistential to the mind. The existential is nonexistential to the mind; and the non-existentials are existential to the mind. Hence the whole effort is how to get out of the mind, how to get out of the non-existentials and to stand in the middle – where existence is.

How to be in the present? – That is the whole knack of meditation. And the moment you are in the present, enlightenment is its by-product.

Don't give it to the mind – the mind will immediately make it a goal. Mind cannot do anything else. It cannot put it in the past because you have never experienced it, so the past is closed. You

have yet to experience it; naturally, it has to be put somewhere in the future. And it always happens in the present.

So forget about enlightenment. It is a by-product; you cannot do anything about it. This is the beauty of by-products: you have to do something else, and the by-product comes in. You have to learn to be in the present more and more. In other words: you have to learn to be in a state of no-mind more and more.

It was for a certain reason that mystics called meditation "no-mind": if you call it meditation, again the mind makes a goal out of it. Then you have to achieve meditation. So it makes no difference whether the goal is enlightenment or meditation, the goal remains, the future remains, and goes on destroying the present.

The mystics time changed from meditation to no-mind for the first time had a tremendous insight. Now no-mind cannot be made a goal: mind cannot make it a goal. It is simply absurd – how can mind make a goal of no-mind? It will simply say it is not possible; mind is all, there is no no-mind.

This was a strategy not to allow you to make it a goal. Very few people have understood the strategy, that that's why they have called it no-mind – to prevent the mind from making it a goal.

So be more and more in a state of no-mind. Just go on removing memories, imagination, to clean and clear the present moment. And as it deepens, as you become more and more capable of no-mind, enlightenment comes of its own accord.

Enlightenment is simply recognizing your being, recognizing the eternity of your being, recognizing that there has been no death before, nor is there any death to come – that death is a fiction. Seeing your being in its utter nakedness, in its absolute beauty, its grandeur, its silence, its blissfulness, its ecstasy – all that is involved in the word "enlightenment."

Once you have experienced that juice, mind starts losing its grip on you because you have found something which is qualitatively so high, so fulfilling, such a tremendous contentment, that mind feels its function is finished. It looks ugly, because it has only given you misery, worries, anxiety. What has been its contribution to you? Its grip loosens; it starts hiding in the shadows, and by and by it falls away.

You continue to live, but now your living is moment to moment; and what you have got as a by-product in that small gap of no-mind goes on growing. There is no end to that growth.

Enlightenment only begins, it never ends.

Nobody has said this before. They have all said that it is perfect – but perfection means it cannot grow. It has happened once, and all growth, all evolution, is finished.

But as far as my experience is concerned, I can say very authoritatively that anything that you are stuck with permanently cannot remain ecstatic, cannot remain blissful. You will start taking it for granted.

It was ecstatic because you had lived in agony; compared to that agony it was ecstatic. You have lived in pain, in wounds; against that, it was contentment, fulfillment. But now, day after day, month after month, year after year, life after life, you have forgotten agony, the taste of pain. And with that forgetfulness, your enlightenment will become just ordinary – something that you take for granted, dull and dead. The ecstasy is the same but you cannot feel it the same. There has come a full stop, and life knows no full stop.

But why have all these mystics insisted that it is perfect? – Because they were afraid. Logically they were not able to face the philosophers, the critics... because if you say it is imperfect, that means something more has to happen. You have not attained the goal – something is still missing. So it is partial, what you have attained. If it is not perfect, it is partial.

To avoid calling it partial, they said that it is perfect. But they forgot that someday somebody can raise a question against perfection. It has not been raised yet, but I am raising it: perfection is going to be dead; it cannot be living, because nothing is going to happen. It will be the same tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, for eternity.

You will get utterly bored with your ecstasy, with your contentment, and there is no going back. You cannot find that agony again, those moments of misery again, because all that has fallen out of your being. There is no way back, and in the future, for as far as you can see, it will remain the same.

I deny perfection. Enlightenment appears perfect because nothing seems to be missing at the moment. All that you have ever dreamed – it is much more than that. All that you could have ever conceived – it is much more than that. So it appears absolute, perfect, ultimate; but this is a fallacy. It will grow, it will become vast. New qualities will be added to it; and each time it is going to be a surprise because you have never thought about this quality.

So I want it to be clearly understood by my people, that enlightenment is only a beginning, the beginning of tremendous evolution, that has no limits. Only then can you remain dancing, singing. And you can remain thrilled every moment, because one never knows what the next moment is going to bring – new insights, new visions, new experiences.

And there is no limitation to it. There never comes a point when you can say the journey has ended. The journey only begins, it never ends.

Other mystics have not said it because they were afraid that if you say to people that the journey only begins and never ends, they will never begin it. What is the point of a journey that begins and never ends? Then do something else. Why waste your life in such a journey, where nowhere you will find a place where you can say, ”I have come home”?

But I want to be absolutely truthful about enlightenment. And I want it to be an excitement that it does not end. It is not something against it, it is something favorable about it – that everything goes on expanding, everything goes on growing, everything goes on getting higher; and still the infinite sky is there, the infinite universe is there.

And if the universe can be infinite, which is inconceivable for the mind... you cannot conceive the universe as infinite. Mind cannot conceive infinity, for the simple reason that mind functions through logic. It will say, “It may be far away, but somewhere it has to end. How can it go on

and on and on? We may never reach the end; we may never find the boundary line where the universe ends – that is possible because we are limited – but that does not mean that the universe is unlimited.

Logic cannot conceive it, thinking cannot have any justification for it. And if you start thinking, you cannot believe it. You can push on the boundary as far as you can but the boundary remains.

But the truth is, the boundary cannot be there, because a boundary always needs two things: one on this side and one on the other side. You cannot make a boundary with only one side. You have a fence around your house because there is a neighbor's house. Your fence is not the end – it is simply the beginning of another house.

So if sometime logic forces you to conclude there must be a boundary, it has to be asked: What will be beyond the boundary? There must be something. Even though it is going to be nothing, that nothing will also be part of the universe. Why are you creating a boundary? That emptiness will also be the universe.

Once you understand that every boundary needs two things – something that it closes and something that it opens – then you can have some idea that a finite universe is impossible. Only an infinite universe is possible.

But for the infinite universe you need an infinity of growth, because if you come to a point where you think you have become perfect, you fall out of tune with the universe.

The same logic has to be understood about evolution. It has to be forever and forever – because again there is the question of a boundary.

You cannot make any boundaries in existence.

Boundaries do not belong to reality. [...]

We are always in the middle, growing. It is eternal growth, in all the dimensions.

And the same applies to enlightenment.

From ***Light on the Path***, Discourse #36, Q2

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Self-Remembering vs Witnessing

The technique of self-remembering seems easier for me than witnessing. Do they both lead to the same goal?

They both lead to the same goal, but the technique of self-remembering is harder, longer and dangerous. Only very few people in the whole history of mankind have attained to enlightenment through the technique of self-remembering.

Many have tried but utterly failed – it looks easy. The reason is that your self-remembering is not going to be your self-remembering, it will be your ego remembering; that's why it looks easy.

You don't know the distinction between the self and the false self. The false self is our ego, and the ego is very subtle, very cunning, and tries in every way to pretend to be the real self. That's why in the beginning it will look easier than witnessing because in witnessing there is no place for the ego. From the very beginning the ego is avoided.

In witnessing, the ego cannot enter. But in self-remembering, there is every possibility of the ego pretending to be your Self. Then the more you will practice, the more your ego will become stronger.

If somebody wants to travel on the path of self-remembering, he absolutely needs a master. He cannot move alone because he cannot make a clear-cut distinction of what is false and what is true.

He knows only the false; he is not acquainted with his true being. Unless he is under a very rigorous master, it will be very difficult to create a separation between the ego and the self.

I will explain it to you by an ancient Chinese story . . .

A great master had a big monastery – five hundred monks – and they were all practicing the path of self-remembering. Self-remembering is one of the paths Buddha has recommended.

One man entered into the monastery – he wanted to become a disciple. The master accepted him, but he was a very simple man from a village, almost uneducated. The master told him, "Your job is cleaning the rice in the kitchen."

It was a big kitchen – five hundred monks. The poor man was cleaning the rice before sunrise and late into the night. He had no time to go to the sermons, to go to the prayers; he had no time to read the scriptures or listen to the wise talks. Those five hundred monks were great scholars, and the monastery was known all over the country.

Twenty years passed and the man continued just cleaning the rice and doing nothing. He forgot even to count the years – what was the point? He forgot the days, the dates, and finally he became suspicious about his own name. For twenty years nobody had used it, nobody had called him by his name – perhaps it was his name, perhaps it was not. For twenty years continuously he was doing one small thing: cleaning the rice, from the moment he woke up until he went back to bed again.

The master declared that his time to depart from the body had come. He wanted to choose his successor, and the way he did it was this: “Anybody who thinks he has succeeded in self-remembering should write on the wall of my hut some insight which shows that he has seen the truth.”

One person, who was thought to be the greatest scholar in the commune, tried. But he was so afraid to write that sentence there because it was not his insight. He knew – how could he not know it – he knew it was not his insight, it was just borrowed from scriptures. It was not his experience – and it was difficult to deceive the old man.

In the morning the old man came out, asked the servant to erase what had been written, and said, “Find out who this idiot is who has spoiled my wall.”

It is said that the great scholar had not even signed, out of fear that he would be caught. If the master appreciated that this was really a great insight, then he would come out and say, “I have written it.” Otherwise he would remain silent . . . who knows? Out of five hundred people anybody could have done it!

Almost one dozen great scholars tried, but none of them had the courage to sign his name. And the master behaved in the same way; he erased the line and said, “None of you has come to the point of self-remembering. You have all been feeding the ego in the name of self. I reminded you again and again but having a big ego is such a joy. And a spiritual ego, the otherworldly ego, the divine ego, becomes even more delicious. Now I will have to find the person myself.”

In the middle of the night the master went to the man who had come twenty years ago. For twenty years the master had not seen him, he had simply been cleaning rice. He woke the man up. The man asked the master, “Who are you?” Because twenty years . . . he had just seen him once for a few seconds when he was initiated – “And what is the idea of disturbing my sleep?”

The master said, “I am your master. You have forgotten . . .? Do you remember your name?”

The man said, “That is the difficulty. The work you have given me is such that it needs no name, no fame, no scholarship, no austerities. It is so simple that I have forgotten everything. I cannot be certain that this is my name. A few names come to my mind and I cannot decide which one is mine, but I am grateful to you.” He touched the feet of the master. “Please don’t change my job. I have forgotten everything, but I have also achieved everything. I know a peace that I had never dreamed of, a silence that no word can express. I have known such moments of ecstasy that even if I had died, there would not have been any complaint that life has not been fair to me. It has given me more than I was worthy of. Just don’t change my job. I am doing it perfectly well. Has somebody complained about my work?”

The master said, “No, nobody has complained, but your job has to be changed because I am choosing you as my successor.”

The man said, “I am only a rice cleaner. I don’t know anything about being a master or a disciple. I know nothing. Please forgive me, I don’t want to be your successor because I cannot handle such a big job, I can only handle this rice cleaning.”

The master still insisted, “You have achieved that which others have been trying to achieve but have failed. You have achieved it because you were not trying. You were simply doing your small work. Slowly, slowly there was no need for thinking, no need for emotions, no need for anger, no fight, no comparison, no ambition – your ego died. And with the ego died your name. You are not born with a name. It is the ego that is given a name – that is the beginning of the ego. With the death of the ego, you even forgot your own master, because it was the ego that brought you to me.

“Up to that moment you were on a spiritually ambitious trip. You are absolutely the right person, so take my robe, my hat, my sword, which have always been given by the master to the successor. But remember one thing: take them and escape from this monastery as far away as you can because your life will be in danger. All these five hundred egoists will kill you. You are so simple, and you have become so innocent that if they ask you for the robe, the sword, the cap, you will give them. You simply take them and go as far away as you can into the mountains.

“Soon people will start arriving to you just as bees start finding their way toward the flowers when the flowers blossom. You have blossomed. You need not bother about the disciples, you simply remain silently in a faraway place. People will come to you; you simply teach them whatever you have been doing.”

“But,” he said, “I have received no teaching, and I don’t know what to teach them.”

The master said, “Just teach them to do small things, silently, peacefully, without any ambition, without any motivation to gain something in this world or in the other world, so that you can become innocent like a child. That innocence is real religiousness. Not being Hindu, not being Mohammedan, but being utterly innocent – just a tabula rasa, a clean sheet on which nothing is written. No Bhagavad Gita, no Koran, no Bible . . .”

It is possible . . . a few people have attained through self-remembering. One of the great masters of this age, George Gurdjieff, used the method self-remembering, but you have to be aware that not a single person of his disciples became enlightened – and he was one of the most perfect masters.

But the problem is that the ego and the self are so close and so similar that whatever you think is your self is most probably, in ninety-nine percent of cases, just your ego. The master’s function is absolutely necessary for this method because he has to destroy your ego. And he has to be hard, harsh. Unless he destroys your ego, self-remembering is going to lead you, not to enlightenment, but to darker spaces of being.

It will strengthen your ego more – you will become a very strong ego, very assertive. In any ordinary field of life, you will be very successful. You can become an Adolf Hitler; you can become a Joseph Stalin . . . Stalin was not his real name; it was given to him because he was such a strong man. “Stalin” means man of steel.

But these people are not a benediction to humanity, they are a curse. If they had not been there man would have been in a far better space, in a far better consciousness.

So if you feel that it is easier for you, then be very careful. I will still suggest that though witnessing may be difficult in the beginning, it is the most safe method without any dangers. It

cannot lead you anywhere other than towards enlightenment. So it can even be practiced without a master.

I would like to give you something in which you are not to be dependent on somebody else.

How long have you lived, how many lives? In all these lives you may have come across many saints, many masters, but where have you reached? Your darkness is the same, your unconsciousness is the same. Perhaps they all gave you methods, but the methods were such that they needed constant supervision. Those methods are called school methods. You have to enter into a monastery, live in a monastery, function under a strict discipline – then perhaps you may be able to achieve something from a school method. And there are such monasteries.

In Europe, there is a monastery in Mount Athos; it is one thousand years old. There are almost three thousand monks inside the monastery, and anybody who wants to become a monk in that monastery can decide to enter, but only his dead body will go out.

If there is such a commitment, only then is a person accepted. Once a person enters Mount Athos, you will never see him till he is dead. This is a school for absolute self-remembering, but you cannot put the whole world in monasteries. Who will take care of these monasteries? Hence my preference is to use a method which keeps you free from any commitment, from any dependence – which keeps you in the world and yet not of the world.

Witnessing is the most simple and the most infallible method; it is the essence of all meditations. Even self-remembering, finally, is witnessing – but at a later stage, when you have dropped the ego. And if you start looking inside yourself, you can understand what I am saying. Can you see your ego and self separately? You simply know one thing: that is I. You don't know two things: that I is the ego, and that the ego is capable of nursing itself through anything.

I have heard . . .

A small child was passing by the side of a palace. He had failed his examination and was feeling very angry with the teachers. He was ready to do something, and suddenly, he found a pile of stones by the side of the road. He took one big stone from the pile and threw it at the palace. Now the palace had nothing to do with his failing, nor had the stone anything to do with it, but he was in such anger he wanted to do something; the energy was there, and it needed to be released. The boy went on his way, but what happened to the stone?

As the stone started rising up he looked down – his brothers and sisters and cousins were all there. And the stone said to them, "I am going on a pilgrimage. I have been thinking about it for a long time. God willing, I will succeed in my adventures and come back to you to relate all that I experience on the way."

All the other stones looked at this stone with their mouths open: "What is happening? He has no wings." He was just a stone like themselves. They also wanted to fly, but they knew that they could not. "But he is flying, you cannot deny it . . ." So they all said, "Okay, just remember us; don't forget us. You are a hero. In the centuries of time sometimes one stone gets wings the way you have, and we are proud that you belong to us, to our family."

They were even feeling great pride because one of the stones was flying towards the palace. The stone hit against a glass window, and naturally, when a stone hits glass it is the glass that is broken, not the stone – it is just the nature of things. But the stone said to the pieces of glass, "You idiots. I have always said, 'Never come in my way. Whoever comes in my way will be shattered to death.' Now look what happened to you. Let this be a lesson to everyone who is listening."

At that very moment the guard on the gate heard the noise of the stone falling on the floor, the glass being broken . . . he rushed in. He took the stone in his hands, and the stone said – although the guard could not understand his language, because he talked in Nepalese . . .! He said, "Thank you my lord, you are the owner of this palace – I can see from your beautiful dress. I will never forget this honor that you have given to me – taking me in your own hands."

The situation was totally different, but the ego goes on turning every situation in its favor.

The guard was afraid that if the king came to know then he would be caught: "What are you doing? Who has thrown the stone?" He threw the stone back out of the window.

And these are the ways of the ego: the stone said, "Thank you! You are not only a great host; you understand the hurts of other people too. You know I am longing to meet my friends. I want to tell them the whole story of my visiting the palace of the king – the meeting with the king, the conversation with the king, the destruction of the enemies who came in my way." And as he was falling back into the pile of the stones, he said to them, "Brothers and sisters, I am back. You should all be proud. My name should go down in history, and with me, my family's name. This pile of stones is no ordinary pile, it is something historical."

The ego has its ways of fulfilling itself even in situations where it should be shattered. So beware of it.

Self-remembering can be done only in a school where you are devoting yourself to the discipline twenty-four hours a day. Because it is the moment you remember yourself . . . while walking you remember, "I am walking" – then walking is no longer natural. It becomes divided: you are separate, and the walking is separate.

Walking is a simple process, but in life you are doing a thousand and one things which are very complex. If you are going to remember yourself while using a machine, while driving a car . . . it could be very dangerous because your whole focus is in remembering yourself. You could cause an accident which could be dangerous to you, which could be dangerous to others.

Life has its own wisdom. The body has its own wisdom. For example, try one thing and you will understand what I mean: you have been eating every day your whole life but you have never thought about what happens to the food when it goes down your throat – you forget about it. Don't forget about it. Just for three days try to remember that the food has gone in. Remember that the food is being digested, that juices, chemicals and other things are coming in from different directions, that the food is being mixed with them and the food is being transformed into different things. It is becoming blood, it is becoming your flesh, it is becoming your bones.

In three days' time you will have such a disturbed stomach, you cannot imagine. It will take at least three months to get it back to its normal state. You are not needed to remember it. It knows its function, and it does its function perfectly well without your remembering.

That's why when you are sick it is better to rest because the body needs you to sleep so it can work better without any disturbance from you.

You must have heard the famous story about a centipede . . .

A centipede has one hundred legs – that's why it is called centipede. And for centuries, centipedes have been in the world, walking perfectly well – no problem. But one day a rabbit became curious. He saw the centipede, he tried to count his legs and said, "My God! One hundred legs! How does he manage to remember which one to put first, which one to put second?

"If I had one hundred legs," the rabbit thought, "I would get entangled and I would fall immediately; I could not walk at all. This centipede is performing a miracle."

He said, "Uncle, uncle, wait, wait! I have a question if you don't mind . . ."

The centipede said, "There is no hurry. I was just going for a morning walk. You can ask your question."

He said, "My question is simple: you have one hundred legs . . .?"

The centipede said, "One hundred? In fact, I have never counted. It would be too difficult for me to count them, but if you say so then perhaps I must have."

The rabbit said, "My curiosity is: how do you manage to walk with such a trail of one hundred legs? How do you manage which one comes first, then second, then third, then fourth . . .?"

The centipede said, "I have never thought about it. I will try. Just now – I will try here."

And then and there he fell on the ground. He called the rabbit and said, "You idiot! Never ask another centipede such a question, otherwise centipedes will die. We cannot live with this curiosity. I have been doing perfectly well up to now, and just as I started becoming alert about what leg is going when . . . as I started remembering one hundred legs, my mind got very much puzzled."

Self-remembering is a school method. And school method means you are in a safe monastery, not doing work that could be dangerous. Otherwise, your remembering . . . working in a factory, working in a carpentry shop and trying to remember, you are bound to get into the same position as the centipede.

I don't want anybody to get into any trouble in the name of spirituality, hence my suggestion again is just pure witnessing – no question of I. And that too, very playfully, not seriously, with a sense of humor.

If you forget, there is no harm. Whenever you remember, again you start. You will forget many times; you will remember many times. There is no question of guilt; it is human.

Very slowly, bigger and bigger gaps of witnessing will arise in you, and as the gaps of witnessing become bigger, your thoughts will become smaller, less. The moment your witnessing comes to a peak – at certain times with a crystal clarity – the thoughts will simply disappear. You will be in an absolute silence. Whatever you are doing will not be disturbed by your silence, but on the contrary, your workmanship, your creative effort will be enhanced.

If you are making statues, or painting, or playing music . . . with such a mad mind, with all kinds of thoughts running around, and you can still manage to create beautiful music – just think of a silent mind, how much deeper and higher music you could create.

The same applies to every area of life. I make it a point to be remembered that if your meditation is right, everything in your life will start falling into better shape. That is the only criterion. No need to ask anybody else; you can see yourself.

Everything in your life will become better with your meditation. When your meditation is at its highest peak, all your efforts will have a beauty and a grace and a creativeness that you cannot imagine. That's why I say, don't divide spiritual life from the ordinary life. Don't create any division at all. Let this life remain one single whole.

So if your consciousness changes, then everything that surrounds you also changes.

I cannot imagine a man of meditation renouncing his wife. No, a man of meditativeness will love his wife more. Perhaps his love will become more and more purified, less and less sexual, more and more prayerful. But he cannot renounce her, that is ugly.

Leaving a poor woman and escaping – that is not the work of a brave man. It fits to a coward, but not to a man who is meditating.

In my village I loved to sit in an old man's small shop. He used to sell sweets. I was attracted, not by his sweets, but by the sweetness of the man. He would say, "The cost price of this many sweets is one rupee, and if you are willing, just for my labors and for my family, you can give me one *anna* more – that is my profit."

First, he would tell the cost price, and then he would tell his profit. And that too he would leave up to you: "If you don't want to give it to me, you can take it at the cost price – of course, I am a poor man, I cannot give it to you below the cost price. I can give you my labor, I can give you my profit, but I cannot go below the cost price."

And I inquired – because it was a sweet market and there were many shops, I inquired in other shops about what he was saying cost one rupee. And others were selling for two rupees, two and a half rupees – the same quantity, but not the same quality, not the same love.

While he was preparing his sweets, I used to sit. He even asked me, "You are the only one. Why do you come and sit here?"

I said, “I simply like it – to see you work. You work so lovingly, as if you were preparing these sweets for your beloved who is coming after many years – and you don’t know who the customer will be.”

And he laughed. He said, “As far as I know it is the same customer who always comes – different faces, but the customer is the same. That’s why I cannot deceive. I cannot cheat, I cannot exploit because it is the same customer with different faces. I have recognized him.”

His whole life I would describe as the life of a great saint, although nobody in the world would recognize him as a saint because we have this idea so deeply rooted in our minds that a saint should renounce life, get away from life. That anti-life attitude has proved so poisonous that it has destroyed the whole beauty of human existence. It has taken away the whole dignity of man.

Hence, I still insist – even if you feel self-remembering is easier – that you try witnessing. Even though it is difficult in the beginning, it becomes very easy as you go ahead.

Gautam Buddha has said, “My teaching is bitter in the beginning but sweet in the end.”

From ***The Sword and the Lotus***, Discourse #10, Q1

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The Last Word in Meditation

What is prayer?

It is a tremendously significant question because I do not have a God, but I still have some place for prayer in my vision, in my approach.

Prayer ordinarily is towards the concept of a God. I do not think that is a right kind of prayer, because in the first place it is based on a belief. You don't know God, you have only heard about him. And you have heard from people who have heard it from somebody else. It is simply a hearsay. How can you love someone you do not know exists or not?

Prayer is love.

Prayer is gratitude.

Prayer is thankfulness.

My sannyasins can pray to existence itself. To the sunrise or to the sunset, or to the sky full of stars, or to the earth, to the mountains, to the rivers . . . they can pray to this existence which is their experience. It is not a belief; we are part of it.

Now prayer can be possible only if your life has become so beautiful, so blissful, that you feel a gratitude, a thankfulness towards existence. So prayer is not for everybody, it is only for those who have succeeded in meditation. It is the last word in meditation.

When you have come to know the silence of existence, when you have experienced life itself, when you have experienced the unspeakable, when you are drowned in the beatitude of your meditation, the last word is a wordless gratitude, a thankfulness.

It has to be of the heart. You need not say anything, because in such moments whatever you say will be a disturbance. It has to be simply of the heart.

Your heart should be full of gratitude – "Existence has been compassionate to me that it has allowed me to come out of misery, it has allowed me to experience the ultimate of consciousness and I am grateful to its compassion. Without its help it was not possible for me alone to reach to this beautiful space."

So prayer is possible only for meditators –that too, when they have succeeded. It is a gratefulness; it is a thank you to existence.

Okay, Arun?

From ***The Sword and the Lotus***, Discourse #14, Q4

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Living Life Totally vs Witnessing

I am a little confused. Is there a contradiction between living life totally, and at the same time witnessing it from outside?

I have seen the question. It was too long, so I told someone to summarize it, but in the summary, it has lost its basic quest.

The question was that I am teaching witnessing, but I also teach you to do it totally. And the problem to the questioner is that if we do it totally, then who will witness it? And if we witness it, at least a part of our consciousness will not be in the action, it will not be total. So he is asking whether we can totally be in the act, or we have to divide ourselves into a witness and into a doer. The question has arisen because you have only thought about it. You have not done anything to experience what I am saying.

First, witnessing is not a doing.

When the mirror reflects you, do you think it does something? It is simply its nature to reflect. There is no action on its part. Even when you are not there it is reflecting. It may be reflecting simply the walls of the room; it may be reflecting anything that is in front of it.

Reflection is not an activity. So it is with witnessing – witnessing is not an activity.

If you think logically, the contradiction will arise. But if you do what I am saying, you can be totally into an act – your body will be in it, your mind will be in it, your heart will be in it, and that is your totality. But there is something beyond these three which is not counted as you, which is not you, which is part of the universal consciousness, which is the divine in you – and that is the mirror.

So when you are witnessing, your mirror is reflecting. You are totally in the act – your body, your mind, your heart – everything is in the act. But there is something more than these three things.

In the East we have called it simply by number. We have not given it a name for a certain reason.

We have called it the fourth, *turiya*. It is a number; it is not a name. We have not given it a name because any name will create some meaning in your mind, some ideas in your mind; a number cannot do that.

You consist of three elements: the body, the mind, the heart. The fourth is just a silent presence in you – it is not you. Don't include it within the boundaries of you; it is beyond you. It is capable of reflecting you as totally in the act. And the action will not divide because it is not an action; it is witnessing, it is simply reflecting.

It is one thing to think about it; then immediately the logic, the reason will say that you are doing two things – you are walking and you are witnessing. That divides. But this is only logical reasoning.

Just try to walk silently, joyously – put everything into a morning walk. Your body is relishing the morning sun, the air; your mind is full of the rising life all around you; your heart is throbbing with excitement; the birds are singing and the sky is so colorful . . . you be just the walk. And you will be surprised that there is someone witnessing which cannot say "I" – which is not your ego, which is the universal self.

Your body is different from mine, your mind is different from everybody else's, your heart is different from everybody else's. But in consciousness we are one continent – nobody is an island. That universal consciousness is always there. Either you are aware of it, then it makes your life a rejoicing, or you are unaware of it, then your life becomes just a dragging somehow toward death.

So there is no contradiction at all. But remember, there are many experiences. If you think about them, you will find contradictions. If you experience them, you will not find any contradiction.

When you ask a question try to experience it not just out of thinking. Ask out of your experience, and then it will be a totally different thing. Everything is not logical, and it is good that everything is not logical. That's why there is some mystery. That's why there is some unknowable surrounding you. There is a possibility to discover it, and that discovery is the greatest ecstasy.

I have not found any contradiction in my experience, but in thinking, I agree with you, there is contradiction.

But I am not telling you to think about it, I am telling you to live it.

From ***The Sword and the Lotus***, Discourse #12, Q3

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23 Release those Devils

Witnessing is Not a Technique

You spoke the other morning about rising through the different levels of consciousness and bringing light to their respective counterparts in the unconscious. Are special techniques needed for this, or will watchfulness of the mind, the body, and the emotions simply bring us through these different levels?

The watchfulness of body, mind and heart is more than enough. No other special techniques are needed, although there are techniques. But as I see them, they are not necessary; on the contrary, they complicate the whole phenomenon. And spiritual growth is not a technological phenomenon, so any technique can become a hindrance. You can start clinging to the technique. That has happened to millions of people.

Searching for spiritual growth they come across a teacher who gives them a technique. The technique helps them to become more silent, more calm, more quiet, to have a great well-being, but then the technique becomes absolutely essential. They cannot leave the technique. If they leave the technique, all those experiences start disappearing. Even if the technique has been practiced for years, just within three days all the experiences will disappear. The techniques don't really give you spiritual growth, but they create a hallucination which looks spiritual because you don't know what spiritual growth is.

It happened that one Sufi master was brought to me. He was master of thousands of Mohammedans, and once a year he used to come to the city. A few of the Mohammedans of his group had become interested in me and they wanted a meeting. They highly appreciated that their master sees God everywhere, in everything, and he is always joyful: "We have been with him for twenty years and we have never seen him in any other state except ecstasy."

I told them, "It will be good that he becomes a guest in my house. For three days you leave him with me. I will take care of your master." He was an old man, a very good man.

I asked him, "Have you used any technique for this constant ecstasy, or has it come on its own without any technique?"

He said, "I have certainly used a technique. The technique is to remember, looking at everything, that there is God in it. In the beginning it looked ridiculous, but slowly, slowly the mind became accustomed: now I see God everywhere in everything."

Then I said, "You do one thing . . . How long have you been practicing it?"

"Forty years" – he must have been nearabout seventy.

I asked, "Can you trust your experience of ecstasy?"

He said, "Absolutely."

Then I said, “Do one thing: for three days you stop the technique . . . no more remembering that God is in everything. For three days look at things as they are; don’t impose your idea of God. A table is a table, a chair is a chair, a tree is a tree, a man is a man.”

He asked, “But what is the purpose of it?”

I said, “I will tell you after three days.”

But not even three days were needed; after only one day he was angry at me, ferociously angry that “You have destroyed my forty years’ discipline. You are a dangerous man. I have been told that you are a master, and rather than helping me . . . Now I see in a chair nothing but a chair, in a man nothing but a man; God has disappeared, and with the disappearance of God my ecstasy that I am surrounded by an ocean of God has also disappeared.”

I said, “This was the specific purpose. I wanted you to understand that your technique has produced a hallucination; otherwise, forty years’ discipline cannot disappear in one day. You had to continue the technique so it would continue to create the illusion. Now it is up to you: if you want to live your remaining life in a hallucinatory ecstasy, it is up to you. But if you want to wake up, then no technique is needed.”

And remember, witnessing is not a technique, it is your nature. Watching is not a technique, because you are not imposing anything, so there is no possibility of creating an illusion; you are simply watching. Even if God comes in front of you, you are not supposed to fall on the ground and touch his feet: you have simply to watch. Watching is not a technique.

A technique creates something; watching simply reveals that which is. It does not create anything; on the contrary, it may destroy a few illusions that were hanging around because you were not watchful enough, so you had never noticed that they were illusory phenomena.

An illusion can be created so easily, that mind always enjoys techniques. Who is going to use the technique? The mind will be the master of the technique.

Watchfulness is beyond mind. Mind cannot watch. That is the only thing in existence that mind cannot do. That’s why mind cannot pollute it, mind cannot lead it astray. […]

There have been many people – many so-called great saints, prophets, messiahs – who have lived in hallucination, who never knew about the simple natural process of watchfulness.

It is better that you don’t get involved with any technique. Watchfulness is so pure; don’t pollute it with anything else. And it is so entire, so complete, that it needs no other support. But mind always wants some technique because mind can control the technique. Mind is a technician; technology is its field. But watchfulness is beyond its control. It is beyond it, it is above it, and in fact, it is the death of the mind.

If watchfulness grows in you, mind will die.

And all these people, like Maharishi Mahesh Yogi teaching transcendental meditation, are giving techniques which mind feels perfectly good with. The mind can use it. But there is not going to be any growth. The technique is not bad, but it simply gives you an illusory feeling of well-being

– as if you are evolving . . . and you are standing where you have been; there is no evolution, no growth.

All these people are exploiting humanity by giving techniques – and this is the worst exploitation because it stops evolution.

I am against all techniques.

I am for a simple, natural process, which you already have, which once in a while you use.

When you are angry, how do you become aware that you are angry? If there was only anger and nobody watching it, you could not become aware of the anger. Anger itself cannot become aware.

So you are aware when you are angry, when you are not angry, when you are feeling good, when you are not feeling good. But you have not used this watchfulness consistently, scientifically, deeply, totally in every phase of the mind. And to me this word contains the very essence of meditation.

From ***The Path of the Mystic***, Discourse #12, Q1

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Mind is the Whole Problem

The darkness seems so deep, my eyes covered in a haze, my mind never ending noise – except for those moments I am with you – swirling around and around. The light is there but seems so far away in all this darkness. Sometimes I wonder if I am going to make it. Beloved Master, I cannot find the door.

Don't be worried. You don't need to find the door because you are outside the door! You are never inside; you only believe you are inside. Existentially, you are always outside. The moment you understand that you are out – it was just an idea that you were in – the faraway light is no longer far away; it is you. And the darkness that surrounds you is not found anymore.

But the basic thing is to realize that you are already outside the door. There is no way for you to be inside the door. That's what I was saying: watchfulness is not part of the mind and cannot be part of the mind.

Mind cannot be a witness.

Mind is the darkness.

Mind is the whole problem, and the solution is just outside the door waiting for you to recognize that you are not in, you are out.

Witnessing the content of your mind, the moment comes when you suddenly become aware of your being always out – even in the darkest nights that have passed you were not in. Such a great joy descends over you that it is existentially impossible for you to get in. It is good that you are not finding the door; otherwise, you will get in!

There is no door. Mind remains in; you remain out. Neither the mind can come out nor you can come in. But the attachment with the mind is possible without any door. The identification with the mind is possible without any door.

You have just forgotten yourself.

Nothing is lost, nothing is missing, nothing has to be found. Just remember. A simple remembering – the simplest things are very difficult, that's true – and this is the most simple thing.

None of the problems are yours. As far as you are concerned, no problem can enter in you, but you can get identified with something which is not you.

I remember a story. A man's house caught fire. The house was on fire, and it had taken the man's whole life's effort to make that beautiful place. Thousands of people had gathered, but there was nothing that could be done. The fire had become so big. And you can understand that man: tears were coming from his eyes. It was his whole life burning in front of him. And then suddenly his son came running and he said, "Dad, why are you worried? We sold the house yesterday. You were out . . . but we have sold the house. It is now for somebody else to cry and weep, not for you. And we have got enough profit out of it."

The man immediately wiped away his tears and became just a spectator like the others were spectators. The identity, the invisible identity, "It is my house," was no longer there. There was no pain, there was no misery, there was no problem at all. And he was really happy in a way: "Now we can make a better house." He was feeling relieved; the house was burning, and he was feeling relieved.

And then a second son came running. He said, "It is true that we had negotiated the sale, but the papers were not signed and the money has not been transferred. So it is our house that is burning, and you are looking at it as if you are just a spectator!" Again those tears were flowing and again the heart was breaking. And nothing has visibly changed: the house is burning, the man is standing there. But these people who are bringing messages are changing everything! When he becomes identified, he is burning with the house. When he gets unidentified, he is relieved and he has nothing to do with the house; it is somebody else's house.

The only thing to be remembered is that you are already out, and by nature there is no way for you to be in. You can believe, you can imagine . . . still you will be outside. Sitting on the steps of your house you are trying to find the door to go out. You will never find it; it is not there; the whole sky is available. You just stand up and walk in any direction; there is no need of opening any door.

But your attachment, your identification, is with the mind, which is in and which cannot come out. It cannot exist in the light. Now this is the situation: witnessing is always out and cannot enter in; it can exist only in the light, it cannot exist in darkness. Mind is always in; it can exist only in darkness, it cannot exist in light.

Between these two absolutely different things you are having an identification, an attachment, that is creating the trouble for you.

So just remember: you are outside. If you cannot do it suddenly, do it slowly, part by part. When anger is there, watch it, and you will find anger is in and you are out.

When Gurdjieff's father died Gurdjieff was only nine years old. The father was poor. He called Gurdjieff close to him and told him, "I have nothing to give you as your inheritance. I am poor, and my father was also poor, but he gave me one thing that made me the richest man in the world, although the outside poverty remained. I can only transfer the same to you.

"It is some advice. Perhaps you are too young and you may not be able to do it right now, but remember it. When you are able to act according to the advice, act according to it. The advice is simple. I will repeat it, and because I am dying, listen carefully and repeat in front of me what I have said so I can die satisfied that I have transferred the message that may have come down from father to son for centuries."

The message was simple. The father said, "If somebody insults you, irritates you, annoys you, just tell him, 'I have received your message, but I have promised my father that I will answer only after twenty-four hours. I know you are angry, I have understood it. I will come after twenty-four hours and answer you.' And the same with anything. Give a gap of twenty-four hours."

The nine-year-old boy repeated what the father said, and the father died, but because it was such a moment the message became engraved. As he repeated the message, the father said, "Good. My blessings will be with you, and now I can die peacefully." He closed his eyes and died. And Gurdjieff, even though he was nine, started practicing what was given to him. Somebody would insult him, and he would say, "I will come after twenty-four hours to answer you because that's what I have promised my dying father. Right now, I cannot answer you."

Somebody might beat him, and he would say, "You can beat me right now, but I cannot answer. After twenty-four hours I will come and answer you because I have promised my dying father." And later on, he used to say to his disciples, "That simple message transformed me totally. The person was beating me but I was not going to react at that moment so there was no question except to watch. There was nothing I had to do: now the person was beating me, I just had to be a spectator. For twenty-four hours there was nothing to do.

"And watching the man created a new kind of crystallization in me. After twenty-four hours I could see more clearly. At the moment when he was beating me, it was impossible to see clearly. My eyes were full of anger. If I was going to answer at that moment, I would have wrestled with the man, I would have hit the man, and everything would have been an unconscious reaction.

"But after twenty-four hours I could think about it more calmly, more quietly. Either he was right – I had done something wrong and I needed, deserved, to be beaten, to be insulted – or he was absolutely wrong. If he was right, there was nothing to say to him except to go and give him thanks. If he was absolutely wrong . . . then there was no point at all in fighting with a man who is utterly stupid and goes on doing such wrong things. It is meaningless, it is wasting time. He does not deserve any answer."

So after twenty-four hours everything settled down and a clarity was there. And with that clarity and the watchfulness of the moment, Gurdjieff changed into one of the most unique beings of this age. And this was the basic foundation of the whole crystallization of his being.

You are always outside.

Just watch.

The mind is always inside. Don't be identified with it. Unidentified, you will become more and more clear, and the mind will die on its own accord.

The death of the mind and the birth of watchfulness is the beginning of your evolution. And the light will not be far away – it is the light. The darkness will be gone, because when you are light, darkness cannot be around you. That's why I said that watchfulness is not a technique, it is your nature. Just remember it.

From ***The Path of the Mystic***, Discourse #12, Q3

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Release Those Devils and Godliness is Within Your Reach

You said the other day to ignore negative mind contents and not give energy to them. I find it difficult to stay on the razor's edge of ignoring without falling into suppressing and thus putting things back into the unconscious. Can you please tell me how to discriminate between these two?

You already know it. Your question contains the discrimination. You know perfectly well when you are ignoring and when you are suppressing.

Ignoring simply means not paying attention to it. Something is there; let it be there. You are unconcerned this way or that whether it should remain or go. You have no judgment. You have simply accepted it is there, and it is none of your business whether it should be there or not.

In suppressing you are taking an active part. You are wrestling with that energy; you are forcing it into the unconscious. You are trying not to be able to see it anywhere. You want to know that it is no longer there.

For example, anger is there. Just sit silently and watch that the anger is there. Let it remain. How long can it remain? Do you think it is something immortal, eternal? Just as it has come, it will be gone. You simply wait. You don't do anything about it, for or against. If you do something for, you are expressing it, and when you are expressing it you are getting into a mess because the other person may not be a meditator – most probably he will not be. He will also react with greater rage. Now you are in a vicious circle.

You are angry, you made the other angry, and you go on becoming angry with each other more and more. Sooner or later your anger will become almost a solid rock of hatred, violence – and while you are moving in this vicious circle you are losing consciousness. You may do something for which you will repent later on. You may murder, you may kill or at least you may attempt to. And after the episode is over you may wonder: "I had never thought that I could murder somebody!" But you created the energy, and energy can do anything. Energy is neutral: it can create, it can destroy; it can light your house, it can set your house on fire.

Ignoring means you are not doing anything about it. The anger is there. Just take note of it, that anger is there, just the way you see a tree is there outside. Do you have to do something about it? A cloud is moving in the sky; do you have to do something about it? Anger is also a cloud moving on the screen of your mind. So watch; let it move.

And it is not a question of being on a razor's edge. Don't make small things into big things. This is a very small thing and can be done very simply; you just have to accept that it is there. Don't try to remove it, don't try to act upon it, and don't feel ashamed that you are angry. Even if you feel ashamed, you have started acting. Can't you be a non-doer?

Sadness is there, anger is there: just watch. And be ready for a surprise; if you can watch, and your watchfulness is uncontaminated, is pure – you are really not doing anything but simply looking – the anger will slowly pass by. The sadness will disappear, and you will be left with such a clean consciousness.

You were not so clean before because the possibility of anger was there. Now that possibility has become actual, and it has gone with the anger. You are far cleaner. You were not so silent, so

peaceful; now you are. Sadness had taken up some energy. It would not have allowed you a deep sense of happiness, it would have clouded your consciousness.

And all the other negative emotions are eating your energy. They are all there because you have repressed them, and they are repressed so you don't let them out. You have closed the door and you have put them in the basement; they cannot escape. Even if they want to escape, you won't let them out. And they will disturb your whole life. In the night they will become nightmares, ugly dreams. In the day they will affect your actions.

And there is always a possibility that some emotion may become too big to control. You have been repressing and repressing and repressing, and the cloud is becoming bigger. And a point comes when you cannot control it anymore. Then something happens, which the world will see as you doing, but only those who know can see you are not doing it: you are under a very great impulsive force. You are behaving like a robot; you are helpless.

You are murdering, you are raping, you are doing something ugly, but in fact you are not doing it. You have collected all that material which has become so powerful that now it can force you to do things – things in spite of you, things against you. Even while you are doing it, you know it is not right. You know, "I should not be doing it. Why am I doing it?" but still you will do it.

Many murderers in many courts of the world have said very honestly that they have not murdered. But the court cannot believe it, the law cannot believe it. I can believe it – because the courts and the law are all primitive. They have not come to maturity. They are not yet psychologically based. They are simply the revenge of the society – put into beautiful words – but it is really nothing but the same thing the man has done . . . he has murdered, now the society wants to murder him.

He was alone. But the society has the law, the court, the police, the jail. And it will go through a long ritual to prove to itself, "We are not murdering the man, we are simply trying to prevent crime." But this is not the fact. If you want to prevent crime, then your law should be based more on psychology, psychoanalysis, meditation. Then you will be able to see that no man has ever done anything wrong, just your whole society is wrong.

The society is wrong because it teaches people to repress, and when they repress there comes a point when what they have repressed starts overflowing and they are simply helpless. They are victims. All your criminals are victims, and all your judges and all your politicians and priests are criminals. But this has been going on for centuries so it has become accepted.

Don't do anything, just ignore . . . and it is not difficult, it is a very simple phenomenon. For example, this plant is here. Can't you ignore it? Do you have to do something about it? There is no need to do anything about it.

Just take a look at the contents of your mind from a distance, just a little distance, so that you can see, "This is anger, this is sadness, this is anguish, this is anxiety, this is worry," and so on and so forth. Let them be there. "I am unconcerned. I am not going to do anything for or against." And they will start disappearing.

And if you can learn a simple thing, of letting these things disappear from the conscious, you will have such a clarity of consciousness . . . your vision will be so penetrating, your insight so

far-reaching that not only will it change your individuality, it will allow the repressed contents in the unconscious to surface. Seeing that you have learned not to repress, things are moving out. They want to go out into the world.

Nobody wants to live in your basement in the darkness. Seeing that you are allowing things to move out, they need not wait for the night when you are asleep; they will start coming up. You will see them coming up from the basement of your being and moving out from your consciousness. Slowly your unconscious will be empty.

And this is the miracle, the magic: if the unconscious is empty, the wall between the conscious and unconscious collapses. It all becomes consciousness. First you had only one-tenth of your mind conscious; now you have all ten parts together conscious. You are ten times more conscious. And the process can go deeper; it can release the collective unconscious. The key is the same. It can release the cosmic unconscious.

And if you can clean all the unconscious parts below your consciousness, you will have such a beautiful awareness that to enter into the superconscious will be as easy as a bird taking wing.

It is your open sky. It is just that you were so loaded . . . so much weight that you could not fly. Now there is no weight. You are so light that gravitation loses its force over your mind; you can fly to the superconscious, to the collective conscious, to the cosmic conscious.

Godliness is within your reach. You just have to release the devils you have been keeping in your consciousness, forcing them into unconsciousness. Release those devils, and godliness is within your reach. And both things can happen together: as the lower part is cleaned, the upper world becomes available to you. And remember, again I say, it is a simple process.

From ***The Path of the Mystic***, Discourse #35, Q3

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The Choice is Yours

I am energy that becomes thoughts and emotions. I am the expression of those thoughts and emotions. I am the witness of those thoughts and emotions. Which of this holy trinity is the closest to the unique being that is me?

The last category, energy as awareness, is the closest to the very center of existence. Then thinking goes a little far away, then expression goes a little farther away. In turning back from expression to thinking, and from thinking to non-thinking and just pure awareness, you are closest to yourself and to existence itself.

In emotions, in thoughts, in expressions, it is the same energy, but it is moving toward the periphery, the circumference, not toward the center. The closer you are to the circumference, the farther you are away from yourself.

Drop backward step by step. It is a journey to the source, and the source is all that you need to experience . . . because it is not only your source, it is the source of the stars and the moon and the sun. It is the source of all.

You can move toward the periphery. That's what people are doing. It is the same energy, just the direction is different – the energy going outward, going further away from yourself. It is the same energy. Remember, I am not saying that it is different energy, but it is going further away from yourself. You will come to know many things, but you will never know yourself.

Coming closer to yourself, it is the same energy. And to know oneself should be a singular goal for every intelligent person in the world; otherwise, you can know the whole world and yet remain ignorant about yourself. Your whole knowledge is futile. You may not know anything, but if you know yourself, your life will be of peace, love, silence, and of great ecstasy.

The choice is yours.

From ***The Path of the Mystic***, Discourse #35, Q2

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24 Your Real Being, the Master

Awareness Is Never Lost

What is awareness? Why is it lost, and how can it be regained? Are there any steps for the same?

Awareness is never lost.

It simply becomes entangled with the other, with objects.

So the first thing to be remembered: it is never lost, it is your nature, but you can focus it on anything you want. When you get tired of focusing it on money, on power, on prestige, and that great moment comes in your life when you want to close your eyes and focus your awareness on its own source, on where it is coming from, on the roots – in a split second your life is transformed.

And don't ask what are the steps; there is only one step. The process is very simple. The step is only one: that is turning in.

In Judaism there is a rebellious school of mystery called Hassidism. Its founder, Baal Shem, was a rare being. In the middle of the night, he was coming from the river – that was his routine because at the river in the night it was absolutely calm and quiet. And he used to simply sit there, doing nothing – just watching his own self, watching the watcher. This night when he was coming back, he passed a rich man's house and the watchman was standing by the door.

And the watchman was puzzled because every night at exactly this time this man would come back. He came out and he said, "Forgive me for interrupting but I cannot contain my curiosity anymore. You are haunting me day and night, every day. What is your business? Why do you go to the river? Many times I have followed you, and there is nothing – you simply sit there for hours, and in the middle of the night you come back."

Baal Shem said, "I know that you have followed me many times because the night is so silent I can hear your footsteps. And I know every day you are hiding behind the gate. But it is not only that you are curious about me, I am also curious about you. What is your business?"

He said, "My business? I am a simple watchman."

Baal Shem said, "My God, you have given me the key word. This is my business too!"

The watchman said, "But I don't understand. If you are a watchman, you should be watching some house, some palace. What are you watching there, sitting in the sand?"

Baal Shem said, "There is a little difference: you are watching for somebody outside who may enter the palace; I simply watch this watcher. Who is this watcher? This is my whole life's effort; I watch myself."

The watchman said, "But this is a strange business. Who is going to pay you?"

He said, “It is such bliss, such a joy, such immense benediction, it pays itself profoundly. Just a single moment, and all the treasures are nothing in comparison to it.”

The watchman said, “This is strange . . . I have been watching my whole life. I never came across such a beautiful experience. Tomorrow night I am coming with you. Just teach me. Because I know how to watch – it seems only a different direction is needed; you are watching in some different direction.”

There is only one step, and that step is of direction, of dimension. Either we can be focused outside or we can close our eyes to the outside and let our whole consciousness be centered in. And you will know, because you are a knower, you are awareness. You have never lost it. You simply got your awareness entangled in a thousand and one things. Withdraw your awareness from everywhere and just let it rest within yourself, and you have arrived home.

From ***The Osho Upanishad***, Discourse #3

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Your Real Being, the Master

In the mind, in the process of thinking, there is so much energy. How can we use that energy in a creative and constructive way?

The question is very complex. It sounds simple, but it is not simple.

You are asking: The mind is full of energy, how to use this energy in a creative and constructive way?

Who is going to use this energy?

If mind itself is going to use this energy, it can never be creative and can never be constructive.

That is what is happening all over the world. That is what is happening in science. The whole misery of science is that mind is using its energy. But mind is a negative force; it cannot use anything creatively; it needs a master. Mind is a servant. Do you have a master?

So to me the question is . . . meditation brings the master in. It makes you fully aware and conscious that the mind is your instrument. Now, whatever you want to do with it you can do. And if you don't want to do anything with it, you can put it aside and you can remain in absolute silence.

Right now, you are not the master – even for five minutes. You cannot say to the mind, "Please, for five minutes, just for five minutes be silent." Those will be the five minutes when mind will be faster, rushing more than ever – because it will have to show you who is the master.

There is a famous story in Tibet. A man wanted to learn the art of miracles, so he served a saint who was thought to be a knower of all the secrets. He served the saint day in, day out; he closed his business. The old saint told him again and again, "I don't know anything. You are unnecessarily wasting your business, and you are becoming a burden to me because whenever I look at you . . . Twenty-four hours a day you are sitting here, on my head, and I don't know any miracles. What to do?"

The man said, "You cannot avoid me so easily. I have heard that you have been hiding those secrets. But if you are stubborn, I am also stubborn. I will die sitting here, but I will learn the secret."

Finally, the saint said, "Listen. This is the mantra" – it was not much, it was a simple mantra – "Just repeat Om, Om, Omkar and all the secrets of all the miracles will be available to you as you become more and more attuned with the mantra."

The man rushed toward his home. While he was going down the steps of the temple the saint said, "Wait! I have forgotten one thing. After taking the bath, when you are sitting to chant the mantra, remember not to let any monkey enter into your mind."

That man said, "You must be getting senile! In my whole life no monkey has ever entered into my mind. Don't be worried."

He said, “I am not worried. It is just to make you aware, so you don’t come later on and tell me that a monkey disturbed everything.”

The man said, “There is no fear about the monkeys. Everything has entered into this mind, but a monkey? I don’t remember this at all, not even in a dream.”

But as he started moving toward his house he was amazed; monkeys started appearing on the screen of his mind – big monkeys, giggling. He said, “My God!” He tried to push them away, “Get out! Get lost! I don’t have anything to do with monkeys, and particularly today!” But he was surprised that it was not one monkey, it was a vast line; they were coming from all sides.

He said, “My God, I had never thought that in my mind so many monkeys are hidden. But first let me take a bath.” But it was so difficult to take a bath because continually he was shouting “Get out! Get lost!”

Finally, his wife knocked on the door – “What is the matter? Who is inside the bathroom? Are you alone?”

He said, “I am alone.”

“But then why are you shouting so loudly, get out, get lost?”

He said, “About these monkeys . . .”

The woman said, “You have gone mad. What monkeys? There are no monkeys here; keep quiet.”

He said, “Strange. This woman has never been so hard on me, but in a way, she is right because there is nobody in the bathroom. But to say that they are in my head looks even worse.”

He sat in his worshipping place, but the monkeys were inside. He closed his eyes; they were sitting all around him. He said, “I have never thought that monkeys are so interested in me. Why are you bothering me? A few are inside the mind, and if I close my mind, a few are sitting all around me. They push me from this side and from that side, and giggling! I am a silent man, and this is not gentlemanly behavior.”

And again the wife looked into his worshipping place and she said, “With whom are you talking?”

He said, “My God, now I have to explain something which I do not understand myself. Just don’t you disturb me tonight. Tomorrow morning I will go and I will see that old man.”

The whole night he took showers many times, rubbed the soap as much as he could to clean himself, but there was no way. In fact, the bathroom was so full of monkeys that to make his way into the bathroom was difficult; to come out of the bathroom was difficult. And when he came back to his worshipping place they were sitting all over – even in his place a big monkey was sitting chanting Om, Om, Om.

That man said, “I cannot wait for morning.” It was midnight. He rushed to the temple, woke up the old man and told him, “What kind of mantra have you given to me?”

He said, “I have told you, that was the condition. That’s why for so many years I have not told it to anybody – because that condition is unfulfillable. You simply drop this idea of miracles, and the monkeys will disappear.”

The man said, “Just . . . I have come for that. I don’t want any miracles; I don’t want any secrets. Just please help me to get rid of these monkeys because they are sitting all over the place, and if I open my shop tomorrow, they will be sitting all over the shop. I am a poor businessman. I got into the wrong business; this is not my business. You do your business but please, if you can help me . . .”

The saint said, “There is no problem. If you drop the idea of miracles those monkeys will disappear. They are the guardians of the miracles.”

If you try even for five minutes to stop thinking, more thoughts will rush in than ever – simply to show you that you are not the master. So first one has to get the mastery, and the way to become the master is not to say to the thoughts, “Stop.” The way to become the master is to watch the whole thought process.

If the man had simply watched the monkeys, had allowed them to giggle, had allowed them to do whatsoever they were doing; if he had been simply a witness, those monkeys would have gone – seeing that this man seemed to be absolutely indifferent, not interested at all.

Your thoughts have to understand one thing: that you are not interested in them. The moment you have made this point you have attained a tremendous victory. Just watch. Don’t say anything to the thoughts. Don’t judge. Don’t condemn. Don’t tell them to move. Let them do whatsoever they are doing, any gymnastics let them do; you simply watch, enjoy. It is just a beautiful film. And you will be surprised: just watching, a moment comes when thoughts are not there, there is nothing to watch.

This is the door I have been calling nothingness, emptiness.

From this door enters your real being, the master.

And that master is absolutely positive; in its hands everything turns into gold.

If Albert Einstein had been a meditator, the same mind would have produced atomic energy not to destroy Hiroshima and Nagasaki but to help the whole of humanity to raise its standard of living. Without meditation the mind is negative, it is bound to be in the service of death. With meditation the master is there, and the master is absolute positiveness. In its hands the same mind, the same energy, becomes creative, constructive, life affirmative.

So you cannot do anything directly with the mind. You will have to take a little roundabout way; first you have to bring the master in. The master is missing, and for centuries the servant has been thinking he is the master. Just let the master come in, and the servant immediately understands. Just the presence of the master and the servant falls at the feet of the master and waits for any order, for anything the master wants to be done – he is ready.

The mind is a tremendously powerful instrument. No computer is as powerful as man's mind – cannot be because it is made by man's mind. Nothing can be because they are all made by man's mind. A single man's mind has such immense capacity: in a small skull, such a small brain can contain all the information contained in all the libraries of the earth, and that information is not a small amount.

Just one library, the British library, has so many books that if we put those books in a line side by side, they will go three times around the earth. And a bigger library exists in Moscow, a similar library exists in Harvard; and there are similar libraries in all the big universities of the world. But a single human mind can contain all the information contained in all these libraries. Scientists are agreed that we may not be able to make a computer comparable to the human mind which can be put in such a small space.

But the result of this immense gift to man has not been beneficial – because the master is absent and the servant is running the show. The result is wars, violence, murders, rape. Man is living in a nightmare, and the only way out is to bring the master in. It is there, you just have to get hold of it. And watchfulness is the key: just watch the mind. The moment there is no thoughts, immediately you will be able to see yourself – not as mind, but as something beyond, something transcendental to mind.

And once you are attuned with the transcendental then the mind is in your hands. It can be immensely creative. It can make this very earth paradise. There is no need for any paradise to be searched for above in the clouds, just as there is no need to search for any hell – because hell we have created already. We are living in it.

I have heard that a great politician died. Naturally, he was afraid that he would be taken to hell. He knew his whole life: it was absolutely criminal and nothing else. It is impossible without crimes to succeed in getting political power. In going higher on the ladder of power, you have to crush, kill, destroy – you have to do everything. But if you succeed then you are forgiven, nobody remembers that you have done anything wrong. And he was a successful politician. But as he was dying, he was afraid; he remembered his whole past, and he was certain that "I am going to hell. Now nothing can help. Those political tricks will not be helpful here."

But when he opened his eyes, he was in front of heaven. He could not believe it. He asked the angels who had brought him there, "There seems to be some mistake, some bureaucratic mistake. This is heaven and you have brought me here?"

"This is, certainly. And there is no mistake, you have earned it."

The man said, "What are you talking about? I have done everything wrong that can be done."

They said, "We know, but your whole life you lived in hell, and now to send you to hell again will not be justified. Moreover, our hell will look very old-fashioned. You have been living in a very ultramodern hell, and we don't want to feel ashamed. Our hell is very ancient, our methods of torture are very ancient, and you have refined everything so well that in fact you will laugh – 'Is this hell?' So the only way . . . even God was puzzled. You are three days late. You must have died three days ago, but it took three days for God to make the decision about where to take you. Finally, we decided, 'It is better to take him to heaven because hell he has lived enough.'"

People still go on thinking that hell is somewhere down underneath the earth – and you are living in it, this is the beauty – and heaven is somewhere above.

You can change this hell into heaven if your mind can be under the guidance of the master, of your self-nature. And it is a simple process . . .

But don't try directly with the mind; otherwise you will be getting into trouble. One can even get into insanity. If you try to put your mind energy into creative directions – you are not capable even of stopping it for one moment and you are trying to put it into a creative dimension – you will go crazy. You will have a nervous breakdown.

Don't touch the mind. First just find out where the master is. It is a complicated mechanism. Let the master be there, and the mind functions as a servant so perfectly.

In the East we have done this. Gautam Buddha could have become Albert Einstein without any difficulty; he has a far greater genius. But his whole life was concerned with transforming people, into awareness, into compassion, into love, into blissfulness.

From ***The Osho Upanishad***, Discourse #4, Q2

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Watchfulness is a Simple Step

I am a first-grade student in the subject of witnessing. Whenever I am listening to you talking about watching, witnessing, something in me feels so thrilled, excited, joyful, and a big "Ah!" comes up.

Recently I have heard you talk about watching the witness. Yet I'm already happy and grateful for the few moments a day when I remember my hands, my body, having a little distance from my thoughts and emotions.

Could you please start with ABC on this subject?

The phenomenon of witnessing has no ABC or XYZ.

It is a simple phenomenon; it is a single step.

It is one process.

You can watch the body; the watching is the same. You can watch the mind – the object has changed, but the watching is the same. You can watch the emotions – again objects have changed, but the process of watching is the same. You can watch the watcher – a tremendous quantum leap, but still the subject is the same; only the object has changed.

Now watchfulness itself is being used as an object. And you have stepped behind watchfulness; you can watch it. And you cannot go beyond this watchfulness. You have come to the very end of your inner core.

So you are going perfectly right. Enjoy it, rejoice in it. More and more silence and peace will be coming your way, more and more blissfulness and benediction. There is no end as far as rewards are concerned because they are all along the way. From the beginning to the very end, each step brings a new space – but it is the same step.

The journey of one thousand miles is done by the simple step, one step. You cannot take two steps at one time. Step after step, just a single step can be stretched to ten thousand miles or to infinity.

Watchfulness is a simple step. There is no alphabet in it. There are no beginners in it; there are no amateurs in it and no experts in it. Everybody is in the middle, always in the middle.

You are moving perfectly right. Just go on.

From ***The Osho Upanishad***, Discourse #11, Q2

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Meditation is Mind Relaxed

Meditation, understanding, awareness, love and enlightenment, and now transcendence of enlightenment, seem to be inalienable parts of your teaching. And they also seem to be organically interconnected.

Would you please explain to us the whole thing once again?

It is so obvious, so simple. It needs no explanation.

It needs only description.

Meditation is nothing but your mind in a silent state. Just as a lake is silent, not even ripples on it . . . thoughts are ripples. Meditation is mind relaxed – don't make things very complex – mind in a state of not doing anything, just at ease.

And the moment you are relaxed, silent, peaceful, there is great insight and understanding of things that you have never understood before. Nobody is explaining anything to you. Just your clarity of vision makes things clear.

It is the same rose, but now you know its beauty in its multi-dimensional way. You had seen it many times – it was just an ordinary rose. But today it is no more ordinary; today it has become extraordinary because you have a clarity. All the dust is removed from your insight and the rose has an aura that you were not aware of before.

Everything around you, inside you, outside you, becomes crystal clear. And as understanding reaches to the ultimate point, there is an explosion of light.

Clarity, in its ultimate stage, becomes an explosion of light we have called "enlightenment."

Just don't use big words; that makes things difficult.

It is simply in the intensity of clarity that darkness disappears. It is because you can see so clearly that darkness is no more there. You know perfectly well that there are animals who can see in darkness; their eyes are more clear, more penetrating. Your insight becomes so penetrating that all darkness is dispelled. In other words, you have an explosion of light. Call it enlightenment, liberation, realization. But you are still beyond it: it is your experience, and you are the experiencer. This is an objective experience; you are a subjectivity. You know all this is happening; hence the transcendence, hence going beyond enlightenment. At that peak, at that Everest . . . only witnessing, just pure awareness; not aware of anything, not witnessing anything – just a pure mirror, not mirroring anything at all. They are all organically related.

And don't bother about the whole thing.

Move step by step; the other step will follow automatically.

From ***The Osho Upanishad***, Discourse #12, Q4

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The Observer is the Observed

There is a statement by J. Krishnamurti that "the observer is the observed." Will you please kindly elaborate and explain what it means?

The statement that "the observer is the observed" is one of the most significant things ever said by any man on the earth. The statement is as extraordinary as J. Krishnamurti was.

It is difficult to understand it only intellectually because the way of the intellect is dialectical, dualistic.

On the path of intellect, the subject can never be the object, the seer can never be the seen. The observer cannot be the observed. As far as intellect is concerned, it is an absurd statement, meaningless – not only meaningless, but insane.

The intellectual approach toward reality is that of division: the knower and the known have to be separate. Only then is there a possibility of knowledge between the two. The scientist cannot become science, the scientist has to remain separate from what he is doing. The experimenter is not allowed to become the experiment itself. As far as intellect is concerned, logic is concerned, it looks absolutely valid.

But there is a knowledge that passeth understanding, there is a knowing that goes beyond science. Only because that kind of knowing which goes beyond science is possible, is mysticism possible, is religiousness possible.

Let us move from a different direction. Science divides the whole of human experience and existence into two parts: the known and the unknown. That which is known today was unknown yesterday. That which is unknown today may become known tomorrow, so the distance is not impossible, not unbridgeable. The distance is only because man's knowledge is growing, and as his knowledge grows the area of his ignorance diminishes. In other words, as he knows more, the area of the unknown becomes less and the area of the known becomes bigger.

If we follow this logic, the ultimate result will be that one day there will be nothing left as unknown.

Slowly, slowly, the unknown will change into the known, and the moment will come when there is nothing left as unknown. That is the goal of science, to destroy ignorance – but to destroy ignorance means to destroy all possibilities of exploration, all possibilities of the unknown challenging you to move forward.

The destruction of ignorance means the death of all intelligence because there will be no need for intelligence anymore. It will be simply something which was useful in the past – you can put it in a museum – but it is of no use anymore. This is not a very exciting picture.

Mysticism does not agree with science, it goes beyond it.

According to mysticism, existence and experience is divided into three parts: the known, the unknown, and the unknowable. The known was unknown one day, the unknown will become known one day, but the unknowable will remain unknowable; it will remain mysterious.

Whatever you do, the mystery will always surround existence. The mystery will always be there around life, around love, around meditation.

The mystery cannot be destroyed.

Ignorance can be destroyed, but by destroying ignorance you cannot destroy the miraculous, the mysterious.

Krishnamurti's statement belongs to the unknowable.

I have been telling you that as you meditate . . . and by meditation I simply mean as you become more and more aware of your mind process. If the mind process is one hundred percent taking your whole energy, you will be fast asleep inside – there will be no alertness.

One morning, Gautam Buddha is talking to his disciples. The king, Prasenjita, has also come to listen to him; he is sitting just in front of Buddha. He is not accustomed to sitting on the floor – he is a king – so he is feeling uncomfortable, fidgety, changing sides, somehow trying not to disturb and not to be noticed by Buddha because he is not sitting silently, peacefully. He is continuously moving the big toe of his foot, for no reason, just to be busy without business. There are people who cannot be without business; they will still be busy.

Gautam Buddha stopped talking and asked Prasenjita, "Can you tell me, why are you moving your big toe?" In fact, Prasenjita himself was not aware of it.

You are doing a thousand and one things you are not aware of. Unless somebody points at them, you may not take any note of them.

The moment Buddha asked him, the toe stopped moving. Buddha said, "Why have you stopped moving the toe?"

He said, "You are putting me in an embarrassing situation. I don't know why that toe was moving. This much I know: that as you asked the question it stopped. I have not done anything – neither was I moving it, nor have I stopped it."

Buddha said to his disciples, "Do you see the point? The toe belongs to the man. It moves, but he is not aware of its movement. And the moment he becomes aware – because I asked the question – the very awareness immediately stops the toe. He does not stop it. The very awareness, that 'It is stupid, why are you moving it?' – just the awareness is enough to stop it."

Your mind is a constant traffic of thoughts, and it is always rush hour, day in, day out.

Meditation means to watch the movement of thoughts in the mind.

Just be an observer, as if you are standing by the side of the road watching the traffic – no judgment, no evaluation, no condemnation, no appreciation – just pure observation.

As you become more and more accustomed to observation, a strange phenomenon starts happening. If you are ten percent aware, that much energy has moved from the mind process to the observer; now the mind has only ninety percent energy available. A moment comes . . . you

have fifty percent of energy. And your energy goes on growing as the mind goes on losing its energy.

The traffic becomes less and less and less, and you become more and more and more.

Your witnessing self goes on increasing in integrity, expanding; it becomes stronger and stronger.

And the mind goes on becoming weaker and weaker: ninety percent observer and ten percent mind, ninety-nine percent observer and only one percent mind.

One hundred percent observer and the mind disappears, the road is empty; the screen of the mind becomes completely empty, nothing moves. There is only the observer.

This is the state J. Krishnamurti's statement is pointing at. When there is nothing to observe, when there is only the observer left, then the observer itself becomes the observed – because there is nothing else to observe, what else to do? The knower simply knows itself. The seer sees himself.

The energy that was going toward objects, thoughts . . . there are no thoughts, no objects. The energy has no way to go anywhere; it simply becomes a light unto itself. There is nothing that it lights, it lights only itself – a flame surrounded by silence, surrounded by nothingness.

That is Krishnamurti's way of saying it, that the observer becomes the observed. You can call it enlightenment, it is the same thing: the light simply lights itself, there is nothing else to fall upon. You have dissolved the mind. You are alone, fully alert and aware.

Krishnamurti is using a phrase of his own. He was a little fussy about it . . . not to use anybody else's phrase, anybody else's words – not to use anything that has been used by other masters. So his whole life, he was coining his own phrases.

But you can change only the expression, you cannot change the experience. The experience is eternal. It makes no difference whether somebody calls it enlightenment, somebody calls it nirvana, somebody calls it samadhi, somebody calls it something else. You can give it your own name, but remember, the experience should not be changed by your words.

And it is not changed by J. Krishnamurti's words. They are perfectly applicable, although they are not so glamorous as nirvana, Gautam Buddha's word, or samadhi, Patanjali's word, or il'aham, Mohammed's word. "The observer is the observed" looks too mundane. It certainly points to the reality, but the words in themselves are not very poetic, are very ordinary. And the extraordinary should not be indicated by the ordinary; that is sacrilegious.

So there are many people around the world who have been listening to J. Krishnamurti. They will listen to these words, "The observer becomes the observed," and they will not have even a far-off notion of nirvana or enlightenment or samadhi.

I don't like this fussiness. I don't want to say anything against that old man because he is dead. If he were alive, I would say something against him, certainly. His whole effort – and he lived

long, ninety years – was somehow to prove that he was original in everything, even in expressions.

I don't feel the necessity. If you are original, you are original. There is no need to shout from the housetops that "I am original," that "I am fortunate that I have not read any sacred scriptures."

And this is not true because even to avoid samadhi, nirvana, enlightenment, you have to know those words; otherwise, how can you avoid them? He may not have read them himself; somebody else may have read them, and he must have heard it.

And that's what actually had happened: from his childhood he was being taught to become a world teacher, so others were telling him . . . He was just nine years old, so he was not telling a lie by saying that he had not read the sacred scriptures; but the sacred scriptures were read to him.

This reminds me of a milkman. I was a student in the university and he used to come to the hostel with his small son to give milk to the students. And everybody was suspicious that his milk was at least fifty percent water. Already the purest milk is eighty percent water; then fifty percent more . . .

So it is just the name milk, otherwise it is all water. So everybody was telling him, "You are mixing in too much water."

And he was a very religious man, worshipping for hours in the temple. And he would say, "I am a religious man. I cannot do this. I can take an oath. This is my son" – and he would put his hand on his son's head – "Under oath I am saying that if I lie, my son should die. I have never mixed water into milk."

I listened many times. One day I called him inside my room and closed the door. He said, "What are you doing?"

I said, "You need not be worried, I am also a religious man. Just a little dialogue . . ."

He said, "But why are you closing the door?"

I said, "It has to be very private; otherwise, you will be in difficulty."

He said, "Strange . . . why should I be in difficulty?"

I said, "Now just tell me exactly. I have seen you mixing water with my own eyes . . . I had to miss one morning walk just to hide near your place to see it. Just this morning I have seen it. And if you don't listen to me . . . I don't have a son, but I can use your son, under oath."

He said, "Wait! Don't do that. You are a dangerous man. You can do it to your son but not to my son."

I said, "What is the harm? Your son is not going to be harmed; truth is truth."

He said, "That means I will have to tell you the truth."

I said, “You will have to tell me the truth.”

He said, “The truth is that I never mix water into milk, I always mix milk into water – and that makes all the difference. My oath is absolutely correct. But please don’t say it to anybody, otherwise they will start asking me to take the oath the other way, and that I cannot do. I mix them, but I always mix milk into the water. I am making the water also milky. I am not destroying milk; I am just changing the quality of the water!”

I said, “You are really a religious man.” Now what he is saying is simply the same.

For thousands of years, anybody who has reached to the point of no-mind and only awareness has given names which are far more meaningful than J. Krishnamurti’s words. For example, Patanjali’s word is the most important and the most ancient: samadhi. In Sanskrit, sickness is called *vyadhi*, and to go beyond all sickness is called samadhi. It has a beauty – going beyond all sickness; attaining wholeness, perfection. It has a beauty and a meaning.

Gautam Buddha used the word nirvana . . . because he was trying to make an effort twenty-five centuries after Patanjali. In these twenty-five centuries Patanjali had been misused. The people who were trying to reach samadhi made it some kind of ego trip. The word “samadhi” is very positive – beyond all illness, wholeness. There is a loophole in it: it can give you an idea that “I will become perfect, beyond all limitations, all sicknesses. I will become whole.” But the danger is that this “I” may be your ego – most probably it will be – because your mind is still there.

The samadhi is true when the mind is gone. Then you can say, “I have gone beyond sickness” because the ego was also a sickness – in fact, the greatest sickness that man suffers from. Now your “I” does not mean ego. It simply means your individuality, not your personality. It simply means the universal in you, just the dewdrop which contains the ocean. The emphasis has changed completely. It is not the dewdrop that is claiming; it is the ocean that is proclaiming.

But because many people became egoistic . . . and you can see those people even today. Your saints, sages, mahatmas, are so full of ego that one is surprised – even ordinary people are not so full of ego. But their egos are very subtle, very refined.

Gautam Buddha had to find a new word, and the word had to be negative so that ego could not make a trick for itself. “Nirvana” is a negative word; it simply means “blowing out the candle” . . . a very beautiful word. Blowing out the candle, what happens? – Just pure darkness remains.

Buddha is saying that when your ego has disappeared like the flame of the candle, what remains – that silence, that peace, that eternal bliss – is nirvana.

And certainly, he was successful: nobody has been able to make nirvana an ego-trip. How can you make nirvana an ego-trip? The ego has to die. It is implied in the word itself, that you will have to disappear in smoke. What will be left behind is your true reality, is your pure existence, is your truth, is your being – and to find it is to find all.

But Buddha had a reason to change the word “samadhi” into “nirvana.” J. Krishnamurti had no reason at all, except that he was obsessed with being original. What he says describes the fact: the observer is the observed – but it has no poetry. It is true, but it has no music.

But that is true about J. Krishnamurti's whole philosophy: it has no music; it has no poetry. It is purely a rational, logical, intellectual approach. He was trying hard somehow to express the mystic experience in rational and logical terms, and he has been successful in many ways, but he has destroyed the beauty.

He has brought the mystic experience closer to rational philosophizing; but the mystic experience is not philosophy, it is always poetry. It is closer to painting, closer to singing, closer to dancing, but not closer to logic – and that's what he was doing. And my opposition to him is based on this ground. My effort is to bring mysticism to your dance, to your song, to your love, to your poetry, to your painting – not to your logic.

Logic is good for business; it is good for mathematics. It is absolutely useless as far as higher values are concerned.

From ***The Osho Upanishad***, Discourse #14, Q1

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25 Free from Everybody

Jivan Mary's Hallelujah

Sitting before you, feeling, your words flowing toward me from your great heart, I found my own heart bursting open and receiving the sun and moon of your being. Soon a great peace fell over me, followed by a never-known calmness so that I feel that I am resting in the arms of existence itself. I bow down before you in gratefulness to kiss the earth that gave you life. I lift my arms to the stars and sing hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Beloved Master, because of you I am alive to realize the beauty, the joy, the purity of love that is the very expanse of existence. These words seem unable to express the truest feelings that arise from the depth of my being. But I bow down before you now, and again and again and again to dance, to sing, to shout: thank you, beloved Master, thank you, thank you, thank you. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Jivan Mary, there is much more yet to happen.

What has happened to you is immense.

What will happen to you will be greater but remember one thing: it is never enough.

Existence is such an abundance — we cannot exhaust it. It is inexhaustible in its beauty, in its blissfulness, in its benediction.

You are feeling difficulties to express what is happening to you. And this is only the beginning — just think of the difficulties of those who have gone far ahead of you. There comes a moment when even to say that this cannot be said is not possible — because to say that this cannot be said is still saying something about it. It is still defining it in a very negative way.

There comes a moment when only silence, utter silence, remains your expression.

That is your thankfulness, that is your gratitude, that is your hallelujah . . . a dance which is invisible, a song which is not heard, a beauty which cannot be painted, described.

And only when we have come to the point where words are to be left behind does what I call "religiousness" begin.

I do not say renounce the world, but I certainly say move towards the moment when you will have to renounce the word.

The Bible says, "In the beginning was the word." Nobody knows about the beginning.

Nobody can know about the beginning because nobody can be the witness about the beginning. If somebody had been witnessing the beginning then it would not have been the beginning because somebody was already there.

The Bible may be right, may be wrong about the beginning, but I say unto you: In the end there is no word, and that has been witnessed by thousands of mystics in thousands of years past.

And the moment you come to realize that words are slipping out of your hands, that the boundary line of language is crossed . . . a tremendous innocence, a new childhood. For the first time you can understand that which cannot be spoken. You can understand the message of the wind blowing through the pine trees, you can understand the poetry of the sound of running water.

To be freed from language is to be freed from all human limitations.

Language is the greatest imprisonment.

I am happy that you are feeling a great difficulty to express something that you are experiencing. Slowly, it will become more and more clear that there is no word, no language, no concept to explain it, to express it.

Just silence is the only answer to all your questions, the only meeting with existence without any barrier, any wall.

As the language disappears, the mind is no more of any use. For the first time you contact existence directly, without the mediation of the mind — and that experience is enlightenment. And nobody is far away from it; it is within everybody's reach.

But people are searching for their happiness where it does not exist. They are looking for living waters in deserts. And when frustration comes, failure comes, despair comes, they are angry at life, not angry at themselves.

What can life do? It is available, but somehow you manage to search in the wrong direction. Perhaps you are afraid, deep down, that life may be too much, love may be too much, existence may drown you.

And in a way, your fear is right: the closer you come to reality, the less you will be. The moment you encounter reality face to face, you will not be at all.

I have said many times that nobody has seen God — neither Moses nor Jesus nor Krishna.

And naturally, people have misunderstood me. Whenever I have said that nobody has seen God, I was not saying there is no God; I was simply saying the moment you come close enough to God to see, you are no more. Who is going to see God? As long as you are — to see, to feel, to say, to question, to inquire — God is not. And God is another name of reality. It is not a person, it is only a quality, a fragrance, a sweetness, a music.

Jivan Mary, one day will come when you will be in the state of hallelujah, but you will not be able to say the word because the word will fall short of the experience.

From ***Beyond Enlightenment***, Discourse #4, Q1

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Osho on “Who am I?”

Would you please talk about the sadhana based on holding as much as possible to the “I” thought or the sense “I AM” and on asking oneself the questions, “Who am I?” or “From where does the ‘I’ arise?”

In what way does this approach to meditation differ from that of watching the gaps between one’s in-breath and out-breath? Does it make any difference whether one witnesses the breath focusing on the heart center or on the lower belly center?

It is an ancient method of meditation but full of dangers. Unless you are alert, the greater possibility is that you will be led astray by the method rather than to the right goal. The method is simple — concentrating yourself on the concept of I, closing your eyes and inquiring, “Who am I?”

The greatest problem is that when you ask “Who am I?” . . . who is going to answer you? Most probably the answer will come from your tradition, from your scriptures, from your conditioning. You have heard that “I am not the body, I am not the mind. I am the soul, I am the ultimate Brahma, I am God” — all these kinds of thoughts you have heard before.

You will ask a few times, “Who am I? Who am I?” — And then you will say, “I am ultimate Brahma.” And this is not a discovery, this is simply stupid. If you want to go rightly into the method, then the question has not to be verbally asked. “Who am I?” has not to be repeated verbally. Because as long as it remains a verbal question, you will supply a verbal answer from the head. You have to drop the verbal question. It has to remain just a vague idea, just like a thirst. Not that “I am thirsty,” — can you see the difference? When you are thirsty, you feel the thirst. And if you are in a desert, you feel the thirst in every fiber of your body. You don’t say, “I am thirsty, I am thirsty.” It is no longer a linguistic question, it is existential.

If “Who am I?” is an existential question, if you are not asking it in language but instead the feeling of the question is settling inside your center, then there is no need for any answer. Then it is none of the mind’s business. The mind will not hear that which is non-verbal, and the mind will not answer that which is non-verbal.

All your scriptures are in the mind, all your knowledge is gathered there.

Now you are entering an innocent space. You will not get the answer. You will get the feel, you will get the taste, you will get the smell. As you go deeper, you will be filled more with the feeling of being, of immortality, blissfulness, silence . . . a tremendous benediction.

But there is no answer like, “I am this, I am that.” All that is from the scriptures. This feeling is from you, and this feeling has a truth about it. It is a perfectly valid method.

One of the great masters of this century, Raman Maharshi, used only this method for his disciples: “Who am I?” But I have come across hundreds of his disciples — they are nowhere near the ultimate experience. And the reason is because they know the answer already.

I have asked them, “Do you know the answer?”

They said, “We know the answer.”

I said, “If you know the answer, then why are you asking? And your asking cannot go on very long — do it two or three times and the answer comes. The answer was already there, before the question.” So it is just a mind game. If you want to play it, you can play it. But if you really want to go into it as it was meant by Raman Maharshi, and by all the ancient seers, it is a nonverbal thirst.

Not knowing oneself hurts, it is a wound. Not knowing oneself makes the whole of life meaningless. You may know everything, only you do not know yourself — and that would be the first thing to know. So if you can avoid the danger of falling into a verbal question, it is perfectly good, you can go ahead.

You have also asked about witnessing, watching the breath and where one should watch. Anywhere — because the question is not where you are watching, the question is *you are watching*. The emphasis is on watching, watchfulness. All those points are just excuses. You can watch the breath at the tip of the nose when the breath goes in, you can watch it while it is going in, you can watch it when it returns — you can watch it anywhere. You can watch thoughts moving inside. The whole point is not to get lost in *what* you are watching. That is not important. The important thing is that you are watchful, that you have not forgotten to watch, that you are watching . . . watching . . . watching.

And slowly, slowly, as the watcher becomes more and more solid, stable, unwavering, a transformation happens. The things that you were watching disappear. For the first time, the watcher itself becomes the watched; the observer itself becomes the observed. You have come home.

From ***Beyond Enlightenment***, Discourse #9, Q3

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Free from Everybody

The fruit falls on the ground when it is ripe. One day, you will leave us, and it will be impossible to have another master in your place. How can anybody else be the substitute for the Master of masters?

When you leave the physical body, will your meditation techniques help our inner growth as they do now?

My approach to your growth is basically to make you independent of me. Any kind of dependence is slavery, and the spiritual dependence is the worst slavery of all.

I have been making every effort to make you aware of your individuality, your freedom, your absolute capacity to grow without any help from anybody. Your growth is something intrinsic to your being. It does not come from outside; it is not an imposition, it is an unfolding.

All the meditation techniques that I have given to you are not dependent on me – my presence or absence will not make any difference – they are dependent on you. It is not my presence but your presence that is needed for them to work. It is not my being here but your being here, your being in the present, your being alert and aware that is going to help.

I can understand your question and its relevance. It is not irrelevant. The whole past of man is, in different ways, a history of exploitation. And even the so-called spiritual people could not resist the temptation to exploit. Out of a hundred masters, ninety-nine percent were trying to impose the idea that, "Without me you cannot grow, no progress is possible. Give me your whole responsibility."

But the moment you give your whole responsibility to somebody, unknowingly, you are also giving your whole freedom. And naturally, all those masters had to die one day, but they have left long lines of slaves: Christians, Jews, Hindus, Mohammedans. What are these people? Why should somebody be a Christian? If you can be someone, be a Christ, never be a Christian. Are you absolutely blind to the humiliation when you call yourself a Christian, a follower of someone who died two thousand years ago?

The whole of humanity is following the dead. Is it not weird that the living should follow the dead, that the living should be dominated by the dead, that the living should depend on the dead and their promises that "We will be coming to save you"? None of them has come to save you. In fact, nobody can save anybody else; it goes against the foundational truth of freedom and individuality.

As far as I am concerned, I am simply making every effort to make you free from everybody – including me – and to just be alone on the path of searching.

This existence respects a person who dares to be alone in the seeking of truth. Slaves are not respected by existence at all. They do not deserve any respect – they don't respect themselves – how can they expect existence to be respectful toward them?

So remember, when I am gone, you are not going to lose anything. Perhaps you may gain something of which you are absolutely unaware. Right now, I am available to you only embodied, imprisoned in a certain shape and form.

When I am gone, where can I go? I will be here in the winds, in the ocean; and if you have loved me, if you have trusted me, you will feel me in a thousand and one ways. In your silent moments you will suddenly feel my presence.

Once I am unembodied, my consciousness is universal. Right now, you have to come to me. Then, you will not need to seek and search for me. Wherever you are . . . your thirst, your love. . . and you will find me in your very heart, in your very heartbeat.

From ***Beyond Enlightenment***, Discourse #11, Q1

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Just a Liquid Friendliness

I am familiar with the master-disciple relationship after years of being around you.

Could you please comment on the disciple-disciple relationship?

There is no such thing. Disciples in the past have created organizations. That was their relationship, that "we are Christians," that "we are Mohammedans," that "we belong to one religion, to one faith, and because we belong to one faith, we are brothers and sisters. We will live for the faith and we will die for the faith."

All organizations have arisen out of the relationships between disciples. In fact, two disciples are not connected with each other at all. Each disciple is connected with the master in his individual capacity. A master can be connected with millions of disciples, but the connection is personal, not organizational.

Disciples don't have any relationship. Yes, they have a certain friendliness, a certain lovingness. I am avoiding the word "relationship" because that is binding. I am not calling it friendship even, but "friendliness" – because they are all fellow travelers walking on the same path, in love with the same master, but they are related to each other through the master. They are not related to each other directly.

This has been the most unfortunate thing in the past: that disciples became organized, related amongst themselves, and they were all ignorant. And ignorant people can only create more nuisance in the world than anything else. All the religions have done exactly that.

My people are related to me individually. And because they are on the same path, certainly they become acquainted with each other. A friendliness arises, a loving atmosphere, but I don't want to call it any kind of relationship.

We have suffered too much because of disciples getting directly related to each other, creating religions, sects, cults, and then fighting. They cannot do anything else. At least with me, remember it: you are not related to each other in any way at all. Just a liquid friendliness, not a solid friendship, is enough – and far more beautiful, and without any possibility of harming humanity in the future.

From ***Beyond Enlightenment***, Discourse #2, Q2

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The Eternity of Your Being

What does it mean when you say, "Just be yourself"? How can I be myself when I don't know who I am? I know many of my preferences, likes, dislikes and tendencies, which seem to be the outcome of a programmed biocomputer called the mind. Does just being oneself mean that one totally lives out the whole content of the mind as watchfully as possible?

Yes, it exactly means that — to live as an awareness: awareness of all the programs the mind has been conditioned for, awareness of all the impulses, desires, memories, imaginations . . . all that the mind can do.

One has to be not part of it but separate — seeing it but not being it — watching it. And this is one of the most essential things to remember, that you cannot watch your watchfulness. If you watch your watchfulness, then the watcher is you, not the watched. So you cannot go beyond watchfulness. The point that you cannot transcend is your being. The point that you cannot go beyond is you. You can watch very easily any thought, any emotion, any sentiment. Just one thing you cannot watch — and that is your watchfulness. And if you manage to watch it, that means you have shifted: the first watchfulness has become just a thought; now you are the second watcher.

You can go on shifting back, but you cannot get out of watchfulness because it is you: you cannot be otherwise.

So when I say, "Just be yourself," I am saying to you, "Just be unprogrammed, unconditioned awareness." That's how you had come into the world, and that's how the enlightened person leaves the world. He lives in the world but remains totally separate.

One of the great mystics, Kabir, has a beautiful poem about it. All his poems are just perfect — nothing can be better. One of his poems says, "I will give back the soul that was given to me at the time of my birth as pure, as clean, as it was given to me. I will give it back that way when I die." He is talking about awareness, that it has remained unpolluted. The whole world was there to pollute it, but he has remained watchful.

All that you need is just to be watchful, and nothing will affect you. This unaffectedness will keep your purity, and this purity has certainly the freshness of life, the joy of existence — all the treasures that you have been endowed with.

But you become attached to the small things surrounding you and forget the one that you are. It is the greatest discovery in life and the most ecstatic pilgrimage to truth. And you need not be an ascetic, you need not be anti-life; you need not renounce the world and go to the mountains. You can be where you are, you can continue to do what you are doing. Just a new thing has to be evolved: whatever you do, you do with awareness — even the smallest act of the body or the mind — and with each act of awareness you will become aware of the beauty and the treasure and the glory and the eternity of your being.

From ***Beyond Psychology***, Discourse #22

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26 No Time Left for any Device

No Time Left for any Device

In the last few weeks, you have been talking a lot about the world running fast toward a dead end, without showing any more hope that things will ever change. On the other hand, up to one month ago, you talked on the possibility that the presence of two hundred enlightened people, or even one, could save the world. Why this shift of emphasis? Did you give up on the other possibility? Did something happen within the last few weeks that made your vision change?

Chidananda, it is true that I have been talking a lot about the world running fast toward a dead end. The reason is, factually, it is running toward an end. But it was running toward its end before, too. Now I want it to be absolutely emphasized on your consciousness so that you stop postponing your own transformation. Man's mind is so stupid that if there is a little possibility to postpone, then he will postpone for tomorrow – unless he comes to a dead-end street where there is no way to go forward and he has to take an absolute about-turn.

But things in the world are not visible to you. You may go on sleeping and the world may die. It is urgent that you take it seriously that the world may not be there tomorrow. You don't have time to waste for anything else other than your own awakening.

I still know if there are two hundred enlightened people in the world, the world can be saved; but I have never told you that just one enlightened man can save the world. It is a heavy load. One single enlightened man cannot carry it; two hundred is the minimum. But from where to bring those two hundred people? They have to be born amongst you – *you* have to become those two hundred people. And your growth is so slow, there is every fear that before you become enlightened the world will be gone.

You are not putting your total energy into meditation, into awareness. It is one of the things that you are doing, amongst many; and it is not even the first priority of your life. I want it to become your first priority. The only way is that I should emphasize, deeply into your consciousness, that the world is going to end soon.

And if you are not awakened before its end, you will be lost in a long journey because evolution will start from the very beginning on some other planet. On this planet it took four billion years for man to arrive. His life began in the ocean as a fish. On another planet, if this planet is destroyed, life will continue, but it will have to begin from the very beginning – and after four billion years you may be again a human being. It is a great risk to take.

Nothing has changed in the world; everything is going exactly in the direction of death – a little faster of course – and the moment of total annihilation is coming very close. It all depends on what your priorities are. If being awakened has become your priority, and you are ready to sacrifice everything for it, then there is hope. […]

I have been telling you that two hundred enlightened people can save the world. Existence is very generous; it cannot destroy two hundred awakened people, who have reached to the highest

peak of consciousness – which has taken four billion years of evolution. But you have to become those two hundred people! To wake you up, I have been insisting that the end is very close. And this time it is not a parable.

Jesus used it as a device, that the end of the world is very close and the last judgment day is very close. His disciples asked him at the time of his departure – before the enemies got hold of him and when it was certain that he would be crucified the next day – their last question was, "When will we be seeing you again?" He said, "In this very life, because the end of the world is very close – but do what I have told you."

And even Christians don't know what he has told them. The last night before he was caught, they were in the mountains and he told his disciples, "This may be the last night we are together, and I am going to do my prayer. While I am praying behind the bush you should remain awake. It is absolutely essential, to support my prayer, that you are awake. Don't fall asleep."

In the middle of his prayer, he came back – and almost all were fast asleep. He woke them up and said, "Have you not heard me? I had told you, 'You have to remain awake.' Can't you remain awake just one night? – because I will not be here with you again. Even my death tomorrow cannot help you to remain awake?" They were very sorry. They said they would try, and he went again. This went on four, five times – he would come back and they would all be fast asleep.

According to me this was his last teaching: to remain awake. But Christianity has completely forgotten about it. And I have not seen a single commentary by Christians on the implications of why Jesus was so insistently saying, "Be awake!" He was trying his hardest because once he was gone, there was every possibility they would all fall asleep, just as the whole of humanity is asleep, and they would start doing in their dreams things that are not to be done. But things that are not to be done can be prevented only when you are aware, alert.

His last teaching was awareness, but the disciples failed him – not only those twelve intimate disciples failed him, for two thousand years all his disciples have failed him. The very word "awareness" has disappeared from the Christian idea of transforming human beings. Jesus was continually saying, "The end is very close." That was a device because if you feel that there is enough time, why not sleep a little more? What is the hurry? But if there is no time left at all, perhaps the shock of it may wake you up.

What was only a device to Jesus, to me is not a device. It is a reality. The world is going to end.

I have been giving you hope because I have to do two things: on the one hand I have to make it clear to you that the world is coming to its final suicide; and on the other hand, I have to give you the hope that still there is a possibility, at least for you, to become awakened.

Your awakening is of tremendous importance; it has never been so important before – neither with Jesus nor with Gautam Buddha – because there was enough time. Time has run out. We are at the far end of time.

To make you aware of the reality – so that you can make some effort to remain awake, make some effort to be more conscious and not to get lost in trivia – is absolutely necessary. That's why my insistence will go on growing because every day the end is approaching closer.

Man is so asleep he is almost in a coma, and all his actions are arising out of this state of coma, otherwise, there is no necessity for the world to end. But we are carrying nuclear weapons within our souls. The end is going to come because of our own ignorance, our own deep sleep. [...]

At least *you* have to come out of it – and you need a constant hitting on your head to remind you that the times are no longer ordinary. And there have never been, in the whole history of man, such dangerous moments as those through which we are passing. It is no time for quarreling, arguing about theological matters; it is not intelligent to console yourself that some miracle will happen, and the world war will be postponed. It is not only the world war – the attack is multidimensional.

The ecology of the Earth is breaking down. [...]

The population of the world is growing so fast that just the growth of population will be enough to kill half of humanity out of hunger and thirst. […]

These are the multi-dimensional ways that death is approaching the Earth.

Because we have cut so many forests, a thick layer of carbon dioxide has gathered on top of our atmosphere, miles away from the Earth, where the air ends. The layer is so thick that it has already increased the temperature more than it has ever been on the Earth; and that rise of temperature is melting the ice of the north and south poles. If that ice goes on melting – and there is no way to prevent it – all the oceans of the world will rise four feet higher. And all your big cities are ports; they will be flooded with water, will become unlivable.

If this carbon dioxide becomes a little thicker, then the Himalayas and the Alps, which have eternal snow which has never melted, will start melting. The Himalayas alone have so much ice that if it melts completely, it will raise all the oceans of the world forty feet higher. All your cities will be drowned, and this is not a flood that is going to recede.

One of the most dangerous things happening is that carbon dioxide is going to accumulate more and more. The trees go on inhaling carbon dioxide. If you cut the trees, you are cutting two things: the supply of oxygen for your life, and the place for carbon dioxide to be absorbed. It is a double-edged sword. […]

So when I say the end is not very far away, it is not like when Jesus says it – just a device. By the end of this century, you will see all these dimensions bringing death to you. It has to be emphasized: unless you become absolutely clear about death, you are not going to concentrate your whole energy on transforming your being.

People change with difficulty; they find it easier to remain as they are – just like stones, like rocks. Change means a determined effort, a commitment to transform your energies, to take your being in an absolutely serious manner – that it has not to be wasted in stupid things. […]

Being alert means you have to stop being robots. Change your routines, move more consciously; let every act become an object of awareness. Then even these few years that are left are enough – more than enough. If you put your total energy into transformation, the destruction of the Earth will not be your destruction. If you can die consciously, you have found the key to a higher life, to an eternal life, to a divine life.

From ***The Hidden Splendor***, Discourse #14, Q1

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Flowering, Awakening, Self-realization and Enlightenment

A short time ago you said that spring has come, and many sannyasins are ready to flower. Do "flowering," "awakening" and "self-realization" all mean enlightenment, the ultimate truth? Or is there a difference? And can a person, after attaining, fall back into identification with the mind?

Mukto, there is a difference between flowering, awakening, self-realization, and enlightenment. Enlightenment is the ultimate truth — the seeker disappears but the truth is found. The pilgrim disappears but God is found. It is important to understand the differences . . .

From enlightenment there is no possibility of falling back because you are no longer there to fall back. As long as you are, there is a possibility.

Only your absence is the guarantee that you cannot fall back.

Flowering is just the beginning of entering within yourself — just as you enter into a garden. It is immensely important because without entering you are never going to reach to the center. But in flowering, for the first time you recognize your potential, your possibility. In flowering is the transition period, from human to divine. But one can fall back, because the flowering is so new and so fragile, and your past is so old and so strong — it can pull you back; it is still there.

Awakening is getting very close to your center. And as you get closer to the center, falling back becomes more and more difficult because your new experience is gathering power, strength, experience, and the old is losing. But the old is still there; it has not disappeared. Ordinarily, people don't fall from awakening, but the possibility remains: one can fall.

Self-realization is reaching to your center. Many religions have believed that self-realization is the end — for example, Jainism — you have come to your ultimate truth. It is not true. Self-realization is only a dewdrop which has become aware, alert, contented, fulfilled. It is almost impossible to fall back from self-realization — but I am saying almost impossible, not absolutely impossible, because the self can deceive you; it can bring your ego back.

The self and the ego are very similar. The self is the natural thing and the ego is the synthetic, so it happens sometimes that a self-realized man becomes a pious egoist. His egoism is not going to harm anyone, but it certainly prevents him from dropping into the ocean and disappearing completely.

Enlightenment is the dewdrop slipping from the lotus leaf into the vast, infinite ocean. Once the dewdrop has fallen into the ocean, now there is no way even to find it. The question of turning back does not arise.

Enlightenment, hence, is the ultimate truth. What begins as flowering moves on the path of awakening, reaches to self-realization. Then one quantum leap more — disappearing into the eternal, into the infinite.

You are no more, only existence is.

I have told you about Kabir, India's greatest mystic. When he was young, he became self-realized and he wrote a small couplet:

Herat, herat he sakhi
Rahya, Kabir, herai

"Searching and searching and searching, oh my friend, the searcher is lost. Seeking and seeking and seeking, the seeker is lost."

Bund samani samund mein
Sokat herijai

"The dewdrop has slipped into the ocean; now there is no way to get it back."

But it was too early to say that. The dewdrop was still there, slipping toward the ocean, but it had not yet fallen into the ocean.

When Kabir was dying, he became enlightened. He called his son Kamaal and told him, "I have written something wrong. At that moment, that was my feeling — that I had come to the ultimate. Before I die, you write this down, and change it."

The change is very small in words, but in experience it is tremendous. He has used again the same words:

Herat, herat he sakhi
"Oh beloved, seeking and searching, the seeker is lost."

Samund samund bund mein
Sokat herijai
"And the ocean has fallen into the dewdrop; now it is impossible to find it."

Just a little difference in the words . . . "The dewdrop has fallen into the ocean" – something of the self has remained in it. But "the ocean has fallen into the dewdrop" . . . that is the tremendous experience and explosion of enlightenment. The first statement was about self-realization; the second statement is about enlightenment.

From enlightenment, falling is simply impossible. You are gone — and gone forever; not even a shadow or a trace of you is left behind.

Up to self-realization the possibility remains — it becomes less and less, but it remains.

You can start being egoistic about your self-realization: "I have known, I am a realized person. I am a saint, I have encountered God" — but that "I" is there, howsoever pious. Even its shadow is dangerous; it can pull you back.

I have heard a very beautiful story about Jesus . . .

Jesus was walking through Jerusalem when he saw an angry crowd shouting and screaming at a woman. He came closer and heard the mob accusing the woman of adultery. Jesus strode to the front of the mob, held up his arms and said, “Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.”

The crowd fell silent, but one little old lady pushed to the front, picked up a huge rock, and hurled it at the sobbing woman. Jesus gently took the old lady by the arm and said quietly,

“Mother, why do you always embarrass me?”

Jesus’ mother! She is a virtuous woman — so virtuous that she has given birth to Jesus without any contact with another human being. She stands alone in the whole of history with the claim — even after the birth of the son — of being the *virgin* Mary. That idea must have got into the old woman’s mind too much. Her virtue, her piousness — God has chosen her to be the mother of His only-begotten son — has become a subtle ego in her. The others were not pious. The moment Jesus said, “The first stone has to be hurled by one who is virtuous,” the mob stopped. They were all in the same boat.

And you can see it in your saints . . . a strange but very subtle ego. Spirituality has become their achievement. Somebody has all the riches of the world, somebody is the most beautiful person, somebody is the strongest, and somebody is the most pious. The question is not what is it by which the ego can get nourished — any idea can make you fall.

One has not to stop until he has reached the point when he is not: when there is no claimer, when one has moved the full circle and has come back to the world, just a nobody. Perhaps people may not recognize him as a great saint . . . and this is my understanding, that the greatest of saints have remained unrecognized, because you understand only the language of the ego. You don’t understand the language of egolessness.

The greatest sage will appear to you as just an ordinary man, nothing special, with no claim for any talent, for any possession, for any power, for any genius, for any knowledge — no claim at all. He has become absolutely a zero. But the zero is not negative, it is full of godliness, overflowing with godliness.

From ***The Hidden Splendor***, Discourse #16, Q1

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Enlightenment is Not an Experience

The other night when you talked about the false and the real, I came to a place inside of me that could for the first time really understand you. It was as if I was looking at myself from the outside, as a body that was given to me but was not really "me"; then a layer of my personality that was also just a layer of falseness and not really "me". And even further inside was a space that was very silent and beautiful, but that couldn't be me either, because it was neither masculine nor feminine, nor could it understand any language of words — it was just a nothingness. Beloved Osho, if none of those three things are me, then where am I?

Anand Disha, one of the most fundamental things to be remembered — not only by you but by everyone — is that whatever you come across in your inner journey, you are not it.

You are the one who is witnessing it. It may be nothingness, it may be blissfulness, it may be silence, but one thing has to be remembered: however beautiful and however enchanting an experience you come across, you are not it. You are the one who is experiencing it. And if you go on and on and on, the ultimate in the journey is the point when there is no experience left — neither silence, nor blissfulness, nor nothingness. There is nothing as an object for you but only your subjectivity.

The mirror is empty; it is not reflecting anything.

It is you.

Even great travelers of the inner world have got stuck in beautiful experiences and have become identified with those experiences, thinking, "I have found myself." They have stopped before reaching the final stage where all experiences disappear.

Enlightenment is not an experience.

It is the state where you are left absolutely alone, nothing to know. No object, howsoever beautiful, is present. Only in that moment does your consciousness, unobstructed by any object, take a turn and move back to the source. It becomes self-realization, it becomes enlightenment.

I must remind you about the word "object." Every object means a hindrance – the very meaning of the word is "hindrance," objection.

So the objects can be outside you, in the material world; the objects can be inside you, in your psychological world; the objects can be in your heart, feelings, emotions, sentiments, moods. The objects can be even in your spiritual world. And they are so ecstatic that one cannot imagine there can be more. Many mystics of the world have stopped at ecstasy. It is a beautiful spot, a scenic spot, but they have not arrived home yet.

When you come to a point when all experiences are absent, when there is no object, then consciousness without obstruction moves in a circle — in existence everything moves in a circle, if not obstructed — it comes from the same source of your being, goes around, finding no obstacle to it, no experience, no object, it moves backward, and the subject itself becomes the object.

That's what J. Krishnamurti, for his whole life, continued to say: that when the observer becomes the observed, know that you have arrived.

Before that, there are thousands of things in the way. The body gives its own experiences, which have become known as the experiences of the centers of kundalini; seven centers become seven lotus flowers. Each is bigger than the other and higher, and the fragrance is intoxicating. The mind gives you great spaces, unlimited, infinite. But remember the fundamental maxim — that still, the home has not come.

Enjoy the journey and enjoy all the scenes that come on the journey, the trees, the mountains, the flowers, the rivers, the sun and the moon and the stars — but don't stop anywhere unless your very subjectivity becomes its own object. When the observer is the observed, when the knower is the known, when the seer is the seen, the home has arrived.

This home is the real temple we have been searching for, for lives together, but we always go astray. We become satisfied with beautiful experiences. A courageous seeker has to leave all those beautiful experiences behind and go on moving. When all experiences are exhausted and only he himself remains in his aloneness . . . no ecstasy is bigger than that, no blissfulness is more blissful, no truth is truer. You have entered what I call godliness; you have become a god. [...]

From ***The Hidden Splendor***, Discourse #10, Q2

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27 Charaivet, Charaiveti

Charaiveti, Charaiveti

A while ago you said something about silence which startled me. In my sleepiness I'd simply thought of it as just an absence — an absence of noises. But you were saying it had positive qualities, a positive sound. And in my meditations, I've noticed the distinction between a silence in my body and a silence in my mind. I can have the first, without the second. Beloved Master, please talk to me about silence.

Anand Somen, silence usually is understood to be something negative, something empty, an absence of sound, of noises. This misunderstanding is prevalent because very few people have ever experienced silence. All that they have experienced in the name of silence is noiselessness. But silence is a totally different phenomenon. It is utterly positive. It is existential, it is not empty. It is overflowing with a music that you have never heard before, with a fragrance that is unfamiliar to you, with a light that can only be seen by the inner eyes. It is not something fictitious; it is a reality, and a reality which is already present in everyone — just we never look in. All our senses are extrovert. Our eyes open outside, our ears open outside, our hands move outside, our legs . . . all our senses are meant to explore the outside world.

But there is a sixth sense also, which is asleep because we have never used it. And no society, no culture, no educational system helps people to make the sixth sense active.

That sixth sense, in the East, is called "the third eye." It looks inward. And just as there is a way of looking in, so there is a way of hearing in, so there is a way of smelling in. Just as there are five senses moving outward, there are five counter-senses moving inward. In all, man has ten senses, but the first sense that starts the inner journey is the third eye, and then other senses start opening up.

Your inner world has its own taste, has its own fragrance, has its own light. And it is utterly silent, immensely silent, eternally silent. There has never been any noise, and there will never be any noise. No word can reach there, but you can reach. The mind cannot reach there, but you can reach because you are not the mind. The function of the mind is again to be a bridge between you and the objective world, and the function of the heart is to be a bridge between you and your self.

The silence that I have been talking about is the silence of the heart. It is a song in itself, without words and without sounds. It is only out of this silence that the flowers of love grow. It is this silence that becomes the Garden of Eden. Meditation, and only meditation, is the key to open the doors of your own being.

You are asking, "A while ago you said something about silence which startled me in my sleepiness. I had simply thought of it as just an absence — an absence of noises. But you were saying it had positive qualities, a positive sound. And in my meditations, I have noticed a distinction between a silence in my body and a silence in my mind."

Your experiences are true. The body knows its own silence — that is its own well-being, its own overflowing health, its own joy. The mind also knows its silence, when all thoughts disappear

and the sky is without any clouds, just a pure space. But the silence I am talking about is far deeper.

I am talking about the silence of your being.

These silences that you are talking about can be disturbed. Sickness can disturb the silence of your body, and death is certainly going to disturb it. A single thought can disturb the silence of your mind, the way a small pebble thrown into the silent lake is enough to create thousands of ripples, and the lake is no longer silent. The silence of the body and the mind are very fragile and very superficial but in themselves they are good. To experience them is helpful because it indicates that there may be even deeper silences of the heart.

And the day you experience the silence of the heart, it will be again an arrow of longing, moving you even deeper.

Your very center of being is the center of a cyclone. Whatever happens around it does not affect it; it is eternal silence. Days come and go, years come and go, ages come and pass, lives come and go, but the eternal silence of your being remains exactly the same – the same soundless music, the same fragrance of godliness, the same transcendence from all that is mortal, from all that is momentary.

It is not your silence.

You are it.

It is not something in your possession; you are possessed by it, and that's the greatness of it. Even you are not there because even your presence will be a disturbance. The silence is so profound that there is nobody, not even you. And this silence brings truth, and love, and thousands of other blessings to you. This is the search, this is the longing of all the hearts, of all those who have a little intelligence.

But remember, don't get lost in the silence of the body, or the silence of the mind, or even the silence of the heart. Beyond these three is the fourth. We, in the East, have called it simply "the fourth," *turiya*. We have not given it any name. Instead of a name we have given it a number because it comes after three silences — of the body, of the mind, of the heart — and beyond it, there is nothing else to be found.

So, don't misunderstand. Most of the people . . . for example, there are people who are practicing yoga exercises. Yoga exercises give a silence of the body, and they are stuck there. Their whole life they practice but they know only the most superficial silence. Then there are people who are doing concentrations like the transcendental meditation of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. It can give you a silence which will be only of the mind. Just by repeating a name or a mantra . . . the very repetition creates in its wake a silence in the mind. But it is not meditation, and it is not transcendental.

And there are Sufis who know the third, which is the deepest of the three. But still it is not the goal, the target; your arrow is still falling short. It is very deep because Sufis know the heart more than anybody else. For centuries they have been working on the heart, just as yogis have

been working on the body, and people of concentration and contemplation have been working on the mind.

The Sufis know the immense beauty of love. They radiate love, but still the home has not been reached. You have to remember the fourth. Unless you reach the fourth, continue the journey.

People misunderstand very easily. Just a little bit of experience and they think they have arrived. And mind is very clever to rationalize.

There is a Sufi story about Mulla Nasruddin. The Mulla hears a commotion in the street outside his house in the middle of the night. His wife tells him to go down, and after many arguments, he puts a blanket on his shoulders and goes down to the street. There were many people in the street and a lot of noise, and in the crowd somebody steals his blanket.

The Mulla goes home naked, and his wife asks him, "What was that all about?" The Mulla says, "It seems to be about my blanket because as they got the blanket, they all disappeared. They were just waiting for the blanket. And I was telling you 'Don't force me to go there.' Now I have lost my blanket and I have come naked. It was none of our business."

He has found a rationalization, and it looks logical, that as they got his blanket, they all disappeared. And the poor Mulla thinking that perhaps that was the whole problem . . .

"Their argument and their noise just in front of my house in the middle of the night, and my foolish wife persuaded me finally to lose my blanket!"

Mind is continuously rationalizing, and sometimes it may appear that what it is saying is right because it gives arguments for it. But one has to beware of one's own mind because in this world nobody can cheat you more than your own mind. Your greatest enemy is within you, just as your greatest friend is also within you.

The greatest enemy is just your first encounter, and your greatest friend is going to be your last encounter — so don't be prevented by any experience of the body or the mind or the heart. Remember always one of the famous statements of Gautam Buddha. He used to conclude his sermons every day with the same two words, "*charaiveti, charaiveti*." Those two simple words — just one word repeated twice — means "Don't stop; go on, go on."

Never stop until the road ends, until there is nowhere else to go — charaiveti, charaiveti.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #1, Q1

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Crystallize Your Experience

When you said that if we don't achieve total consciousness in this life, we will have to start from the very beginning again and go through the whole evolution of mankind one more time, I was very touched. Is it possible that we will totally lose these few glimpses of light, beauty and consciousness that we've got through being sannyasins?

Antar Ashiko, it is a very complicated question. Whatever you achieve in this life will remain with you, but it has to be an achievement not just a glimpse. And there is a great difference between an achievement and a glimpse. You can see the Himalayan peaks from thousands of miles away — it is a glimpse — but to reach those peaks will be an achievement.

A glimpse helps you to move onward, toward achievement, but unless something becomes a crystallized experience in your life, it is going to be lost — you will have to start from the very beginning.

There will be a little difference, and that will be that in your unconscious a shadow of your past life, a faraway echo — as if you have seen something — will remain. And when you again get the glimpse, you may feel that this is not new, I have known it before. But otherwise, only crystallized achievements go with you, consciously, into the other life . . . knowingly, not just a dark shadow, a faraway echo in the unconscious — but consciously knowing that these Himalayan peaks exist — and you have been on those peaks. There will be no doubt about it, no wavering about it, no question about it.

You are asking, "Is it possible that we will totally lose these few glimpses of light, beauty, and consciousness that we have got through being sannyasins?" Such glimpses you have got in many lives before too, and you have lost them. They never became part of your being; they remained only beautiful memories. But the memories are not achievements. It is as if you have seen something in a dream — perhaps it may be true, perhaps it may not be true.

So if you feel that there is something happening now, make every effort that it does not remain only a glimpse but becomes an actual experience, becomes part of your being. Only then can it go with you into another life.

It is possible to take all your experiences with you into another life and never to begin from scratch but always to begin where you had left off in the past life. But be clear that just a glimpse is very fragile, just a glimpse is very superficial. Howsoever touching it may be in the moment, even tomorrow you may start doubting whether it really happened or you imagined it. And the life after this life is a faraway journey.

Glimpses are simply incentives to move toward crystallization. Make it an experience so deep that it becomes part of you, and there is no way to forget it or to lose it. Don't remain satisfied with glimpses. Enjoy them but use them only as an indicator toward greater things to happen.

To see something from far away is one thing and to become that thing is totally another.

A glimpse of love is just like a breeze that passes within seconds; a glimpse of silence is just like the fragrance of a rose flower that you felt for a moment, and now you don't know where it has gone.

When I say, “Crystallize your experience,” I mean it is not enough to have beautiful glimpses. It is good but not good enough. You should become the fragrance of the rose itself; the glimpse was only an arrow pointing toward the possibility — it did its work, but you remain there. In the past life also, many times you have come across many beautiful experiences and right now you don’t know even that there have been past lives. Only once in a while you see somebody, and you have a very strange feeling, almost weird, as if you have seen this man before — and certainly not in this life. You come to a place, and suddenly you are startled, as if you had come to this place before too — although certainly not in this life. Everything seems to be known but has been dormant in your unconscious.

Life has a mechanism that whenever a person dies, unless he is enlightened, he becomes almost unconscious; he goes into a coma before death, actual death, happens. So he knows nothing about the death, and he remains in a state of coma till he is born again. All those nine months in the mother’s womb are a state of coma; the child is fast asleep twenty-four hours a day for nine months.

It rarely happens that somebody dies consciously. It happens only to great meditators, who know well the path death will be coming on because in their meditations they have traveled on the path again and again — it is the same path. As they go deep in their meditation the body is left far away; mind is left far away; the heart is left far away; only a beautiful silence — fully alert and conscious — remains.

The same happens when you die. If you have been meditating, then death is not a new experience. You will be surprised that in your meditation you have been dying every day, and you have been coming back to life every day. Such a person dies very consciously, so he knows what death is — and such a person remains conscious in the mother’s womb. He is also born consciously. From his very first moment on the earth, he knows all that has passed before in the past life, and he remembers it.

I have come across many children . . . And this happens most particularly in India, because outside India — where Christianity is prominent or Judaism is prominent or Mohammedanism is prominent — they have conditioned the mind that there is only one life. They don’t know anything about meditation. They have substituted meditation with prayer, and prayer is praising a fictitious god; it is very childish.

Meditation needs no god — you are enough. You are a reality, and you explore your reality to the deepest core.

In India all the religions are agreed on one point; they differ in their philosophies, they differ on every other thing, but on one thing they are all agreed — that life is a continuity; death comes millions of times. Death is only a change of the body, a change of the house, and this process goes on — unless you become totally enlightened. Then there is no need to enter another womb, because life was just a school, a training; you have completed it. Your enlightenment is the culmination of your education about existence. Now you need not enter into another body. You can enter into the womb of the universe itself — you are prepared for it.

So whenever you are having glimpses, don’t be satisfied with them. Your glimpses should create great discontent in you, not content. They should create a longing that what is seen far away you

would like to come closer, and closer, and closer. You don't want just to see it, even from closeness; you want to become it.

You can become love, you can become silence, you can become joy, you can become all these experiences: beauty, light, consciousness. These are not things that you cannot become; they are your potentials. So take every glimpse to its ultimate end. That's what I call crystallization.

Once it is crystallized, once you have known your self to be love, your self to be light, your self to be consciousness, then there is no problem of forgetting it. Then these experiences will go with you. And in your future life, you will be growing further ahead, from consciousness to super-consciousness; you will be going beyond these experiences. But if you remain satisfied with your glimpses, there is every danger they will be erased. Death is such a shock and such a surgery and such a long coma that when you wake up, you will have forgotten all those glimpses.

"Someone stole my bike," complained a priest to his minister friend.

"Bring up the Ten Commandments in your sermon tomorrow and as soon as you mention, 'Thou shalt not steal,' look around in your congregation; you will find the guilty party. Invite him to come forward. Tell him that this is the way to confess, and this is the way to get the forgiveness of God," the minister said confidently.

The next day the priest visited the minister and happily reported that he had found his bike. "Yes", he went on, "when I came to 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' I remembered where I had left it."

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #2, Q1

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Let-go and Witnessing

Please would you say something about the relationship between let go and witnessing?

Prem Vijen, let go is the atmosphere in which witnessing flowers. They are almost two sides of the same experience — they are not different. One cannot allow let go without witnessing, neither can one be a witness without being in a let go.

Let go simply means total relaxation: no tension, no thought, no desire — mind not moving, not going anywhere, just not functioning. Mind in silence allows the greatest experience of life, the arising of a new phenomenon — witnessing.

We are all living and we are all a little bit conscious too; otherwise life would be impossible. But our consciousness is very superficial, just skin-deep — or perhaps not even that deep.

Witnessing is as deep as you are, as existence is. It is the deepest point of life in existence where one simply watches what remains to watch: a tremendous silence, a great joy, a beautiful existence surrounding you, and a deep ecstasy — a song without words and a dance without movement.

Witnessing is the ultimate experience of religion. Only those who arrive at it have really lived; others have been only vegetating [...] — they are vegetables. They have not known anything that can make them claim to be more than vegetables. The whole effort of raising your consciousness is to make you transcend your vegetable existence. Let go is to create the right soil, and witnessing, watching, being alert are the seeds. You have only to be the right soil for the right seed, and the lotuses are bound to grow in your being.

From ***The Golden Future*****,** Discourse #18, Q1

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28 My Belly has become My Best Friend

My Belly Has Become My Best Friend

Eleven years ago when I first sat in front of you, I was so overwhelmed by your energy, by your love, by you, that I could do nothing but cry and bow down to your feet in silent expression; and yet I felt very much understood by you. At that time, you told me to keep my energy inside and bring it to my hara*. Since then, this suggestion stays with me, and my belly has become my best friend, and the place below my navel a mirror of my feelings. In all this time, tears and laughter of joy and gratitude for being able to spend this life with you have kept back most of my words. My beloved master, I feel that behind this small suggestion of yours lies more than I can imagine. Would you please say something more about the hara and guide me further?*

Deva Radhika, *hara* is the center from where a life leaves the body. It is the center of death. The word *hara* is Japanese; that's why in Japan, suicide is called *hara-kiri*. The center is just two inches below the navel. It is very important, and almost everybody in the world has felt it. But only in Japan have they gone deeper into its implications. Even the people in India, who had worked tremendously hard on centers, had not considered the hara. The reason for their missing it was because they had never considered death to be of any significance. Your soul never dies, so why bother about a center that functions only as a door for energies to get out and to enter into another body? They worked from sex which is the life center. They have worked on seven centers, but the hara is not even mentioned in any Indian scriptures.

The people who worked hardest on the centers for thousands of years have not mentioned the hara, and this cannot be just a coincidence. The reason was that they never took death seriously. These seven centers are life centers, and each center is of a higher life. The seventh is the highest center of life, when you are almost a god.

The hara is very close to the sex center. If you don't rise toward higher centers, toward the seventh center which is in your head, and if you remain for your whole life at the sex center, then just by the side of the sex center is the hara, and then when life will end, the hara will be the center from where your life will move out of the body.

Why have I told Radhika this? She was very energetic but not aware of any higher centers; her whole energy was at the sex center, and she was overflowing. Energy overflowing at the sex center is dangerous because it can start releasing from the hara.

And if it starts releasing from the hara, then to take it upward becomes more difficult. So I had told her to keep her energy in and not to be so expressive: Hold it in! I simply wanted the hara center, which was opening and which could have been very dangerous, to be completely closed.

She followed it, and she has become a totally different person. Now when I see her, I cannot believe the expressiveness that I had seen at first. Now she is more centered, and her energy is moving in the right direction of the higher centers. It is almost at the fourth center, which is the center of love and which is a very balancing center. There are three centers below it and three centers above it.

Once a person is at the center of love, there is very rarely a possibility for him to fall back down because he has tasted something of the heights. Now valleys will be very dark, ugly; he has seen sunlit peaks, not very high, but still high; now his whole desire will be . . .

And that is the trouble with all lovers: they want more love because they don't understand that the real desire is not for more love but for something more than love.

Their language ends with love; they don't know any way that is higher than love, and love does not satisfy. On the contrary, the more you love the more thirsty you become.

At the fourth center of love, one feels a tremendous satisfaction only when energy starts moving to the fifth center. The fifth center is in your throat, and the sixth center is your third eye. The seventh center, the *sahastrara*, is on the top of your head. All these centers have different expressions and different experiences.

When love moves to the fifth center, then whatever talents you have, any creative dimension, is possible for you. This is the center of creativity. It is not only for songs, not only for music; it is for all creativity.

Hindu mythology has a beautiful story. It is a myth, but the story is beautiful, and particularly for explaining to you the fifth center. Indian mythology says that there is a constant struggle between evil forces and good forces. They both discovered that if they made a certain search in the ocean they could find nectar, and that whoever drank it would become immortal. So they all tried to find it.

But as life balances everywhere, there too . . . Before they found the nectar, they found poison which was hiding the nectar underneath it. Nobody was ready to test it; even the very sight of it created sickness. One of them thought that the first hippie of the world perhaps might be willing – he was the god, Shiva. So they asked Shiva, "You test it." He said, "Okay."

He not only tested it, he drank it all, and it was pure poison. He kept it just in his neck, at the fifth center. The fifth center is the creative center. It became completely poisoned, and Shiva became the god of destruction. So Hindus have three gods: Brahma who creates the world, Vishnu who sustains the world, and Shiva who destroys the world. His destructiveness came from his creative center being poisoned. And the poison was so great that it cannot be a small destruction; he can only destroy the whole of existence.

When Vishnu is tired of maintaining it, Shiva destroys it. By that time, Brahma has forgotten – millions of years have passed since he created the world; he again starts creating it – just an old routine! Brahma is the creator god, but in the whole of India there is only one temple devoted to Brahma because who cares about him? He has done his work; it is futile to say anything to him. Vishnu has millions of temples because he is the sustainer god. Krishna and Rama are all incarnations of Vishnu.

But nobody can compete with Shiva. Shiva has more shrines to him than anybody else.

He is a hippie, so he does not need very great temples or anything – just anywhere, under any tree. Just put a round stone, oval shape, and he does not ask much – a few leaves, not even flowers. A few leaves you can drop there, a few drops of water on his head, just to keep him cool

. . . so people have created devices; they just hang a small pot on top of his head with a small drip, drip, drip. It keeps him cool so he does not get annoyed with anybody and destroy the world.

Everybody is afraid of him, so naturally he has many more worshipers, many more temples, and many more shrines. In every small village you will find at least a dozen Shiva shrines because they cost nothing; any poor man can afford it. And he has to be concerned about it because Shiva can destroy. Keep him satisfied! And he does not ask much; just keep his head cool. Flowers are costly but any two leaves and his worship is finished.

Shiva became the destroyer of the world because his fifth center had accumulated the whole poison of existence in it. It is our creative center, that's why lovers have a certain tendency to creativity. When you fall in love, you suddenly feel like creating something — it is very close. If you are guided rightly, your love can become your great creative act.

It can make you a poet, it can make you a painter, it can make you a dancer, it can make you reach to the stars in any dimension.

The sixth center which we call the third eye is between the two eyes. This gives you a clarity, a vision of all your past lives, and of all the future possibilities. Once your energy has reached your third eye, then you are so close to enlightenment that something of enlightenment starts showing. It radiates from the man of the third eye, and he starts feeling a pull toward the seventh center.

Because of these seven centers, India never bothered about hara. Hara is not in the line; it is just by the side of the sex center. The sex center is the life center, and hara is the death center. Too much excitement, too much un-centeredness, too much throwing your energy all over the place is dangerous because it takes your energy toward the hara. And once the route is created, it becomes more difficult to move it upward. Hara is equally parallel to the sex center so the energy can move very easily.

It was a great discovery by the Japanese: they found that there was no need to cut your head off, or shoot your brains out to kill – they are all unnecessarily painful; just a small knife forced exactly at the hara center, and without any pain, life disappears. Just the center should be open and life disappears, as if the flower opens and the fragrance disappears. The hara should be kept closed. That's why, Radhika, I had told you to be more centered, to keep your feelings inside, and to bring it to your hara. "Since then, this suggestion stays with me, and my belly has become my best friend, and the place below my navel a mirror of my feelings."

If you can keep your hara consciously controlling your energies, it does not allow them to go out. You start feeling a tremendous gravity, a stability, a centeredness, which is a basic necessity for the energy to move upward.

You are asking, "I feel that behind this small suggestion of yours lies more than I can imagine." Certainly, there is much more . . .

A Pole is walking down the street and passes a hardware store advertising the sale of a chain saw that is capable of cutting seven hundred trees in seven hours. The Pole thinks that it is a great deal and decides to buy one.

The next day he comes back with the saw and complains to the salesman, “The thing did not come close to chopping down the seven hundred trees that the ad said it would.”

“Well,” said the salesman, “let us test it out back.” Finding a log, the salesman pulls the starter cord, and the saw makes a great roaring sound.

“What is that noise?” asked the Pole.

So he must have been cutting by hand. It was an electric saw!

Radhika, your hara center has so much energy, that if it is rightly directed, enlightenment is not a faraway place.

So these two are my suggestions: keep yourself as much centered as possible. Don’t get moved by small things – somebody is angry, somebody insults you, and you think about it for hours. Your whole night is disturbed because somebody said something . . . If the hara can hold more energy, then naturally that more energy starts rising upward. There is only a certain capacity in the hara, and every energy that moves upward moves through the hara; but the hara should just be closed.

So one thing is that the hara should be closed. The second thing is that you should always work for higher centers. For example, if you feel angry too much you should meditate more on anger, so that anger disappears, and its energy becomes compassion. If you are a man who hates everything, then you should concentrate on hate; meditate on hate, and the same energy becomes love.

Go on moving upward, think always of higher ladders, so that you can reach to the highest point of your being. And there should be no leakage from the hara center. India has been too concerned about sex for the same reason: sex can also take your energy outside. It takes . . . but at least sex is the center of life. Even if it takes energy out, it will bring energy somewhere else, life will go on flowing.

But hara is a death center. Energy should not be allowed to move through the hara. A person whose energy starts moving through the hara you can very easily detect. For example, there are people with whom you will feel suffocated, with whom you will feel as if they are sucking your energy. You will find that, after they are gone, you feel at ease and relaxed, although they were not doing anything wrong to you.

You will also find just the opposite kind of people whose meeting makes you joyful, healthier. If you were sad, your sadness disappears; if you were angry, your anger disappears. These are the people whose energy is moving on higher centers. Their energy affects your energy. We are affecting each other continuously. And the man who is conscious, chooses friends and company which raises his energy higher.

One point is very clear. There are people who suck you, avoid them! It is better to be clear about it, say goodbye to them. There is no need to suffer because they are dangerous; they can open your hara too. Their hara is open, that’s why they create such a sucking feeling in you.

Psychology has not taken note of it yet, but it is of great importance that psychologically sick people should not be put together. And that is what is being done all over the world.

Psychologically sick people are put into psychiatric institutes together. They are already psychologically sick, and you are putting them in company which will drag their energy even lower.

Even the doctors who work with psychologically sick people have given enough indication of it. More psychoanalysts commit suicide than any other profession, more psychoanalysts go mad than any other profession. And every psychoanalyst once in a while needs to be treated by some other psychoanalyst. What happens to these poor people? Surrounded by psychologically sick people, they are continuously sucked, and they don't have any idea how to close their haras.

There are methods, techniques to close the hara, just as there are methods for meditation, to move the energy upward. The best and simplest method is: try to remain as centered in your life as possible. People cannot even sit silently; they will be changing their position. They cannot lie down silently, the whole night they will be turning and tossing. This is just unrest, a deep restlessness in their souls.

One should learn restfulness. And in these small things, the hara stays closed. Particularly psychologists should be trained. Also, psychologically sick people should not be put together.

In the East, particularly in Japan in Zen monasteries where they have become aware of the hara center, there are no psychologists as such. But in Zen monasteries there are small cottages, far away from the main campus where Zen people live, but in the same forest or in the same mountain area. And if somebody who is psychologically sick is brought to them, he is given a cabin there and he is told to relax, rest, enjoy, move around in the forest – but not to talk. Anyway there is nobody to talk to! Only once a day a man comes to give food; he is not allowed to talk to that man either, and even if he talks, the man will not answer. So his whole energy is completely controlled. He cannot even talk; he cannot meet anybody.

You will be surprised to know that what psychoanalysis cannot do in years is done in three weeks. In three weeks' time the person is as healthy as normal people are. And nothing has been done – no technique, nothing. He has just been left alone so he cannot talk. He has been left alone so he can rest and be himself. He is not expected to fulfill somebody else's expectations.

Radhika, you have done well. Just continue whatever you are doing, accumulating your energy in yourself. The accumulation of energy automatically makes it go higher. And as it reaches higher you will feel more peaceful, more loving, more joyful, more sharing, more compassionate, more creative.

The day is not far away when you will feel full of light, and the feeling of coming back home.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #3, Q3

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The Metaphor of the Third Eye

The other day, you talked about the third eye as a door for connecting with you and existence. Whenever I feel open, flowing, connecting with you, other people, nature or myself, I mostly feel it in my heart as silence and expanding spaciousness, and sometimes as radiating light. Beloved Osho, is this the same kind of experience you were talking about, or is there a difference between connecting through the third eye or the heart; or are there different stages?

What you are experiencing is in itself valuable, but it is not the experience of the third eye. The third eye is a little higher than your experience. The way the mystics in the East have categorized the evolution of consciousness is in seven centers. Your experiences belong to the fourth center, the heart. It is one of the most important centers because it is exactly in the middle. Three centers are below it and three centers are above it. That's why love is such a balancing experience.

Your description is, "Whenever I feel open, flowing, connecting with you, other people, nature or myself, I mostly feel it in my heart as silence and expanding spaciousness, and sometimes as radiating light. Is this the same kind of experience you were talking about?" I was talking about the third eye which is above the heart. There are three centers above the heart. One is in your throat which is the center of creativity; one is between your two eyebrows, exactly in the middle, which is called the third eye. Just as you have two eyes to know the outside world . . . the third eye is only a metaphor, but the experience is knowing oneself, seeing oneself.

The last center is sahastrara, the seventh; that is at the top of your head. As consciousness goes on moving upward, first you know yourself; and in the second step, you know the whole universe — you know the whole and yourself as part of it.

In the old language, the seventh is "knowing God," the sixth is "knowing yourself," the fifth is "being creative," and the fourth is "being loving, sharing and knowing others." With the fourth, your journey becomes certain; it can be guaranteed that you will reach the seventh. Before the fourth, there is a possibility you may go astray.

The first center is the sex center which is for reproduction — so that life continues. Just above it . . . the sex energy can be moved upward, and it is a great experience; for the first time you find yourself self-sufficient.

Sex always needs the other. The second center is the center of contentment, self-sufficiency: you are enough unto yourself. At the third center you start exploring — who are you? Who is this self-sufficient being? These centers are all significant . . . and the moment you find who you are, the fourth center opens, and you find you are love.

Before the fourth, the journey has started, but there is a possibility you may not be able to complete it. You can go astray. For example, finding yourself self-sufficient, contented, you can remain there; there is no need to do anything anymore. You may not even ask the question, "Who am I?" The sufficiency is so much that all questions disappear.

A master is needed in these moments so that you don't settle somewhere in the middle without reaching the goal. And there are beautiful spots to settle . . . feeling contented, what is the need to go on? But the master goes on nagging you and wants you to know who you are; you may be contented but at least know who you are. The moment you know who you are, a new door opens

because you become aware of life, of love, of joy. You can stay there; it is so much, there is no need to move any more. But the master goads you on, “Move to the fourth! Unless you find the purest energy of love, you will not know the splendor of existence.”

After the fourth, you cannot go astray. Once you have known the splendor of existence, creativity arises on its own. You have known beauty; you would like to create it also. You want to be a creator. A tremendous longing for creativity arises. Whenever you feel love, you always feel creativity just as a shadow coming with it. The man of creativity cannot simply go on looking outside. There is much beauty outside . . . but he becomes aware that just as there is an infinite sky outside, to balance it, there must be the same infinity inside.

If a master is available, it is good; if he is not available, these experiences will lead you onward.

Once your third eye is open, and you see yourself — the whole expanse of your consciousness — you have come very close to the temple of God. You are just standing on the steps. You can see the door and you cannot resist the temptation to go inside the temple and see what is there. There you find universal consciousness, there you find enlightenment, there you find ultimate liberation. There you find your eternity.

So these are the seven centers — just arbitrarily created divisions — so the seeker can move from one to another in a systematic way; otherwise, there is every possibility, if you are working by yourself, to get muddled. Particularly before the fourth center there are dangers, and even after the fourth center . . .

There have been many poets who have lived at the fifth center of creativity and never gone ahead — many painters, many dancers, many singers who created great art but never moved to the third eye. And there have been mystics who have remained with the third eye — knowing their own inner beauty; it is so fulfilling that they thought they had arrived. Somebody is needed to tell you that there is still something more ahead; otherwise, in your ignorance, what you will do is almost unpredictable.

Mike had decided to join the police force and went along for the entrance examination.

The examining sergeant, realizing that the prospective recruit was an Irishman, decided to ask him a simple question. “Who killed Jesus Christ?” he asked.

Mike looked worried and said nothing, so the sergeant told him not to worry and that he could have some time to think about it. Mike was on his way home when he met Paddy.

“Well,” said Paddy, “are you a policeman yet?”

“Not only that,” says Mike, “but I am on my first case.”

Man is such that he needs someone who has known the path and knows the pitfalls, knows the beautiful spots where one can remain stuck, and has compassion enough to go on pushing you — even against you — until you have reached to the final stage of your potentiality.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #6, Q2

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This Witness is Our Truth

A few days ago, I heard you say that the voice speaking inside of us is always the mind, so I wonder who in me is hearing this voice. When I try to find the answer, I only find silence.

Chidvilas, the moment you look into your self you only find silence. But are you not aware that you are also there? Who finds the silence? Silence itself cannot find itself; there is somebody as a witness who is finding the silence. Just your focus is wrong; you are still focusing on the object. It is just an old habit, perhaps cultivated for many, many lives, that you always focus yourself on the object, and you always forget yourself. [...]

So when you are watching your thoughts, inside, you are not aware that there is a watcher too. When you are watching silence, you are not aware that you cannot watch silence if you are not there.

Chidvilas, you are asking, "A few days ago I heard you say that the voice speaking inside of us is always the mind, so I wonder who in me is hearing this voice?" Certainly, I am not hearing it, and as far as I know nobody else is hearing it. You must be the guy who is hearing this voice. Everybody else has his own problem!

"When I try to find the answer I only find silence." But then too the question arises: Who finds the silence? It is the same guy who was hearing the voice. His name is Chidvilas.

You have to become more subjective, more alert to yourself; we are always alert to everything around us. [...]

Whether you are hearing a voice, or you are hearing silence, remember more about yourself – who is the watcher? Who is the witness?

In every experience, when you are angry, when you are in love, when you are in greed, when you are in despair, it is the same key: just watch – are you really in danger or are you only a witness. Here we are, just sitting. Deep down, who are you? Always a witness.

Whatever happens on the outside, you may be young, you may be old, you may be alive, you may be dead – whatever happens on the outside, inside is the same witness.

This witness is our truth. This witness is our ultimate reality, our eternal reality. So all your work is concerned with shifting your focus from the object to the subject.

Don't be bothered about anger, or silence, or love. Be concerned about whom all this is happening to and remain centered there. This centering will bring you the greatest experience of your life. It will make you a superman.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #2

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29 Out of that Pure Existence Arises the Aroma of Love

Learn the Art of Listening

Sometimes in discourse, I suddenly come to consciousness and realize that I don't know where I've been, and yet the discourse is coming to a close. Your words were coming through, but I'm not sure if I was awake. If I'm not conscious, am I asleep? Are these the only two possibilities? Is there some stage in between? How to tell the difference?

Mary Catherine, the question you have asked is the question everybody needs the answer for. Man is asleep, but it is no ordinary sleep, he is asleep with open eyes. His sleep is spiritual, not physical.

Just as in physical sleep your consciousness is filled with dreams, in spiritual sleep your consciousness is filled with thoughts, desires, feelings — a thousand and one things. It is not that you are unconscious in the sense of being in a coma; you are unconscious in the sense that your consciousness is covered with too much dust. It is exactly like a mirror: if covered with many layers of dust, it will lose the quality of reflecting, will lose the quality of being a mirror. But the mirror is there; all that is needed is to remove the dust. Your consciousness is there — even while you are physically asleep your consciousness is there — but now more covered than when you are awake.

You are asking, "If I'm not conscious, am I asleep? Are these the only two possibilities? Is there some stage in between? How to tell the difference?"

You are not unconscious in the sense a person falls into a coma; you are not conscious in the sense a Gautam Buddha is conscious. You are in between. A thick layer of thoughts does not allow you to be in the present. That's why, while you are listening to me, you are listening and yet the listening is very superficial because deep down there are so many thoughts going on. You are listening but it is not reaching you, and as I stop speaking, suddenly you realize that you have been listening, certainly, but you have not understood it. It has not penetrated you; it has not become part of your being. Something has prevented it, like a China Wall. Those thoughts are transparent, but they are thicker than any China Wall can be.

You are neither asleep nor awake, you are in between — awake as far as your day-to-day mechanical activities are concerned and asleep as far as a clear consciousness is concerned. A pure consciousness, a deep innocence like an unclouded sky, is absent.

The pope was sitting with his cardinals signing papers and proclamations. The phone rang and his secretary answered. "Your holiness," she said. "It is about the abortion bill. A reporter wants to talk to you."

"Don't bother me," the pope interrupted.

“But he wants to know what you are going to do about the bill.”

“Just pay it,” the pope replied. “Pay it quick!”

In what position will you put the pope? Asleep or awake? He is in between; he has heard the word bill, but he has interpreted it in his own way. He has forgotten completely that the bill is about abortion, and certainly he has not been aborted, and he has not to pay any bill.

But this is the situation of us all. We hear what we want to hear; we hear only that which adjusts with our preconceived notions, prejudices.

You will be surprised to know . . . the scientific research is almost unbelievable: it says ninety-eight percent of what you hear is prevented from reaching to you — ninety-eight percent! Only two percent reaches you. It has to pass through so many thoughts, conceptions, beliefs, conditionings, and they go on cutting it according to themselves. By the time it reaches you, it is something totally different than was said, than was heard. It is a long process of screening, and we are all screening. If something falls in tune with our mind, that means with our past, we hear it. But if it goes against it, we certainly hear the sound but we miss the meaning.

To listen is a great art.

People only hear; very few people are able to listen.

One man had reached Gautam Buddha. He was a well-known philosopher of the day and he had defeated many philosophers in discussions about the ultimate, the truth, God. He had come to defeat Gautam Buddha too — that would be the crowning victory. He had brought with him five hundred chosen disciples to see Gautam Buddha defeated. But Gautam Buddha asked a very strange question. He asked, “Do you understand the meaning and the difference between hearing and listening?”

The man was at a loss. He had come to discuss great things, and this was a small matter. And there was no difference . . . as far as language is concerned, dictionaries are concerned, hearing is listening. The man said, “There is no difference at all, and I had hoped you would not ask such an ordinary question.”

Gautam Buddha said, “There is a great difference. And unless you understand the difference, there is no possibility of any dialogue. I will say something; you will hear something else. So if you really want to have a dialogue with me, sit by my side for two years. Don’t speak a single word, just listen. Whatever I’m telling others, be unconcerned; I’m not telling you. So you need not be worried about whether it is true or untrue, whether you have to accept it or not. You are just a witness; your opinion is not required.

“After two years, you can have the dialogue, the discussion you have come for. And I would love to be defeated, so this is not to postpone defeat; it is just to make the dialogue possible.”

At that very moment, Mahakashyap, a great disciple of Gautam Buddha, perhaps the greatest, laughed. He was sitting under a tree far away, and the philosopher thought, “That man seems to be mad. Why is he laughing?”

Buddha said, “Mahakashyap, this is not mannerly; even for an enlightened man this is not right.”

Mahakashyap said, “I don’t care about right and wrong; I’m just feeling sorry for the poor philosopher.”

And he turned to the philosopher and said to him, “If you want to have a discussion, have it right now; after two years, there will be just silence and no dialogue. This man is not trustworthy. He deceived me; I also came with the same idea as you, to defeat him, and he cheated me. He said, ‘Sit down for two years by my side, and listen. Learn first the art of listening. And because you are not concerned at all, your mind need not function.’”

And two years is a long time; the mind starts forgetting how to think, how to function. The very presence of Gautam Buddha is so peaceful, so silent, that one starts rejoicing in the silence. And to listen to his words . . . which are not addressed to you, so you are not worried whether they agree with your prejudices, your philosophy, your religion — with you, or not. You are indifferent. You listen to him as if you are listening to the birds singing in the morning when the sun rises.

“And two years . . . the mind disappears. And although those words are not addressed to you, they start reaching to your heart. Because the mind is silent, the passage is open — the door is open, the heart welcomes them. So if you want to ask anything, if you want to challenge this man, challenge now. I don’t want to see another man cheated again.”

Gautam Buddha said, “It is up to you; if you want to defeat me now, I declare my defeat. There is no need to talk. Why waste time? You are victorious. But if you really want to have a dialogue with me, then I’m not asking much, just two years to learn the art of listening.”

The man remained for two years, and even forgot completely that after two years he had to challenge Gautam Buddha for a debate. He forgot the whole calendar. Days passed, months passed, seasons came and went away, and after two years he was enjoying the silence so much that he had no idea that two years had passed.

It has to be remembered that time is a very elastic thing. When you are in suffering, time becomes longer; suddenly all the watches and clocks of the world start moving slowly — a great conspiracy against a poor man who is in suffering. Time moves so slowly that sometimes one feels as if it has stopped.

You are sitting by the side of someone you love who is dying, in the middle of the night; it seems time has stopped, that this night is not going to end, that your idea that all nights end was a fallacy . . . this night is not going to have a dawn because time is not moving. And when you are joyful, when you meet a friend after many years, when you meet a beloved, a lover for whom you have waited long — suddenly, again the conspiracy. All the clocks, all the watches, start moving faster; hours go like minutes, days go like hours, months go like weeks. Time is elastic: time is relative to your inner condition.

The man had enjoyed those two years of silence so deeply that he could not conceive that two years had passed. Suddenly, Buddha himself asked him, “Have you forgotten completely? Two years have passed; this is the day you had come two years ago. Now if you want to challenge me to a debate, I’m ready.”

The man fell to the feet of Gautam Buddha.

And Mahakashyap laughed again, and said, “I had told you, but nobody listens to me. I have been sitting under this tree for almost twenty years, preventing people from falling into the trap of this man, but nobody listens to me. They fall into the trap, and each person gives me two occasions to laugh.”

The man went, after touching Gautam Buddha’s feet, to touch the feet of Mahakashyap too, saying, “I am grateful to you. I have learned the distinction between hearing and listening. Hearing had made me a great knowledgeable man, and listening has made me innocent, silent — a peace that passeth understanding. I don’t have any questions, and I don’t have any answers; I am utterly silent. All questions have disappeared, all answers have disappeared. Can I also sit by your side under the tree?” he asked Mahakashyap.

Mahakashyap said, “No, I don’t accept disciples; that is the business of Gautam Buddha — you just go there. Don’t crowd around my tree, because even here there is nothing to listen to, only once in a while a laughter when somebody comes and I see that he’s falling into the trap. You have fallen into the trap; now be initiated, become a sannyasin.” Not only did the man become a sannyasin, his five hundred followers who were also sitting and listening for two years had also become silent.

Mary Catherine, you are well-educated, perhaps too much; well-read, perhaps too much. Your mind is so full of thoughts. Those thoughts are creating a state which is neither consciousness nor unconsciousness. Everything seems to be so full of noise in you that if I shout, perhaps my words may reach you, but what about my whispers? And truth cannot be shouted, it can only be whispered. In fact, it can be said only in silence, even whispering is too much verbiage.

Put your educated mind aside. Here you have to be innocent, like small children playing on the beach making castles of sand, running after butterflies, collecting seashells, looking at everything with so much wonder that each and every thing in existence becomes a mystery.

Listening to me is only a beginning; then you have to listen to the trees, to the mountains, to the moon, to the faraway stars — they all have messages for you. To the sunrises, to the sunsets . . . they all have been waiting for so long. Once you start listening, the whole existence starts speaking to you. Right now you only speak to yourself, and nobody listens.

Three Soviet citizens, a Pole, a Czech, and a Jew, were accused of spying and sentenced to death. Each was granted a last wish.

“I want my ashes scattered over the grave of Karl Marx,” said the Pole.

“I want my ashes scattered over the grave of Lenin,” said the Czech.

“And I,” said the Jew, “want my ashes scattered over the grave of Comrade Gorbachev.”

“But that is impossible!” he was told. “Gorbachev is not dead yet.”

“Fine,” said the Jew, “I can wait.”

You should not wait. Start from this moment to listen, to be silent, because the next moment is not certain. Gorbachev may die, may not die. Tomorrow it may not be so easy as it is today because in twenty-four hours you will have gathered more garbage in your head — so the sooner the better, because you cannot sit silently. If you don't start now, you will be doing something or other . . .

Don't postpone it. Every postponement is suicidal — particularly of those experiences which belong to the beyond.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #16, Q1

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Out of That Pure Existence Arises the Aroma of Love

In my meditations, as I try to look more and more inside, I often feel that there is nobody. It is like falling into an endless black gap. And I feel a lot of tension and wanting to run away. If there is no me inside, then whom should I love? Please help me find that love for myself, and that totality that you have talked about so many times.

Shivam Annette, the question you have asked is one of the most important questions as far as the people who are meditating are concerned. Before I go into your question, a few necessary distinctions have to be understood.

When I say, "Go inward," that does not mean that you will find someone there waiting for you. On the contrary, the more you go inward, the less and less you are an ego. You are, but the feeling of I-ness starts disappearing — for the simple reason that the I can exist only in reference to Thou. If the Thou is not present, the I starts melting.

Outside you are confronted with many Thous, they keep your I alive. But inside, there is no Thou; hence, there can be no I. That does not mean that you are not. It simply means you are in your purity — not in reference to somebody else, but just yourself, without any reference, in your absolute aloneness. Because our whole life we live as an ego, as an I, this disappearance of the I naturally creates fear and an effort to run away. Although it is natural, it is not right.

You have to go through this fear, darkness, anxiety, tension, because your I is dying. Up to now, you have remained identified with the I, so it seems as if you are dying. But just look at a single point: you are watching fear, you are watching the disappearance of I, you are watching tension, you are watching blackness, darkness, you are watching a feeling of nobodiness. This watcher is you.

Going inward is to find the witness in its absolute purity, unpolluted by anything — just a pure mirror, not reflecting anything. If mirrors were thinkers — fortunately they are not — and if they were brought up always with somebody looking in them, that would have given them an idea of who they are. And for many years, always reflecting somebody, they would have created a certain image of themselves — that they are the reflectors. Just visualize that one day suddenly nobody reflects in the mirror. The mirror will feel fear. The mirror will feel as if he is falling into a deep abyss, dark, dismal, into nonexistence — who is he? His identity is lost just because nobody is looking in the mirror. The mirror has not changed. In fact, the mirror is pure, but with this purity he has never been acquainted; nobody has introduced him to this purity.

Meditation takes you to your purity.

Your purity is witnessing, watching, awareness.

You have not asked, "Who is the watcher?" You are asking, "I find there is nobody."

Who finds it? — That's you! You will find nothingness, you will find nothing reflected in you; you will find emptiness. You have to change your focus from the object to your subjectivity. One thing is certain: the witness is present, and the inward journey is to find the witness — is to find the pure mirror of your being.

You say, “In my meditations, as I try to look more and more inside, I often feel that there is nobody.” But you are not conscious at all that you are finding that there is nobody. But you *are*! Do you think you are going to meet yourself as somebody? Do you think you are going to meet somebody who will say, “Hello, Shivam Annette, how do you do?” That will really freak you out — “My God, I’m not one, I’m two!”

This feeling that there is nobody is absolutely right. You are on the right track. Just go on being alert that you are still there, watching. All these are objects — the nobody, the darkness, the fear, the tension . . . “It is like falling into an endless black gap. And I feel a lot of tension and wanting to run away.”

Watch all these things. They are just your old habits. You have never been into your own depths, hence the fear of the unacquainted, of the unknown. You have always been going around and around — but outside — and you have even forgotten the path to your inner home. In the beginning it will look like an endless black gap. Allow it. Blackness has a beauty of its own. Blackness is deep, is silent — enjoy it! There is no need to run away from it.

“If there is no me inside, then whom should I love?”

There is certainly no me inside anyone. But there is something else far more important: there is something which can only be called your am-ness, your is-ness — just your pure existence.

You call it me because outside you need to refer to yourself. Have you watched small babies? In the beginning they often refer to themselves by their name, “Johnny is hungry.” They are far more accurate. But in a society, they will be thought to be insane. “Johnny is hungry?” Why don’t you say, “I’m hungry.” “Johnny” gives the idea that somebody else is hungry. Johnny is your name to be used by others.

You cannot use it when you are referring to yourself. Then you have to refer to yourself as “I,” “me,” but not your name.

It happened in Thomas Alva Edison’s life . . . he was one of the greatest scientists. As far as numbers of inventions are concerned, he is unparalleled — he invented one thousand things. It is almost impossible to find a thing which is not invented by Thomas Alva Edison. He was so much respected that nobody mentioned his name, just out of respect. His colleagues called him Professor, his students called him Sir, and obviously, he didn’t use his own name.

Then came the First World War, and for the first time, rationing was introduced, and he went to the rationing shop. There was a queue; he was standing in the queue and when the man in front of him had left, the clerk shouted loudly, “Who is Thomas Alva Edison? And Thomas Alva Edison looked here and there, where is Thomas Alva Edison? The clerk was also a little puzzled because this man ought to be Thomas Alva Edison; it was his number. And the whole queue was also puzzled. They were looking at each other, what is the matter?

Finally one man from the back of the queue said to him, “Sir, as far as I remember, I have seen you. You are Thomas Alva Edison.”

And Edison said, “If you say so, perhaps I am.”

The clerk said, “Are you insane or what?”

He said, “Not insane, but I have not heard this name for almost thirty years. I have forgotten it. Nobody calls me by the name. My father died when I was very young, my mother died. Now it is a far, faraway memory. I can remember that something like Thomas Alva Edison used to be my name, but for thirty years nobody has mentioned it. It is good that that man recognized me; otherwise, I don’t think that on my own I would have been able to recognize it myself.”

It is a rare case, but thirty years is a long time, particularly for a man like Edison whose life is so full of creativity. His thirty years are almost three hundred years in your life. It is simply a social invention that you refer to others by their name, and you refer to yourself by I, me. But inside there is no other, and with the other gone, the me is gone, the I is gone.

But there is no need to worry. You will not find your I but you will find something greater: you will find your is-ness, your existence, your being.

When I say, “Love yourself,” this is for those who have never gone inside; because they can always . . . are bound to understand only a language of duality. Love yourself — that means you are dividing yourself into two, the lover and the loved. You may not have thought about it, but if you go inside, you will not love yourself, you will be love.

You will be simply the energy called love.

You will be loving; you will radiate love. Love will be your fragrance.

Goldstein, who looked Jewish, was walking down a street in Berlin just before the war, when he accidentally collided with a stout Nazi officer.

“Schwein,” bellowed the Nazi.

“Goldstein,” replied the Jew with a courteous bow.

Sometimes you may need your name also; life gives strange situations. Goldstein did well. Rather than being offended, he introduced himself, just as the Nazi had introduced himself. But all these names can be used only on the outside.

Inside you are nameless, you are egoless. Inside you are just a pure existence — and out of that pure existence arises the aroma of love.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #8, Q1

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True Religiousness

It is true that listening to you I often feel surrounded by softness, peacefulness, silence, but within all that is such a deep longing. It happens also sometimes when I am overwhelmed and delighted by a sunset, a full moon, a beautiful piece of music. There is always a longing, almost like a sweet pain. Osho, what is it that I long for?

Anything of beauty, anything reminding you of the beyond, will create a longing in you, a longing that you cannot figure out what it is for. You don't know the name of the object because in fact it is not for any object.

Listening to beautiful music, looking at a sunset or just a bird on the wing or beautiful roses, or sitting here in silence, a sweet pain can be felt.

The longing is how to become one with this state of feeling. It should not be a fleeting thing that comes and goes but something that remains with you, that becomes you, because the same music which was sweet today may not be sweet tomorrow, may be boring the day after tomorrow.

So it is not the music. It is something else that is triggered in you: the longing to be peaceful, to be musical, to have all the beauty of existence and to have it forever. It is a spiritual longing, a longing for the beyond, beyond all fleeting experiences; a longing to stop time and to be here now, in this moment eternally. This is true religiousness.

The true religiousness has nothing to do with churches, mosques, priests – they are all technicians exploiting you. Their ideologies, theologies, are simply supplies to fill this longing within you. They cannot fulfill it. So people are Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, but still in some corner of their heart there is a search, an ongoing quest. And if they can understand that that is the true direction of religion, then they will drop Christianity, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, and they will follow the longing. It is a longing to make your life more creative, so that it becomes a music, so that life itself becomes a sunset. It is a longing to make it so meditative that life itself becomes the presence of the unknown surrounding you, releasing a fragrance that is not of this world.

From ***Path of the Mystic***, Discourse #8, Q4

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30 Meditation is Your Mastercard

Meditation is Your Mastercard

The other night during darshan, listening to your answer to Nivedano's question, I had tears running down my face. For the first time in the seven years I've been with you, I could not only intellectually understand but really feel that to look inside oneself is the only way to find the real treasures of life. Even though I am feeling this so strongly, it doesn't make it easier to meditate, to look inside.

In the past my favorite subject for you to talk about has always been love and relationships. Now, I can't get enough of hearing you talk about meditation. Beloved Master, could you please speak about vipassana meditation?

Prem Sampurna, there are hundreds of methods of meditation, but perhaps vipassana has a unique status; just the same way as there have been thousands of mystics, but Gautam Buddha has a uniqueness of his own. In many ways he is incomparable, in many ways he has done more for humanity than anybody else. In many ways his search for truth was more sincere, more authentic than anybody else's.

Why am I reminded of Gautam Buddha? I am reminded of Gautam Buddha because you have asked a question about vipassana meditation. That is the meditation through which Gautam Buddha became enlightened.

The very word vipassana in Pali, the language in which Gautam Buddha spoke . . . he was perfectly acquainted with Sanskrit – as a prince he was well educated in the highest literature of those days. But when he started speaking, he never used Sanskrit because Sanskrit was the language of the intellectuals, of the brahmins, of the priests, not of the people.

It has never been a living language. It has a uniqueness among all the languages of the world – it has been spoken only by the learned, by the scholarly amongst themselves; and because of its unknowability, the masses have been mystified by it. Translated, it contains nothing special, and sometimes it contains nothing but bullshit, but it has a very musical sound.

Its construction is the most perfect of any language in the world. It is very exhaustive – fifty-two letters in the alphabet, English has only twenty-six; it means the other twenty-six sounds are unavailable in English. Sanskrit is twice as rich because it can express all possible sounds; it has not left a single sound out of its alphabet. Subtle nuances have also been taken into account – sounds which are very difficult to pronounce, sounds which are rarely used by anyone, but which are possible to use, have been included.

But Gautam Buddha decided to speak in the language of the masses. It was a revolutionary step because the languages of the masses are not grammatically right. Just by use, by ordinary people changing their tone, their sound, the words become easier; they are not complicated.

We have seen this happen to English in India. English was the language of the bureaucracy, of the people who were in power, of the British Empire. But a few words were bound to enter into

the local people's languages. And the transformation is worth seeing; it will explain to you the difference between a language which is really living, alive, because rough people use it . . . it has the quality of a wildflower, the quality of a forest, not of a well-clipped British garden.

People have an uncanny sense to change words into their simplest form; for example, the English word "report." Even the faraway villagers who don't come in contact with educated people have to use that word – once in a while they have to go to the police station. But in the villages of India the word "report" has become *rapat*. Report is a little difficult, rapat is more alive.

"Station" is a word that is bound to be used by the people of the lowest education or no education. In Punjab it has become *satation*; in other parts it has become *teshan*, but nowhere is it station.

Pali is a language of the simple, and in a way, innocent and ignorant people. Vipassana is their word. In Sanskrit it has its parallel which the public has changed according to their convenience. In Sanskrit it is *vipashyana* – that is a little difficult. But in Pali it is simply vipassana. The meaning is the same. The meaning – the literal meaning – of the word is "to look" and the metaphorical meaning is "to watch, to witness."

Gautam Buddha has chosen a meditation which can be called the essential meditation. All other meditations are different forms of witnessing, but witnessing is present in every kind of meditation as an essential part; it cannot be avoided. Buddha has deleted everything else and kept only the essential part – to witness.

There are three steps of witnessing – Buddha is a very scientific thinker. He begins with the body because that is the easiest to witness. It is easy to witness my hand moving, my hand being raised. I can witness myself walking on the road, I can witness each step as I walk. I can witness while I am eating my food.

So the first step in vipassana is witnessing the actions of the body, which is the simplest step. Any scientific method will always begin from the simplest.

And while witnessing the body, you will be amazed at the new experiences. When you move your hand with witnessing, watchfulness, alertness, consciousness, you will feel a certain grace and a certain silence in the hand. You can do the movement without witnessing; it will be quicker, but it will lose the grace.

The Buddha used to walk so slowly that many times he was asked why he was walking so slowly.

He said, "This is part of my meditation: always to walk as if you are walking in winter into a cold stream . . . slowly, alert, because the stream is very cold; aware because the current is very strong; witnessing each of your steps because you can slip on the stones in the stream."

The method remains the same, only the object changes with each step. The second step is watching the mind. Now you move into a more subtle world – watching your thoughts. If you have been successful in watching your body, there is not going to be any difficulty. Thoughts are subtle waves – electronic waves, radio waves – but they are as material as your body. They are

not visible, just as the air is not visible, but the air is as material as the stones; so are your thoughts – material but invisible.

That is the second step, the middle step. You are moving toward invisibility, but still, it is material . . . watching your thoughts. The only condition is, don't judge. Don't judge because the moment you start judging you will forget watching.

There is no antagonism against judging. The reason it is prohibited is that the moment you start judging – "This is a good thought" – for that much space you were not witnessing. You started thinking, you became involved. You could not remain aloof, standing by the side of the road and just seeing the traffic.

Don't become a participant, either by appraising, valuing, condemning; no attitude should be taken about what is passing in your mind. You should watch your thoughts just as if clouds are passing in the sky. You don't make judgments about them – this black cloud is very evil, this white cloud looks like a sage. Clouds are clouds; they are neither evil nor good.

So are thoughts – just a small wavelength passing through your mind. Watch without any judgment and you are again in for a great surprise. As your watching becomes settled, thoughts will come less and less. The proportion is exactly the same: if you are fifty percent settled in your witnessing, then fifty percent of your thoughts will disappear. If you are sixty percent settled in your witnessing, then only forty percent of thoughts will be there. When you are ninety-nine percent a pure witness, only once in a while will there be a lonely thought – one percent, passing on the road – otherwise the traffic is gone. That rush-hour traffic is no longer there.

When you are one-hundred-percent nonjudgmental, just a witness, it means you have become just a mirror because a mirror never makes any judgments. An ugly woman looks into it – the mirror has no judgment. A beautiful woman looks into the mirror, it makes no difference. Nobody looks into it . . . the mirror is as pure as when somebody is being reflected in it. Neither reflection stirs it, nor no-reflection. Witnessing becomes a mirror.

This is a great achievement in meditation. You have moved halfway, and this was the hardest part. Now you know the secret, and the same secret has just to be applied to different objects.

From thoughts you have to move to more subtle experiences – emotions, feelings, moods . . . from the mind to the heart, with the same condition: no judgment, just witnessing. And the surprise will be that most of your emotions, feelings and moods which possess you . . .

Now, when you are feeling sad, you become really sad, you are possessed by sadness. When you are feeling angry, it is not something partial. You become full of anger; every fiber of your being is throbbing with anger.

Watching the heart, the experience will be that now nothing possesses you. Sadness comes and goes; you don't become sad. Happiness comes and goes; you don't become happy either.

Whatever moves in the deep layers of your heart does not affect you at all. For the first time you taste something of mastery. You are no longer a slave to be pushed and pulled this way and that way, where any emotion, any feeling, anybody can disturb you for any trivia. […]

People become disturbed with absolute trivia, meaningless things. Somebody just passes by you twitching his eye. He has not done anything. It is his eye; he has every right to twitch it. It is his constitutional right. Nobody can prevent anybody from twitching his eyes – but why do you get disturbed? And if he makes it a practice that whenever he sees you he twitches his eyes, you will start becoming enraged. Our consciousness is so small, it gets overpowered and possessed by anything – any mood, any feeling, any emotion.

When you become a witness of the third step, you will become, for the first time, a master: nothing disturbs you, nothing overpowers you, everything remains far away, deep below, and you are on a hilltop.

These are the three steps of vipassana. Vipassana has many kinds of methods – this is only one method. Because Buddhism spread all over Eastern Asia, the Far East vipassana has a different structure in Japan. It is watching the belly as you breathe in and out. That's why the Japanese statues of Buddha have big bellies. No Indian statue of Buddha will have a big belly – that is unathletic, does not look beautiful.

But the Japanese Buddha has to have it because the whole method of vipassana is to practice the belly coming up, not the chest. The chest remains silent, unmoving; only the belly goes up as you breathe in, and the belly goes in as you breathe out. Watching it is a single-step vipassana prevalent in Japan.

In Ceylon there are two steps: first watching the same breathing, not at the belly point, but at the nose point. When you breathe in, the air touches your nostrils, be aware of it. And when the hot air goes out, be watchful. This is the first step.

And the second step: when you breathe in, there is a gap before the breath returns back – just a rest period, a few seconds – watch those few seconds when the breath is not moving. If you become capable of watching those moments, you will be able to watch them outside also. When the breath goes out, before it comes in, there is a small interval – the same interval as inside. Watch that too, just be aware of it.

In Tibet they have a different way, in Korea another way, in China another way, but the essential point is to be a witness. And my feeling is that what I have described as three steps is the most easy, most simple – everybody can do it. It needs no scholarship, no austerity, no great understanding.

And after these three steps comes the real experience. These three steps take you to the door of the temple, which is open.

When you have become perfectly watchful of your body, mind and heart, then you cannot do anything more, then you have to wait. When perfection is complete on these three steps, the fourth step happens on its own accord as a reward. It is a quantum leap from the heart to the being, to the very center of your existence. You cannot do it; it happens – you have to remember that.

Don't try to do it because if you try to do it your failure is absolutely certain. It is a happening. You prepare three steps; the fourth step is a reward from existence itself. It is a quantum leap.

Suddenly your life force, your witnessing, enters into the very center of your being. You have come home. You can call it self-realization, you can call it enlightenment, you can call it ultimate liberation, but there is nothing more than that. You have come to the very end in your search, you have found the very truth of existence and the great ecstasy that it brings as a shadow, by and around itself.

The Jew and the Irishman are arguing about sex. The Irishman says, that according to his priest, sex is work and solely for the purpose of procreation.

"No," says the Jew, "my rabbi says sex is pleasure. If it was work, we would let the Irish do it."

Meditation is not work.

Meditation is purest blissfulness.

As you go deeper, you come across more and more beautiful spaces, more and more luminous spots. They are your treasure . . . deeper and deeper silences which are not only the absence of noise but the presence of a soundless song – musical, alive and dancing.

As you reach to the ultimate point of your being, the center of the cyclone, you have found God – not as a person but as light, as consciousness, as truth, as beauty – as all that man has been dreaming of for centuries. And those dreamed-of treasures are hidden within himself.

It is not a troublesome, torturous, ascetic practice; it is very pleasant, musical, poetic, and it goes on becoming more and more of a sheer joy. It is not work; it is prayer – the only prayer I know of. To me prayer means: when you have achieved your being, you feel a tremendous gratitude toward existence. That gratitude is the only real, authentic prayer; all other prayers are fake, pseudo, manufactured. This gratitude will arise within you just like a fragrance arising out of roses.

It is good that you are dropping your childish questions about boyfriend, girlfriend, your so-called relationships; you don't know yourself and you have started relating with another!

It is good that you are asking about meditation. That will not only bring transformation to you, it will also bring transformation to your relationships. It will also bring an authentic overflow of love, and only then will you be able to see that what you used to call love was not love; it was simply lust, biological lust, based on your hormones. Only a meditator knows a love that is not biological, that comes as a spiritual abundance with a great urge to share – because the more you share it, the more you have it.

A Jewish swami, Goldstein, takes a gorgeous ma out to dinner. They go to the most expensive restaurant in Poona and feast on Italian spaghetti, Japanese sushi and French wine. For dessert they choose German chocolate cake and finish with Brazilian coffee.

When the waiter brings them the bill, Goldstein finds he has left his wallet at home. So he takes out his picture of Rajneesh and hands it to the waiter.

"What is this?" demands the waiter.

“My Mastercard,” replies Goldstein.

Meditation is your Mastercard!

From ***The Rebel***, Discourse #17, Q2

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To Remove the Obstacles

Is it possible to meditate without any technique?

Deva Maturo, the question you have asked is certainly of great importance because meditation, as such, needs no technique at all. But techniques are needed to remove the obstacles in the way of meditation. So it has to be understood very clearly: meditation itself needs no techniques, it is a simple understanding, an alertness, an awareness. Neither alertness is a technique, nor is awareness a technique.

But on the way to being alert, there are so many obstacles. For centuries man has been gathering those obstacles – they need to be removed. Meditation itself cannot remove them; certain techniques are needed to remove them. So the work of the techniques is just to prepare the ground, is just to prepare the way, the passage. The techniques in themselves are not meditation. If you stop at the technique, you have missed the point.

Krishnamurti was insisting his whole life that there is no technique for meditation. And the total result was not that millions of people attained to meditation; the total result was that millions of people became convinced that no technique is needed for meditation. But they forgot all about what they were going to do with the obstructions, the hindrances. So they remained intellectually convinced that no technique is needed. I have met many followers of J. Krishnamurti, very intimate ones, and I have asked them, "No technique is needed – I agree absolutely. But has meditation happened to you or to anyone else who has been listening to J. Krishnamurti?"

Although what he is saying is essentially true, he is saying only the positive side of the experience. There is a negative side also. And for that negative side all kinds of techniques are needed – are absolutely needed – because unless the ground is well prepared, and all the weeds and wild roots are taken away from the ground, you cannot grow roses and other beautiful flowers. Roses are in no way concerned with those roots, with the wild plants that you have removed. But the removal of those weeds was absolutely necessary for the ground to be in a right situation where roses can blossom.

You are asking, "Is it possible to meditate without any technique?" It is not only possible; it is the only possibility. No technique is needed at all – as far as meditation is concerned. But what are you going to do with your mind? Your mind will create a thousand and one difficulties. Those techniques are needed to remove the mind from the way, to create a space in which the mind becomes quiet, silent, almost absent. Then meditation happens on its own accord. It is not a question of technique. You don't have to do anything.

Meditation is something natural, something that is already hidden inside you and is trying to find its way to reach to the open sky, to the sun, to the air. But mind is surrounding it from all sides; all doors are closed, all windows are closed. The techniques are needed to open the windows, to open the doors. And immediately the whole sky is available to you, with all its stars, with all its beauty, with all its sunsets, with all its sunrises.

Just a small window was preventing you . . . just a small piece of straw can go into your eye and it will prevent you from seeing the vast sky because you cannot open your eyes. It is absolutely

illogical that just a small piece of straw or sand can prevent you from seeing the great stars, the infinite sky. But in fact they can – they do.

Techniques are needed to remove those straws, those pieces of sand, from your eyes. And meditation is your nature, is your very potential. It is another name for alertness.

The young father, taking his baby for a walk in the pram in the park, seemed quite unperturbed by the wails emerging from the pram. "Easy now, Albert," he said quietly. "Keep calm, there's a good fellow."

Another howl rang out. "Now, now, Albert," murmured the father, "keep your temper."

A young mother, passing by, remarked, "I must congratulate you. You certainly know how to speak to babies." Then, patting the baby on the head, she cooed, "What is bothering you, Albert?"

"No, no," cried the father. "His name is Johnnie; I am Albert."

He was simply trying to keep himself alert: "Albert, don't lose your temper." He does not want to forget; otherwise he would like to throw this baby into the lake.

Meditation is simply awareness without any effort, an effortless alertness; it does not need any technique. But your mind is so full of thoughts, so full of dreams, so much of the past, so much of the future – it is not here-now, and awareness has to be here-now. The techniques are needed to help you to cut your roots from the past, to cut your dreams from the future, and to keep you in this moment as if only this moment exists. Then there is no need of any technique.

Hymie Goldberg was visiting his friend, Mr. Cohen, who was dying. "Do us a favor," said Hymie Goldberg, "when you go to heaven could you find a way of letting me know whether they play baseball up there?" Mr. Cohen said he would certainly try to contact his old friend if at all possible.

Only a few days after Mr. Cohen died, Hymie Goldberg had a phone call. "Hello, Hymie," said Mr. Cohen. "It is your old friend here."

"Cohen? Is it really you?" asked Hymie.

"Sure," answered his friend. "I have some good news and some bad news. First, there sure is baseball in heaven. And the bad news is that you are pitching next Sunday."

Life is a complicated affair. There is good news, and there is bad news. The good news is that there is no need of any technique; but the bad news is, without any technique you are not going to get it.

From ***The Rebel***, Discourse #24, Q1

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Relaxation Without Concentration

When we start watching our bodies, and then our minds and emotions, there remains an element, although subtle, of concentration. Initially, for example, watching my breathing, I would watch it to the exclusion of everything else – here there was an element of focus. On other occasions, when silence is just there, the breathing may be all there is to watch. This seems to be nearer, but still I feel that more soft focusing of the awareness would take me further and further back, as if relaxing enough to let the watcher move far enough away so that all is seen, rather than any one thing like thoughts or breathing. Does relaxing allow the watcher to be on the hill?

It is true. Relaxation helps the most. No part of concentration should be in your watchfulness. Concentration is sabotaging the whole process of watchfulness because concentration is an act of the mind, and watchfulness is something that comes from above, from beyond. If there is any concentration . . . I can understand, if you start watching your breathing – in the name of watching, you are concentrating on the breathing, you are excluding everything else. Don't exclude.

Watch your breathing inclusive of all.

Watching your breathing . . . a temple bell starts ringing, a car passes by, a child starts crying – all that should be included. Your watchfulness should be open. Watching the breathing is simply to begin with. It is not the end. It is just learning how to watch.

But there is a difficulty – you can start thinking that concentration is watching. Concentration is not watching. Concentration is narrow, narrowing the mind, bringing it to a focus on one thing, forgetting everything else. That's why in relaxing, you will feel more watchful, yet without concentration. If that is happening, that's perfectly good.

The essential thing is watchfulness, inclusive of all. Concentration can be disturbed; watchfulness cannot be disturbed. These are the differences. If somebody is concentrating on something, anybody can disturb him. Just a small boy can do something, and he is distracted, and his focus is lost – or not even a small boy, just the wind comes, and the door opens, and the noise is enough.

So you will find the phenomenon in so-called religious people. They are always angry because their concentration is continuously disturbed.

Watchfulness cannot be disturbed. It is simply inclusive of all. If the door opens, makes a noise, the wind passes through the trees singing its song, it is available to it. It is not choosing breathing or anything in particular, but simply being there, open, available, present to everything that is happening.

So remember the difference: concentration is sabotaging watchfulness.

To begin with, something has to be given to you so you can have a little taste of what watchfulness is. Then it has to be made wider and wider and bigger, so much bigger that there is no need to do anything. You simply sit or lie down relaxedly and everything that is happening around you is mirrored in you.

You don’t think about it, you don’t justify it, you don’t condemn it, you don’t evaluate it – you simply watch.

So it is perfectly right. Relaxation, utter relaxation with no focusing of consciousness is real watchfulness.

From ***The Transmission of the Lamp***, Discourse #12, Q2

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31 The Only Gift to Me, Your Enlightenment

The Only Gift to Me: Your Enlightenment

If I look at my death, or your death, one thing I could never forgive myself for is to miss you. I used to think: if life has a purpose, you are the purpose – and if there is a destiny, you are my destiny. Now I see things a little differently. The most beautiful gift my life can give to you is not to worship you or help your work on this Earth. It is not even to love you. Out of your compassion, as I understand it, the most beautiful gift my life can give to you is my own enlightenment. Please, Osho, give me a technique to prepare my meditation.

Raso, the way your understanding has been growing is perfectly the right way and the right direction. The only thing you should think of is enlightenment. Yes, that is the only gift you can give to me: your enlightenment. Everything else is trivia. So your conclusion has my absolute, categorical approval.

Once you are committed, once you have decided wholeheartedly that enlightenment is the only purpose of being here in the world, of being alive, then a single pointed awareness – just like an arrow moving toward its target – begins in you.

You are asking for the right meditation. Meditation is a beautiful word; hiding behind it is a very dangerous reality. The dangerous reality is: if you want to be deeply in meditation, you will have to pass through almost a death – the death of the old, the death of all that you used to be, a discontinuity with the past – and a rebirth.

The place where your meditation is going to descend is the place occupied by your mind and your past. So the first and primary work is to clean your interior being of all thoughts. There is no question of choosing to keep the good thoughts in and to throw the bad thoughts out. For a meditator, all thoughts are simply junk; there is no question of good and bad. They all occupy the space inside you, and because of their occupation, your inner being cannot become absolutely silent. So good thoughts are as bad as bad thoughts; don't make any discrimination between them. Throw the baby out with the bath water!

Meditation needs absolute quiet, a silence so deep that nothing stirs within you. Once you understand exactly what meditation means, it is not difficult to attain it. It is our birthright; we are absolutely capable of having it. But you cannot have both: the mind and meditation.

Mind is a disturbance.

Mind is nothing but a normal madness.

You have to go beyond the mind into a space where no thought has ever entered, where no imagination functions, where no dream arises, where you simply are – just a nobody.

It is more an understanding than a discipline. It is not that you have to do much; on the contrary, you don't have to do anything except clearly understand what meditation is. That very understanding will stop the functioning of the mind. That understanding is almost like a master before whom the servants stop quarreling with each other, or even talking with each other; suddenly the master enters the house and there is silence. All the servants start being busy – at least looking like they are busy. Just a moment before, they were all quarreling and fighting and discussing, and nobody was doing anything.

Understanding what meditation is, is inviting the master in. Mind is a servant. The moment the master comes in with all its silence, with all its joy, suddenly the mind falls into absolute silence.

Once you have achieved a meditative space, enlightenment is only a question of time. You cannot force it. You have to be just a waiting, an intense waiting, with a great longing – almost like thirst, hunger, not a word . . . It is like the experience of people who have sometimes got lost in a desert. At first, thirst is a word in their mind: "I am feeling thirsty, and I am looking for water." But as time goes on, and there is no sign of any oasis – and as far as the eyes can see, there is no possibility of finding water – the thirst goes on spreading all over the body.

From the mind, from just a word, "thirst," it starts spreading to every cell and fiber of the body. Now it is no longer a word, it is an actual experience. Your every cell – and there are seven million cells in the body – is thirsty. Those cells don't know words, they don't know language, but they know that they need water; otherwise life is going to be finished.

In meditation, the longing becomes just a thirst for enlightenment and a patient awaiting because it is such a great phenomenon and you are so tiny. Your hands cannot reach it; it is not within your reach. It will come and overwhelm you but you cannot do anything to bring it down to you. You are too small; your energies are too small. But whenever you are really waiting with patience and longing and passion, it comes. In the right moment, it comes. It has always come.

You are asking what meditation will be helpful to you. Raso, all meditations . . . hundreds of techniques are available, but the essence of all those techniques is the same, just their forms differ. And the essence is contained in the meditation vipassana.

That is the meditation that has made more people in the world enlightened than any other because it is the very essence. All other meditations have the same essence but in different forms; something nonessential is also joined with them. But vipassana is pure essence. You cannot drop anything out of it and you cannot add anything to improve it.

Vipassana is such a simple thing that even a small child can do it. In fact, the smallest child can do it better than you because he is not yet filled with the garbage of the mind; he is still clean and innocent.

Raso, I would suggest vipassana as the technique for you. Vipassana can be done in three ways – you can choose which one suits you the best.

The first is: Awareness of your actions, your body, your mind, your heart. Walking, you should walk with awareness. Moving your hand, you should move with awareness, knowing perfectly that you are moving the hand. You can move it without any consciousness, like a mechanical

thing. You are on a morning walk; you can go on walking without being aware of your feet. Be alert to the movements of your body.

While eating, be alert to the movements that are needed for eating. Taking a shower, be alert to the coolness that is coming to you, the water falling on you and the tremendous joy of it . . . Just be alert. It should not go on happening in an unconscious state.

And the same about your mind: whatever thought passes on the screen of your mind, just be a watcher. Whatever emotion passes on the screen of your heart, just remain a witness – don't get involved, don't get identified, don't evaluate what is good, what is bad – that is not part of your meditation. Your meditation has to be choiceless awareness.

You will be able one day even to see very subtle moods: how sadness settles in you just like the night is slowly, slowly settling around the world; how suddenly a small thing makes you joyous.

Just be a witness. Don't think, "I am sad." Just know, "There is sadness around me, there is joy around me. I am confronting a certain emotion or a certain mood." But you are always far away: a watcher on the hills and everything else is going on in the valley. This is one of the ways vipassana can be done.

And for a woman, my feeling is that it is the easiest, because a woman is more alert of her body than a man. It is just her nature. She is more conscious of how she looks, she is more conscious of how she moves, she is more conscious of how she sits; she is always conscious of being graceful. And it is not only a conditioning; it is something natural and biological.

Mothers who have experienced having at least two or three children, start feeling after a certain time whether they are carrying a boy or girl in their womb. The boy starts playing football; he starts kicking here and there, he starts making himself felt – he announces that he is here. The girl remains silent and relaxed; she does not play football, she does not kick, she does not announce. She remains as quiet as possible, as relaxed as possible.

So it is not a question of conditioning because even in the womb you can see the difference between the boy and the girl. The boy is hectic; he cannot sit in one place. He is all over the place. He wants to do everything; he wants to know everything. The girl behaves in a totally different way.

That's why I say, Raso, it will be easier for you to take vipassana in this first form.

The second form is breathing, becoming aware of breathing. As the breath goes in, your belly starts rising up, and as the breath goes out, your belly starts settling down again. So the second method is to be aware of the belly, its rising and falling. Just the very awareness of the belly rising and falling . . . And the belly is very close to the life sources because the child is joined with the mother's life through the navel. Behind the navel is his life's source. So when the belly rises up, it is really the life energy, the spring of life that is rising up and falling down with each breath. That too is not difficult, and perhaps may be even easier, because it is a single technique.

In the first, you have to be aware of the body, you have to be aware of the mind, you have to be aware of your emotions, moods. So it has three steps. The second sort has a single step: just the

belly, moving up and down. And the result is the same. As you become more aware of the belly, the mind becomes silent, the heart becomes silent, the moods disappear.

And the third is to be aware of the breath at the entrance, when the breath goes in through your nostrils. Feel it at that extreme – the other polarity from the belly – feel it from the nose. The breath going in gives a certain coolness to your nostrils. Then the breath going out . . . breath going in, breath going out . . .

That too is possible. It is easier for men than for women. The woman is more aware of the belly. Most men don't even breathe as deep as the belly. Their chest rises up and falls down because a wrong kind of athletics prevails over the world. Certainly, it gives a more beautiful form to the body if your chest is high and your belly is almost nonexistent.

Man has chosen to breathe only up to the chest, so the chest becomes bigger and bigger and the belly shrinks down. That appears to him to be more athletic. Around the world, except in Japan, all athletes and teachers of athletes emphasize breathing by filling your lungs, expanding your chest, and pulling the belly in. The ideal is the lion whose chest is big and whose belly is very small. So be like a lion; that has become the rule of athletic gymnasts and the people who have been working with the body.

Japan is the only exception, where they don't care that the chest should be broad and the belly should be pulled in. It needs a certain discipline to pull the belly in; it is not natural. Japan has chosen the natural way; hence you will be surprised to see a Japanese statue of Buddha. That is the way you can immediately discriminate whether the statue is Indian or Japanese. The Indian statues of Gautam Buddha have a very athletic body: the belly is very small and the chest is very broad. But the Japanese Buddha is totally different; his chest is almost silent, because he breathes from the belly, but his belly is bigger. It doesn't look very good because the idea prevalent in the world is the other way round, and it is so old. But breathing from the belly is more natural, more relaxed.

In the night it happens when you sleep: you don't breathe from the chest, you breathe from the belly. That's why the night is such a relaxed experience. After your sleep, in the morning, you feel so fresh, so young, because the whole night you were breathing naturally . . . you were in Japan!

These are the two points: if you are afraid that breathing from the belly and being attentive to its rising and falling will destroy your athletic form . . . men may be more interested in that athletic form. Then for them it is easier to watch near the nostrils where the breath enters. Watch, and when the breath goes out, watch.

These are the three forms. Any one will do. And if you want to do two forms together, you can do two forms together; then the effort will become more intense. If you want to do all three forms together, you can do all three forms together. Then the process will be quicker. But it all depends on you, whatever feels easy.

Remember: easy is right.

As meditation becomes settled, mind silent, the ego will disappear. You will be there, but there will be no feeling of "I." Then the doors are open. Just wait with a loving longing, with a

welcome in the heart for that great moment, the greatest moment in anybody's life – enlightenment.

It comes . . . it certainly comes. It has never delayed for a single moment. Once you are in the right tuning, it suddenly explodes in you, transforms you. The old man is dead and the new man has arrived.

Big Chief Sitting Bull had been constipated for many moons. So he sent his favorite squaw to the medicine man for help. The medicine man gave the squaw three pills and told her to give them to the chief, and then report back to him the next morning.

The next morning the squaw came back with the message, "Big chief no shit." So the medicine man told her to double the dose.

The next day, she came back with the message, "Big Chief no shit." So again he told her to double the dose.

Again she came back with the same message. This went on for a week, and finally the medicine man told the squaw to give Sitting Bull the whole box.

The next morning, she came back with a very sad expression. "What is wrong, my child?" asked the medicine man. The little squaw looked at him with tears in her eyes and said, "Big Shit, no chief!"

One day it will happen to you, and that will be a great moment. That's what I am calling the right moment.

From ***The New Dawn***, Discourse #16, Q2

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Aloneness, the Everest of Meditation

I am loving my aloneness. I am feeling fulfilled, nourished, fresh with new energy and ecstatic. However, there are days when I feel lonely. Then I get sad, unmeditative and even grumpy. Osho, can you talk about how to go through the transition period from loneliness to aloneness?

Nirvano, aloneness is the Everest of meditation, the highest sunlit peak. Once you start enjoying aloneness, there is no end to where your joy stops growing. It goes on growing, it goes on spreading; it seems as if the whole universe is full of joy and full of fragrance. Aloneness is the greatest achievement in life but certainly there is a painful period of transition.

Man, ordinarily, lives in loneliness. To avoid loneliness, he creates all kinds of relationships, friendships, organizations, political parties, religions and what not. But the basic thing is that he is very much afraid of being lonely. Loneliness is a black hole, a darkness, a frightening negative state almost like death . . . as if you are being swallowed by death itself. To avoid it, you run out and fall into anybody, just to hold somebody's hand, to feel that you are not lonely.

I have seen people when they are walking in the night on a lonely street, they start singing songs. Nobody has ever heard that they are singers! And what suddenly transpires that they become singers? – and loudly. They are simply trying to forget that they are lonely. They are trying to drown themselves in their own voice.

Nothing hurts more than loneliness.

But the trouble is, any relationship that arises out of the fear of being lonely, is not going to be a blissful experience because the other is also joining you out of fear. You both call it love. You are both deceiving yourself and the other. It is simply fear and fear can never be the source of love. Only those love who are absolutely fearless; only those love who are able to be alone, joyously, whose need for the other has disappeared, who are sufficient unto themselves.

The common psychology of man is of loneliness. He does everything to avoid it. But whatever you do, it is always there, just like your shadow. You may not look at it, but you know it is there. And once in a while you cannot resist the temptation either: you will look and you will find it always there. You cannot escape from your shadow. In the same way you cannot escape from your loneliness just by creating friendships, relationships, marriages, organizations – religious, political, social. They give you a little relief, but they don't transform anything.

The day you decide that all these efforts are failures, that your loneliness has remained untouched by all your efforts, that is a great moment of understanding. Then only one thing remains: to see whether loneliness is such a thing that you should be afraid of, or if it is just your nature. Then rather than running out and away, you close your eyes and go in. Suddenly the night is over, and a new dawn . . . the loneliness transforms into aloneness.

Aloneness is your nature. You were born alone; you will die alone. And you are living alone without understanding it, without being fully aware of it. You misunderstand aloneness as loneliness; it is simply a misunderstanding.

You are sufficient unto yourself.

The transition period is a little painful and difficult because of old habits but it won't be long. And the way to make it short, bearable, is to enjoy your aloneness more and more. Make it a point that when you are enjoying your aloneness, you are not miserly. Then sing and dance, then paint. Do whatsoever you always wanted to do, but you were so much involved in relationships that there was no time left.

Be creative, and the more creative you are, the more rejoicing, the more dancing, the more songful your aloneness becomes. Those periods of sadness, of grumpiness – old habits – will start falling like dead leaves falling from the trees. They also cling for a little while, but they have to fall.

You just have to make your aloneness more and more strong. So you don't have to do anything with your sadness or your grumpiness, or your fear that the old habit may come back again. You have not to think about that at all. You have to pour your whole energy into the joy of being alone. You have only a certain amount of energy – either you can dance or you can be sad. If you dance half-heartedly, then you are saving energy for sadness. That's why I insist: live every moment totally and so intensely that no energy is left to be invested in sadness, in misery, in anger; there is simply no energy left.

So the whole effort has to be very positive. Feed and nourish your aloneness with all that you have, pour your love, and you will be surprised that those gaps of sadness and grumpiness are not coming anymore because you don't have any energy for them, and you are no longer in a welcoming mood for them.

And if by chance you find some clouds of sadness coming, just watch. Don't get identified with them. Remember only one thing: everything passes. So these clouds will also pass. Many times, before they have been there and they have passed, so there is no question that this time they are not going to pass away. So why unnecessarily get disturbed? You just let them pass. You remain absolutely unidentified and watchful.

If these two things are remembered, your aloneness gets your total energy so that no energy is left for anything else. But if in the beginning you don't understand what is total and you are holding something back, then some moments will come. For that, use a watchfulness, unidentified with the moment, as if it has nothing to do with you, as if it is somebody else's sadness, somebody else's grumpiness – none of my business. Keep a distance; don't let them come closer and become one with you.

That's what I mean when I say, don't identify. Don't say, "I am sad," simply say, "A cloud of sadness is passing in front of me." Don't say, "I am angry," simply say, "A cloud of anger is just at the corner going by." And it will not leave even a trace on you; it will not even touch you. And once you have become aware that by not identifying you become free of everything, you have a secret key in your hands for freedom from any kind of emotion, any mood, any thought.

This will remind you that you have not been putting your total energy into your aloneness, something is left. So next time, when you are again feeling alone and the clouds have gone and the sky is clear, put in more energy. You never know how much you have. You will know only when you put it into action, when you make the potential actual – only then will you know. When the seed comes to blossom, only then will you know what was hiding in that seed. So

many flowers – such a small seed – so much green foliage, such a beauty. But you know only when things become actual.

Much of your life remains unlived; it never becomes actual. That's why very few people are able to blossom. They live at the minimum – and I teach you to live at the optimum. […]

But remember that you have to nourish your aloneness so much that it becomes the most beautiful experience of your life; that no sadness can overtake you; that no past can ever possess you again; that no old habit can get you again into patterns that you know perfectly well are simply misery and suffering.

Two things: one, a totality in aloneness. And if in the beginning sometimes you have not been total and a cloud comes, remain unidentified, far away. Slowly, slowly no sadness comes, no suffering comes, no feeling of loneliness comes. [...]

From ***The New Dawn***, Discourse #27, Q3

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32 The Magic of Sharing

The Magic of Sharing

The other day, Sarito asked about writing beautiful words about you that she felt she had no right to say, and you encouraged us to express ourselves in the world. Beloved Master, I am not a speaker or writer of beautiful words, still, many times I have experienced sharing myself with people in the world, sharing you, sharing your vision. For that moment of sharing, I become what I am expressing. For that moment, I radiate your light flowing through me, as if each time I myself am experiencing you newly and fresh. Beloved Osho, can you please talk about the magic of sharing?

Prem Komal, there is only one magic in the world, and that is the magic of sharing. All else in the name of magic is simply trickery; but sharing belongs to the ultimate truth. Sharing is possible only if you have experienced – in absolute depth – love, blissfulness, ecstasy, and these are not just words to you but your very heartbeat, your very breathing. Then the magic happens. There is no magician, just the magic. You don't do it, it simply overwhelms you. If there is somebody to receive, open and vulnerable, thirsty and longing, then something invisible starts flowing between the two.

You cannot see it, but you can feel that a connection has happened which is beyond the reach of the mind. Neither can anybody else see it, but if people of understanding are around you, they can see the effects of it. The person who becomes overwhelmed is immediately no longer a person but only a presence, no longer a flower but only a fragrance, no longer a dancer but only a dance.

You cannot catch hold of him, but you can enjoy to the fullest. And the person who has become connected starts melting and merging. There are no longer two persons; there are two bodies and one soul.

In fact, without our knowing there is only one soul of the whole universe. The trees and the birds and the animals, and all that is living, has a universal soul. We are simply parts of it, and our ignorance consists of our thinking of ourselves as separate. That's what is called the ego.

The idea of separation is ego. The moment that false idea disappears, your whole life becomes a continuous experience of mysteries, miracles, and magic. And without your knowing, those who are thirsty start coming toward you, those who are searching suddenly start feeling a magnetic pull, a charisma, irresistibly. They may not even like to come, but they have to come; it is beyond their capacity to prevent themselves. Once they have felt something of the beyond, then they have no power to go against the flow; then they have to be just part of the flow and allow it to take them wherever it is going.

In a gathering like this, that magic happens every day. You may not give it the name "magic". . . because that word has become very contaminated by wrong usage, otherwise, it is one of the most beautiful words. There are thousands of eyes here but suddenly, one seeing; thousands of

hearts but suddenly, one beating . . . one harmony, and a silence as if there is nobody. This is the only magic there is.

Prem Komal, you don't have to learn it; it is not an art. It is not within your capacity to learn it. What is within your capacity is to allow existence to flow through you. You should not stand in the way, that is the only art; you should not block the radiation. You should simply stand aside and let the universal consciousness flow through you, and reach as far as there are people who can receive it.

When we are meeting here – and not just meeting in the ordinary sense but actually meeting, heart to heart, being to being – this overwhelming experience goes around the Earth, to all the sannyasins wherever they may be. They may not understand what is happening, why suddenly they have become silent, why suddenly they have started singing or playing on the flute, why suddenly a deep urge has arisen in them to dance. They may not be aware of what is happening. So this gathering is not only the gathering of those few who are actually present here, it is a gathering of all those who have loved me and who have received my love. Wherever they may be, dead or alive, they are part of this gathering, and they will rejoice and sing and dance, and feel grateful to existence.

A great Zen master was getting on in years. Finally, one day a few of his disciples gathered around him and with long faces asked, "Master, your death is approaching – you have told us that. Now we must ask where would you like us to bury you?"

The old man looked up and with a twinkle in his eye said, "Surprise me!"

These are the real people, the real magicians. Even death cannot make them sad. They can make fun even of death. What a beautiful man this old Zen master must have been, who could say,

"Surprise me. Let me see what you do when I die. I am not leaving any instructions; I will wait and see. Do something that has never been done. Surprise me – just don't be repetitive."

I don't know what happened later on because I cannot think myself how to surprise. Whatever you do must have been done thousands of times. The old man has left his disciples in a state of koan – that was his whole life's teaching.

These people are so strange that even when they are dying they cannot forget their teaching. That was his teaching: giving *koans* to the disciples. *Koans* are puzzles which cannot be solved – whatever you do it doesn't matter. It is not a question of intelligence; it simply is not possible to solve them.

The moment you realize it, that all your efforts have failed and now you cannot see anything else that is possible, a great silence descends on you. In that silence you are no more. The puzzle remains, but you are solved.

And that's the whole purpose of a koan. The puzzle will always remain – that's why the same koan goes on being used for thousands of years because no koan can ever be solved. But it solves the person. All his problems and doubts and questions and everything disappear. In that utter failure of his mind to solve a small puzzle, the mind stops. It has tried every way; there is no way out. And the moment the mind fails, you encounter yourself . . . beyond mind, beyond words.

That old man has again given them a koan. He will be gone and they will be sitting there trying to solve the puzzle. How to surprise the old man? Whatever you can think of must have been done before. Millions of people have died and thousands of masters have died. Everything must have been tried; surprise is almost impossible. That was the meaning of the twinkle in his eye – he knows that he is putting you in trouble.

Perhaps you will not be able to surprise him, but in the very effort to find a way out, you may find a way in, you may come to know yourself. His death may become a resurrection for you. In his death, you may come to know the eternal, the immortal.

This is the only magic I know of: to have a taste of the eternal and to allow people to share the taste. Those who are ready and ripe, those who are mature and of age, they will immediately start growing. And those who are not yet ripe will have to wait a little.

There is no harm in waiting a little because time is without any beginning and without any end. It does not matter whether you become enlightened on Monday . . . because there are only seven days – you can choose any day. These seven days have been chosen because of the seven colors of the rainbow. These are the seven colors of the rays of the sun. These seven days are named after light and color.

Enlightenment is the most psychedelic experience. There is nothing more colorful than enlightenment. There is nothing else that is more of light and more full of delight.

From ***The New Dawn***, Discourse #25, Q1

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The Art of Watching

For the last four days I have been taking part in the Zazen group. When anger arises, it is difficult for me to watch this feeling instead of throwing this anger on others. Beloved Master, would you please speak about the art of watching?

Everything that I have been saying to you consists of the art of watching – from different dimensions, from different aspects, from different angles. My whole teaching can be reduced to a single word – watching.

That is the only thing in you which is not part of the mind. That is the only thing in you which does not belong to you but belongs to existence itself. For example, I can watch my hand; that means I am not the hand. Whatever you can watch you are not. This is a simple arithmetic. The watcher is bound to be separate from the object that he is watching.

You can watch your body from outside and from inside too. You can close your eyes and you can watch your body from the inside. It will be dark, and it will not be so visible and so clear, but still, you can feel many things. You can hear the heart beating. If you are really very silent you can even hear the sound of your blood running. You are not the body.

You can watch your mind. All its thoughts, howsoever fine, are available to your watching. You can see the subtlest expression of the mind. That makes one thing clear – that you are not the mind either. It is a little more difficult, but not impossible, to watch your feelings – what the poets call the heart; your emotions, your moods – which are the subtlest things in your personality. A little sadness, a little joy, or perhaps nothing but an indifference . . . but even indifference is a certain attitude. Watching goes on becoming more and more deep.

Beyond your moods there is nothing to watch but only silence. In that silence a great miracle happens. The energy that has been watching turns upon itself. Hence many old religions have used as a symbol the snake holding its own tail in its mouth. It is a circle . . . the mouth and the tail. It has been used in a very ancient school in Tibet, and Madame Blavatsky brought it from there and it became a symbol for the Theosophical movement.

I have met many Theosophists. In the city where I used to live there was a Theosophical lodge; it was one of their big centers. And just before the lodge was the snake taking his tail in his mouth.

The president, who had invited me to speak in their lodge, was taking me inside the lodge. I asked him, “Do you know the meaning of this snake?”

He said, “I have once or twice been puzzled myself – what is the meaning of this snake? And I have been asking all our Theosophist leaders – president of the world society, secretary of the world society – but nobody seems to know the meaning of it. And it is there on all the lodges. It seems everybody has forgotten the meaning.”

I said, “If you have forgotten the meaning of this simple symbol, then you have forgotten everything about theology, theosophy, or whatever name you give to it. You have forgotten everything about religion because this snake represents the ultimate experience of watching. When the energy of watching, just like a snake, turns back to the source, creating a circle, one

knows oneself, there is nothing else to know. That's what Socrates was saying to his disciples: 'Know thyself, because without knowing thyself you cannot be thyself.'"

Unconscious, you simply *think* you are. But you don't know who you are, what you are, why you are. Your whole life is lived in unconsciousness.

Mrs. Pomeroy's maid became so sick one afternoon that Mrs. Pomeroy said to her, "Please, let me put you in my bed until I can get our family doctor here to examine you."

When the physician arrived, Mrs. Pomeroy showed him into the bedroom, then left him alone to examine the maid. "Doctor, I am not sick at all," confessed the maid, "I am faking it. That old tightwad owes me three months back salary, and I am not getting out of her bed until she pays me."

The doctor's face suddenly brightened. "Hell," he said, "she owes me for my past ten visits here." He then popped a thermometer into his mouth and said to the maid, "Move over."

But this is our whole life . . . almost living in a state of sleep.

When a sudden storm blew up at sea, a young woman leaning against the ship's rail lost her balance and was thrown overboard. Immediately, another figure plunged into the waves beside her and held her up until a lifeboat rescued them.

To everyone's astonishment, the hero was the oldest man on the voyage, ninety-two years old. That night a party was given in honor of his bravery. "Speech, speech!" cried the other passengers.

The old gentleman rose slowly and looked around at the enthusiastic gathering. "There is just one thing I would like to know," he said. "Who the hell pushed me?"

This game goes on. Our life is really ridiculous, and the only way to make it sane and intelligent is the way of creating a watcher in you. Then whether you are awake or asleep the watcher remains inside you, just like a small flame, continuously burning. It watches your sleep, it watches your dreams. It watches everything, and finally, it watches your death too.

And because it watches your death, it means you are not dying. Only that which was not you is dying. The flame, that has become your life source and the center, simply moves on into another form, into another life. And this flame cannot be extinguished. It is immortality itself. The experience of this flame is the experience of enlightenment. With this experience, all the fears of life disappear.

What remains is pure joy and a tremendous gratitude toward existence. I call this gratitude the only prayer . . . no words but without words a deep feeling of gratefulness: "So much has been given to me which I don't deserve, which I have not earned, of which I am not worthy. Life goes on giving to me out of its abundance, not because I need it, or deserve it, but because life has so much to give. It is overflowing."

The energy of existence is so much, uncontainable. So those who are not closed, who are open, they become filled with all kinds of flowers, and all kinds of fragrances, and all kinds of riches, and all kinds of mysteries, and all kinds of secrets.

The golden key is watching. And there is nothing much to learn it. It is a very simple thing. You cannot imagine anything more simple which can open the doors of the whole existence for you.

From ***The New Dawn***, Discourse #25, Q2

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The Sanest Path

In the last few days, I heard you speak about watching the clouds of moods passing by. The other day I heard you saying: Be total, go totally into it. I like to watch the clouds of anger, sadness, jealousy, etc. passing by but not moods like happiness and joy. I like to become identified with these moods and go totally into them and express them. Should I watch every mood or should I go totally into every mood? I cannot bring these things together.

Would you please comment?

Anutosh Samat, no one can bring these two things together. You will have to choose one. My suggestion is, watch everything with equal distance, with equal aloofness. Sadness, anger, jealousy, happiness, joy, love – remain aloof from all and just be total in your watching.

Your watchfulness should be total. You be identified with your watching because that is your nature, that's what you are. There is no question of disidentifying with it; even if you try you cannot succeed.

Your intrinsic nature is simply that of a witness. A single quality of awareness makes your whole being. So watch everything as if it is a cloud passing by.

I can see your difficulty: you would like to be identified with love, you would like to be identified with happiness, and you would like not to be identified with sadness, you would like not to be identified with misery. But this kind of choice is not allowed by existence.

If you really want to get beyond the mind and all its experiences – sadness and joy, anger and peace, hate and love – if you want to get beyond all these dualities, you have to watch them equally, you cannot choose. If you choose, you will not be able to watch those which you don't want to choose. So the first thing is, just be a watcher.

It will be a little difficult in the beginning to watch those things which are so sweet, so beautiful because watching makes you distant from every experience that is passing by like a cloud. You cannot cling. Up to now that's what you have been doing: clinging to that which you think is good and trying to get away from that which you think is ugly and miserable. But you have created only a mess of yourself. You have not been successful.

The best way is to be totally a watcher, but if you find it difficult, there is an alternative. But that is harder than this; it is more difficult than this one – to get identified with every cloud that moves. If there is misery, then become absolutely miserable, then don't hold anything back, just go with it to the very end. If you are angry, then be angry and do whatever stupidity it suggests to you to do. If some crazy cloud passes by, be crazy. But then don't miss anything. Whatever comes to you, be totally with it in that moment, and when it is gone, it is gone.

This also will liberate you, but it is a more difficult path. If you want something really dangerous to play with, you can get identified with everything. Then don't make any differentiation – that this is good to get identified with and this is bad to get identified with. Then there is no question; without any discrimination, get identified, and within a week you will be finished with it. Just one week will be enough because so many things are passing by; you will be so tired, so exhausted. If you survive, we will meet again. If you don't survive, good bye.

But this is a dangerous path. I have never heard of anybody surviving. And you know perfectly well what kind of things come to your mind. Sometimes you feel like barking, then get into it, bark like a dog. And whatever the world thinks let them think. You have chosen your path; you will get free . . . perhaps totally free. Enlightenment and freedom from the body will come together! But it is a bit dangerous.

People may try to prevent you because nobody knows what kind of things come to your mind. Your own people – your friends, your family, your wife, your husband – may try to prevent you. There are many people all over the world whose families have forced them into insane asylums because that was the only way to protect them. And this happens everywhere. […]

Just now the world has come to know that England's royal family has been keeping two persons belonging to the royal family locked in a basement for forty years in Buckingham Palace. And this was not released; this was not allowed to be known because even to accept that royal people can go mad is humiliating. Royal blood?

For forty years they have been hiding the facts about where these people had disappeared to, and just now it has leaked out. Then they had to accept that they have been keeping them in a basement because they were behaving in an insane way, and they did not want the world to know that members of the royal family of England are behaving insanely.

But this goes on happening. In my village, the richest family had one person locked inside in their house his whole life. Everybody knew that something had happened to the person because he suddenly disappeared. But it was sixty years before, so by and by, people had forgotten. I came to know just by chance because one of the sons, of the man who was kept in chains, was my student.

Because he was from my own village, he used to come to see me often, and one day I just asked him, "I have never seen your father."

He became very sad and he said, "I cannot lie to you, but what is happening to my father is such a heavy weight on my heart. Because my family is the richest family of the village, they don't want anybody to know what they are doing with my father. They beat him; he has been encaged almost like a wild animal. He cries, shouts, screams, but nobody listens, nobody goes near. Just from the top, food is dropped to him. Everything that he needs is dropped from the top. Nobody wants even to face him."

But I said, "What has he done?"

He said, "Nothing special, he was just crazy. He used to do things which are not normal." For example, he might go naked into the market. Now, there was no harm . . . he had not done any harm to anybody, he had just been walking naked in the marketplace, but that was enough for the family to force him. And they made him more and more insane. This was not going to help; this was not a cure, not a treatment. […]

So if you get identified with all your ideas, then you should think before you start the practice: what people will think about it and how they will behave with you – although it is possible to get free of all those emotions if you get identified with all of them, without any choice.

Either be choicelessly identified or be choicelessly unidentified. The real thing is choicelessness.

But the first way, you will be on safer ground. Be a choiceless watcher. Don't choose something good and don't throw away something bad. Nothing is good, nothing is bad; only witnessing is good and non-witnessing is bad.

"Doctor," said the housewife, "I have come to see you about my husband. We have been married for over twenty-five years. He has been a good husband, happy, contented and very devoted to me, but since he came to see you about his headaches, he has been a different man. Now he never comes home at night, he never takes me out anymore; he never buys me anything nor gives me any money.

Hell, he never even looks at me. Your treatment seems to have changed his entire personality."

"Treatment?" said the doctor. "All I did was give him a prescription for a pair of glasses." Because he was not able to see exactly . . . now for the first time he has seen the woman. So just a pair of glasses can make a dramatic change – the whole personality, his whole behavior. Otherwise, he used to be a very loyal husband.

And this will not be such a small thing, just a pair of glasses. If you start getting identified with everything, you will be in difficulty from every corner. It is better to choose the safer way; all awakened people have chosen that way. It is without exception the sanest path towards enlightenment.

From ***The New Dawn***, Discourse #31, Q2

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36 Discipline and Meditation

Discipline and Meditation

Can you please speak on discipline and meditation?

Niten, it is a very strange question because every day, morning and evening, I am speaking on discipline and meditation. If anybody reads your question, he will think that for the first time I have to speak on discipline and meditation! Where have you been for so long?

You remind me of two old friends; they meet on a street in Leningrad . . .

"How is life treating you?" asks one.

"Just great," replies the other.

The first one looks at him dubiously and says, "Have you been reading the papers?"

"Of course," replies the other, "how else would I know!"

People know about their own lives by reading newspapers, and I have been telling you every day about meditation and nothing else, and you are asking . . .!

Okay . . .

A little old Jewish lady sits down on a plane next to a big Norwegian. She keeps staring and staring at him. Finally, she turns to him and says, "Pardon me, are you Jewish?"

"No," he replies. A few minutes go by and she looks at him again and says, "You can tell me — you are Jewish, aren't you?"

He answers, "Definitely not."

She keeps studying him and says again, "I can tell you are Jewish!"

In order to get her to stop annoying him, the gentleman says, "Okay, I am Jewish."

She looks at him and shakes her head back and forth and says, "Really, you don't look it!"

I am wondering from where to begin! Niten, meditation is the only contribution the East has made to humanity. The West has made many contributions — thousands of scientific inventions, immense progress in medicine, unbelievable discoveries in all the dimensions in life — but still, a single contribution of the East is far more valuable than all the contributions of the West.

The West has become rich; it has all the technology to be rich. The East has become poor, immensely poor, because it has not looked for anything else except for one thing, and that is

one's own inner being. Its richness is something which cannot be seen, but it has known the highest peaks of bliss, the greatest depths of silence. It has known the eternity of life; it has known the most beautiful flowering of love, compassion, joy. Its whole genius has been devoted to a single search — you can call it ecstasy.

Meditation is only a technique to reach to the ecstatic state, to the state of divine intoxication. It is a simple technique, but the mind makes it very complex. Mind has to make it very complex and difficult because both cannot exist together. Meditation is the death of the mind. [...]

Meditation starts by being separate from the mind, by being a witness. That is the only way of separating yourself from anything. If you are looking at the light, naturally one thing is certain, you are not the light; you are the one who is looking at it. If you are watching the flowers, one thing is certain, you are not the flower, you are the watcher. Watching is the key of meditation:

Watch your mind.

Don't do anything — no repetition of mantra, no repetition of the name of God — just watch whatever the mind is doing. Don't disturb it, don't prevent it, don't repress it; don't do anything at all on your part. You just be a watcher, and the miracle of watching is meditation. As you watch, slowly, slowly mind becomes empty of thoughts; but you are not falling asleep, you are becoming more alert, more aware.

As the mind becomes completely empty, your whole energy becomes a flame of awakening. This flame is the result of meditation. So you can say meditation is another name of watching, witnessing, observing — without any judgment, without any evaluation. Just by watching, you immediately get out of the mind.

The watcher is never part of the mind, and as the watcher becomes more and more rooted and strong, the distance between the watcher and the mind goes on becoming longer and longer. Soon the mind is so far away that you can hardly feel that it exists . . . just an echo in faraway valleys. And ultimately, even those echoes disappear. This disappearance of the mind is without your effort, without your using any force against the mind — just letting it die its own death.

Once mind is absolutely silent, absolutely gone, you cannot find it anywhere. You become for the first time aware of yourself because the same energy that was involved in the mind, finding no mind, turns upon itself. Remember: energy is a constant movement.

We say things are objects, and perhaps you have never thought why we call things objects. They are objects because they hinder your energy, your consciousness. They *object*; they are obstacles. But when there is no object, all thoughts, emotions, moods, everything, has disappeared. You are in utter silence, in nothingness — rather in no-thingness; the whole energy starts turning upon itself. This returning energy to the source brings immense delight.

Just the other day, I quoted William Blake, "energy is delight." That man, although he is not a mystic, must have found some glimpse of meditation. When meditation comes back to its own source, it explodes in immense delight.

This delight in its ultimate state is enlightenment.

Anything that helps you to go through this process of meditation is discipline: perhaps taking a good bath, being clean and cool; sitting in a relaxed posture with eyes closed, neither hungry nor overloaded; sitting in a posture which is most relaxing . . . having a look at the whole body, every part and whether there is any tension. If there is any tension, then change the posture and bring the body into a relaxed state.

In the East it has been found, and found rightly, that the lotus posture — the way you must have seen the statues of Buddha; that is called the lotus posture . . . It has been a discovery of thousands of years that that is the most relaxed state of the body. But for Westerners who are not accustomed to sitting on the ground, the lotus posture is a nightmare! So avoid it because it takes almost six months to learn the lotus posture; it is not necessary.

If you are accustomed to sitting on a chair, you can find a way, a posture, a chair made in a certain way that helps your body to relax all its tensions. It does not matter whether you are sitting in the chair or in the lotus posture or lying down on the bed. Sitting is preferable because it will prevent you from falling asleep.

The lotus posture was chosen for many reasons. If one can manage it without torturing oneself, then it is the best, but it is not a necessity. It is certainly the best situation in which you can enter into watchfulness. The legs are crossed, the hands are crossed, the spine is straight; it gives many significant supports to being watchful. First, in this position, gravitation has the least effect on the body because your spine is straight. So the gravitation can only effect a very small portion. When you are lying down, gravitation effects your whole body. That's why for sleeping, lying down is the best posture. Gravitation pulls the whole body, and because of its pull, the body loses all tensions. Secondly, when you are lying down, if the purpose is to sleep then you should use a pillow because the less blood reaches to your mind, the less the mind will be active. The less blood reaches to the mind, the more possibility to fall asleep.

A lotus posture is a great combination. It has the least effect of gravitation, and because the spine is straight the least amount of blood reaches to the mind, so mind cannot function. In that posture you cannot fall asleep easily. And if you have learned the posture from your very birth, it becomes so natural. The crossing of the legs, the crossing of the hands have a significance. Your body energy moves in a circle; the circle is not broken anywhere in a lotus posture. Both your hands . . . one hand gives the energy to the other hand; your one foot gives energy to the other foot — and the energy goes on moving in a circle. You become a circle of your bio-energy.

Many things are of much help. Your energy is not being released so you don't get tired. Your blood is reaching in the least amount so the mind does not function too much. You are sitting in such a position — your legs are locked, your hands are locked and your spine is straight — sleep is difficult. These are just supports; they are not essential.

It is not that one who cannot sit in a lotus posture cannot meditate, meditation will be a little difficult but the lotus posture is only helpful, not absolutely needed. And for the people from colder countries where sitting on the ground is not possible — their bodies for centuries — their parents and their parents' parents from Adam and Eve . . . Have you seen any picture of Adam and Eve sitting in a lotus posture? In fact, it would have been very good for them because sitting in lotus posture they could sit naked, and yet nobody would have been very much aware of their nakedness. That's how the Jaina monks sit, always in lotus posture. You cannot see their genitals. Their legs are crossed, their hands are crossed; this functions almost as a protection for their nakedness.

But if for centuries people have never sat, then it will unnecessarily create trouble; your body structure has taken a certain mode. It is better to follow the body and its wisdom: use a chair. The whole thing is you should be comfortable so that the body does not draw your attention. That's why tension has to be avoided because if you have a headache then it will be difficult to meditate. Again and again, your attention will go to the headache. If your leg is hurting, or if there is any slight tension anywhere in the body, it immediately alarms you. It is natural and it is part of the body's wisdom.

If it does not alarm you then there is danger: a snake may be biting you, and you may go on sitting; your clothes may catch fire, your body may be burning, and you may not be aware of it. So the body immediately alarms wherever there is any trouble. That's the reason to create a relaxed position in which the body need not alarm you because every alarm will be a disturbance in your meditation.

So the first thing of discipline is a relaxed body and closed eyes, because if you have open eyes, then so many things are moving around, they can be a disturbance. It is perfectly right for the beginners to use a blindfold, so that you are completely inside, because it is your eyes, your senses that take you outside. Eyes take eighty percent of all your outgoing contact — eighty percent is through the eyes, so close the eyes.

For the beginners, it is good if they can use earplugs. Close the ears so no noise from the outside disturbs you. It is only for the beginners; all the precautions are for the beginners. And then just watch your mind as if the mind is nothing but a traffic of thoughts or a film — a movie passing on the TV screen. You are just a neutral observer.

This is the discipline. And if this discipline is complete, watching comes very easily, and watching is meditation. Through watchfulness mind disappears, thoughts disappear. And that moment is the most blessed moment: when you are fully awake and there is not a single thought, just a silent sky of your inner being.

This is the moment when energy turns inward; the turning in is sudden, abrupt. And as the energy turns inward, it brings immense delight, orgasmic delight. Suddenly your awareness becomes so rich because the energy is nourishment to your awareness. The energy coming back creates almost a flame of your being. You see all around pure light, silence — utter silence — and an immense centering. You are now at your very center.

At the right moment, when you are exactly centered — the explosion. That explosion, we call enlightenment. This enlightenment brings you all the treasures of the inner world, the whole splendor. It is the only miracle in the world: to know oneself and to be oneself, and to know that one is deathless, one is beyond the body, beyond the mind; one is just pure consciousness.

So the discipline is just a support, the essential thing is witnessing, watching — that is meditation. But in the name of meditation, there are hundreds of so-called teachers who go on exploiting people. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi became well known in the West, because the West was not aware that in the East, even the villagers are doing the so-called transcendental meditation. Everybody chanting, repeating the name of God — it is an enjoyable exercise. I am not against it; it is perfectly good but don't call it meditation and don't call it transcendental. Those are wrong words for it.

It is hypnotic auto-suggestion and nothing more. It will never give you the light that Kabir talks of, “As if thousands of suns have arisen all around.” It will not give you what Rumi calls, “As if the whole sky is showering flowers, and the whole being is filled with perfume, unearthly, not of this world.”

It will not give you the ecstasy that Patanjali, the founder of Yoga, continuously insists on in his yoga sutras. He says that samadhi, ecstasy is very similar to sleep with only one difference that it is alert. If sleep can be awake, if sleep can be full of awareness, then it is samadhi, it is ecstasy. It will never give you the buddha nature. It gives you ordinary mental rest — physical relaxation; hence, I am not against it.

Whatever Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and other people like him are doing is good, but they are calling something meditation which is not. That’s where they are leading people astray. If they had remained sincere and authentic and told people that this will give you mental health, physical health, a more relaxed life, a more peaceful existence, it would have been right. But once they started calling it transcendental meditation, they have raised a very trivial thing to an ultimate significance which it cannot fulfill. People have been in transcendental meditation for years, and in the East, for thousands of years. But that has not become their self-knowing, and that has not made them Gautam Buddhas.

If you want to understand exactly what meditation is Gautam Buddha is the first man to come to its right, exact definition — that is witnessing. Learn from Gautam Buddha witnessing, and learn from Patanjali the discipline that can be helpful for meditation. This way, yoga and meditation can become a synthesis. Yoga is a discipline, just an outer support — immensely helpful but not absolutely needed. And Gautam Buddha has given to the world the very fundamental and the most essential thing: witnessing as meditation.

From ***The Invitation***, Discourse #21, Q1

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There is Only One Watcher

You can watch the mind because you are not the mind.

That is the whole reason to watch it: To become aware that you are separate.

Existentially, no problem arises because you cannot watch this watcher. You have come to the very end of the rope; in the very first step you have completed the journey.

Logically, you can manage to create the problem. Watcher one watches the mind; watcher two watches the watcher number one . . . and then go on ad absurdum. Don't make it a puzzle. That will be risking your own possibility of becoming aware.

It is not a logical conclusion.

Logic has no dominance over existence.

There is only one watcher; you cannot go behind it. If you can go behind it, then it was not the watcher, it was part of the mind — mind was befooling you. A part of the mind can watch the other part. But if you have become completely unidentified with the mind and you are simply a watcher — not a thinker, not part of the mind in any way — you have come to the end of the rope in the very beginning. There is no beyond it; however you try, you will not be able to go beyond it, you will always remain the same watcher.

It is the experience of the meditators — they have all tried — that perhaps behind the watcher, they may find some other watcher. But "the watcher" as a word creates the problem. It is not *watcher*; it is really *watching*. It is a process; it is complete in itself. You cannot jump out of it and watch it. You *are* it, so you cannot go behind yourself.

It is possible to watch the mind because you are *not* the mind, so you can step back and have a look at the mind. And this stepping back and having a look at the mind, is the greatest transformation that can happen to man. Freed from mind, you are freed from all that was binding, imprisoning, enslaving — your miseries, your sufferings, your desires, your fears.

The watcher has no disease; the watcher is simply a mirror, reflecting. And the miracle of the process is that the more you become clearly distinct from the mind, the mind starts disappearing. That is the elimination.

Mind exists with your support; it has no source of nourishment other than your support. And the support you can give to the mind is of identity; you have to become one with the mind. Then mind as a parasite goes on living. But the moment you are separate from the mind, the parasite dies. You can see it disappearing, just like smoke into thin air. Only watching remains.

You cannot watch it, you are it.

You know it, but you don't watch it; you feel it, but you don't watch it; you live it, but you don't watch it because you cannot go behind it. It will be still the same watcher.

It is good that existence is not logical; otherwise, there would have been no buddhas, no awakened people. There would have been number one, number two, number three . . . There are unending numbers, and the whole process would become tedious. But the process does not exist; it is only mind that can create the problem and can stop you from going into existential experience.

So to eliminate you is the only way, Rashid. To illuminate you, to make you enlightened, the only way is to kill you, to kill you as an identity with the mind.

As the mind is left — like a snake leaves its old skin and slips out of it — you have done the whole pilgrimage from darkness to light, from the finite to the infinite, from death to deathlessness.

From ***The Invitation***, Discourse #8, Q1

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34 Rejoice with the Flames of the Energy

Loneliness is a Misunderstanding

I have often heard you speak of aloneness and loneliness as being opposed; of aloneness being a state in which one is so full – fulfilled; of loneliness being a state in which one is missing the other, feeling very empty. Reading Ryokan's poetry, I feel some loneliness, yet that man is known as an enlightened Zen monk.

Standing alone beneath the solitary pine,
Quickly the time passes.
Overhead the endless sky.
Who can I call to join me on the path?

In the hankering for a true companion, in the need to share that richness, I wonder if in the heart of aloneness, there is a kind of loneliness. Please explain if aloneness and loneliness are interrelated.

Kavisho, loneliness is loneliness, and aloneness is aloneness — and the two never meet anywhere. They cannot by their very nature. Aloneness is so full, so abundantly full of yourself, there is no space for anybody else. And loneliness is so empty, so dark, so miserable that it is nothing but a constant hunger for someone to fill it . . . if not to fill it, at least to help you to forget it.

You are quoting from Ryokan's poetry. I don't think Ryokan is yet enlightened. He was certainly a Zen monk, and a great poet, but he fell short of being a mystic. He reached very close, but even to reach very close is not to be enlightened.

I have also loved Ryokan's poetry. But beware of poets because they appear so close to the mystics. Sometimes their words are more juicy than the words of the mystics because the poet is the artist of words; the mystic is an expert of silence.

Ryokan was a Zen monk; hence something of the mystic echoes in his poetry. But that is because he lived in an atmosphere in communion with the mystics. But he himself was not a mystic.

These are his lines, and you can see immediately what I mean:

Standing alone beneath the solitary pine,
Quickly the time passes.
Overhead the endless sky.
Who can I call to join me on the path?

He is still in need of a companion, and he is still searching. He is still talking of "the path," and the enlightened man knows there is no path. All paths are wrong, without exception, because every path leads you away from yourself. And to come to yourself you don't need any path: you have to be just awake, and you are there.

It is almost like you are asleep in your room and dreaming that you are far away in London, in New York, in San Francisco. Do you think that if suddenly you are awakened you will find yourself in San Francisco? You were there but that was only a dream. Awake, suddenly, you find you are in your miserable room, and you have not even gone out of the door. You may be angry with the person who has awakened you, but he has brought you back to the reality. And there was no need of booking a ticket because you had never gone out; you were only dreaming.

You are only dreaming what you are. If you wake up, suddenly you will find all that you used to think your personality, your body, your mind, your knowledge, your feelings, your love — they were all dreams. You are only a witness. But you cannot dream about the witness; that is an impossibility.

The witness remains a witness, never becomes a dream. Your aloneness is your witness, is your being. And it is so full, there is no need of any companion. And what is the need of a path? Where are you going? You have arrived.

Ryokan was a beautiful poet, and perhaps a very disciplined monk, but he was not a mystic and certainly not an enlightened man.

Kavisho, let this be an opportunity to remind you again: beware of poets. They are like false coins, although they look exactly like authentic coins. But the false is false, and there is no way to make it real. Ryokan has still to wake up and see there is no solitary pine tree standing alone, there is no need of a companion, and there is no path. One is, and has always been, at home.

To realize this at-homeness is aloneness.

Going around in your dreams you will always find yourself lonely. Loneliness is a misunderstanding. Aloneness is an awakening.

From ***The Golden Future***, Discourse #20, Q2

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Watching the Thinking or Thinking of Watching

Is it possible that instead of watching the thinking, I am thinking of watching?

It is not only possible, it is absolutely certain that instead of watching the thinking you are thinking of watching. But if you have become aware of it, the change is possible. If you can think of watching, why can't you watch thinking? Just try. It is not a difficult process, it is simple.

But most people do that. They are thinking of watching and are deceived by themselves and start feeling that great things are happening: The watcher has come in and soon all these thoughts will disappear and the no-mind is not very far away.

When people say to me that meditation is going very well, I am a little suspicious. If the meditation is going very well, you don't have to say it to me; I can see it. It will change your eyes, it will change your posture, it will change your walk, it will change your speaking, it will make you more and more silent – a pool of peace without any ripples of thoughts.

But human mind is very cunning; it tries to the very end to deceive you. And you are very naive, you go on being deceived.

Sadie Moskovitz took her old grandmother to the movies. It was an epic about the Roman Empire. In one scene a lot of unarmed prisoners were thrown to the lions. The old grandmother broke out into loud wails, crying out, "Ah, those poor people."

Sadie was very embarrassed and whispered fiercely, "Don't scream like that, Grandma. Those are Christians."

Choked, Grandma said, "I see." She was quiet at once, but then began wailing louder than before.

"Grandma," demanded Sadie, "what is it now?"

"Over there," said Grandma, pointing, "that poor little lion at the back. He's not getting any Christian."

Beware of your mind more than anything else in the world. It is the greatest deceiving device which has been created by your body, physiology, chemistry, biology. It keeps you tethered to the body and does not allow you to open your eyes to your consciousness. It keeps you engaged; it does not give you even a little holiday. The danger is that if you are given a little holiday, you may become aware of your inner grandeur, the beauty of your being and the enormous truth and the glory of it. And once you have seen that splendor, you are not going to be deceived anymore.

Now change it. Instead of thinking of watching, start watching the thinking. Even if the thinking is about watching, watch. It does not matter what is the object of thinking – it can be watching – don't get at all disturbed. You go on watching even thinking about watching and the watching that you will be doing will reveal secrets and the mystery of your being. And as they are revealed, mind disappears.

Mind is only there while you are utterly unconscious and ignorant. When more light is brought by meditation – watching – mind disappears like darkness. It is not a strong enemy; it is just that you have never tried to go beyond it.

Watching is simply a process of going beyond the mind, far away, looking at the mind, watching what is going on. Whatever the mind is doing you simply see it; don't appreciate, don't condemn, don't judge, because all these things are part of thinking.

Watching knows no judgment, no condemnation, no justification, no appreciation. Watching is simply like a mirror; standing before the mirror you may have a beautiful face but the mirror does not smile at you. You may have an ugly face but the mirror does not feel disgusted. You may have no face at all; the mirror is unconcerned.

Watching is simply exactly like a mirror reflecting the mind. Whatever is going on, the mirror reflects but makes no comments. This is the secret to getting beyond the mind, farther and farther away from it. Soon you will see that your mind is just a faraway echo – you can't even figure out what it is muttering – and then it disappears.

The attachment with the mind is through your condemnation or appreciation. Even when the mind disappears, don't say to yourself, "Aha, this is it." Then the mind has come back from the secret door that it knows.

Just remain silent.

There is no need to say "Aha!"

There is no need to say "This is it!"

Relish and enjoy the silence that has come around you. Where mind was just a marketplace, you have entered into the silences of the heart.

Enjoy, dance, but don't say a single word.

From ***Satyam Shivam Sundaram***, Discourse #27, Q2

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Rejoice with the Flames of the Energy

Sitting silently the other morning, I felt an incredible energy inside me – and suddenly a big fear arose before I had been able to accept or realize this energy. Could you help me to understand this fear? I am so afraid of my fire burning me totally: I had a glimpse of that and my mind has stopped this process. How to become free of this fear?

Shantam Shavda, life is a tremendous energy phenomenon. You are not aware of how much energy you have. Do you think atoms know how much energy they have? A single atom which is invisible to the eyes, if it explodes, can destroy a city as big as Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Within minutes everything is burned. If an atom of matter has that much energy . . . your consciousness is a far higher phenomenon. Your being must be carrying universes of energies – dormant, of course, because you are not aware. But those who have become aware, their descriptions indicate similar things. Kabir says that in his experience of inner being, he sees as if thousands of suns have suddenly arisen. All around him suns are dancing; the light is so dazzling that it makes him almost blind. But this is not only Kabir's experience. Many mystics have described it the same way.

Your experience is just a beginning. You felt as if you would be burned. Don't be worried, nobody has ever burned in his own inner energy. This energy is creative, not destructive. Any energy that comes out of meditative silence is creative. There is not a single instance of it destroying anything, it has only created: it has created a beautiful space within; it has created beautiful art, music, sculpture, poetry, painting, outside. This fire is not even hot, it is very cool.

I am reminded of Moses on Mount Sinai. He had gone there in search of God and he saw a very strange phenomenon which Jewish scholars are unable to explain because it looks fictitious. He saw a fire and within the fire a green bush, unburned. He could not believe his eyes. The flames were rising high and the bush inside the flames was green, and its flowers were blossoming as if a cool breeze was passing through, not a fire.

Attracted toward this majestic experience, he comes closer to the bush, and suddenly, he hears a voice, "Moses, take your shoes off! You are on holy ground." The voice is coming from the bush. As he comes closer, leaving his shoes behind, he does not feel any heat; on the contrary he feels very cool. And the dialogue that happened and culminated in the Ten Commandments was not with a person but an invisible voice coming from that green bush.

Theologians have been at work trying to figure it out. As far as I am concerned, I am not a theologian, but I can understand a little bit of poetry and I think it is a poetic statement, not a theological statement. Once you see it is a poetic statement all confusion disappears. What is being said is that life, or God, is a cool energy, so creative, so non-destructive, that even within the fire of it, a bush will remain green and will grow and blossom.

Accept this life energy, what a great philosopher, Bergson, used to call *élan vital*. This life force is not something to be afraid of. You have to create a communion with this life energy, a dialogue, and you will be immensely enriched, not burned. For the first time your spring will come and your flowers will blossom.

Many ancient parables, stories, are in fact poetic statements, but the theologians have destroyed their beauty and their poetry by dragging them down and trying to prove that they are actual

historical facts. They are not facts; they are far above facts. They are poetic realizations and poetic expressions.

Whatever happened to you, don't be afraid of it. There is no need for any fear. Rejoice with the flames of the energy, dance with those flames, have a communion with those flames, and you will be finding a dialogue with existence itself. If you are afraid that you may be burned, then this very fear will stop the process, will become a barrier to entering inward into deeper realms of your consciousness. Drop this fear. Nobody has ever been burned by life energy.

One has to learn to drop fear as one enters inward – because there is nobody except your own energy, and your own energy cannot be your enemy. In fact, even to say "your energy" is not right. It is because of the poverty of language that we have to use expressions like that. It is better to say you are the energy. Who is there to be burned? You are the fire itself, those dancing flames are your very being. Who is going to be burned? You are not a separate entity. It is language that always divides and creates trouble.

Drop all fear. The moment you are entering into meditation, put your fear where Moses had to leave his shoes. It is sacred ground. You are entering a temple of love, of life, of peace. There is no need of any fear. Go dancing in and it is absolutely certain that if you can be unafraid, a bridge will be created between you and the energy that is also you – but it is dormant, has been asleep and unconscious, so it appears as if it is separate from you.

But once it becomes awake, soon you will see your small flame of life has disappeared into the vast energy that has arisen. You have entered into the cosmic, into the universal. And the vaster the energy, the greater the ecstasy, the more joy, the more blessings, the more laughter.

Little Ernie is sitting at the back of the class, a can of beer in one hand and a cigarette in the other when Miss Goodbody says, "Okay children, today we are going to play a game. I'm going to say a few words about something, and you try to tell me what I'm thinking about. Okay, here we go! The first thing is a fruit. It's round and it's red."

Little Billy raises his hand and says, "An apple."

Miss Goodbody says, "No, it's a tomato, but I'm glad to see you're thinking. The next one is round and it's a green vegetable."

Little Mary says, "It's a lettuce."

"No," says Miss Goodbody, "it's a pea. But I'm glad to see you're thinking."

Just then Ernie raises his hand and says, "Hey, teach! Mind if I ask you one?"

"Go right ahead," says Miss Goodbody.

"Okay," says Ernie, "I've got something in my pocket, and it's long and it's hard and it's got a pink tip."

"Ernie!" shouts Miss Goodbody, "That's disgusting."

“It’s a pencil,” says Ernie, “but I’m glad to see you’re thinking.”

From ***Hari Om Tat Sat***, Discourse #11, Q3

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This Silence, This Moment, So Precious

This silence . . . this moment . . . so precious . . . so beautiful. To keep avoiding it and missing it seems so absurd.

Beloved Master, why? What is so difficult about dropping this whole game and just being?

Deva Gayan, the question you have asked is beautiful. "This silence . . . this moment . . . so precious . . . so beautiful. To keep avoiding it and missing it seems so absurd. Beloved Master, why? What is so difficult about dropping this whole game and just being?"

If the whole game is dropped, and you remain just being . . . soon you will get tired of it, bored with it. The game also has its significance. Its whole significance is that it makes your being just silent, a beauty. Without this game, this crowd, this noise, without this marketplace your temple will not have the beauty that it has. Life is a dialectic.

In the night, you see the whole sky full of stars. Do you think that in the day the stars hide somewhere? They are still there where you see them in the night, but in the light of the sun it is difficult to see them. You can see them if you go into a deep well, where it is almost as dark as night.

I used to have, by my house, a deep well. My family used to keep me away from it, and finally they closed it because it had chains and you could go deep into it. Whenever I could get a chance – nobody was looking at the well – I would simply go into it. There was a place from where it was so dark, that for the first time, I became aware that from that darkness you can see stars in the sky.

To see the stars, you need the darkness. And stars are so beautiful, but they will not be there without darkness. You have to understand the beauty of darkness too.

Life is so beautiful, but it would not be so beautiful if there was no death. Just think – if you go on and on and on living, a point will come where you would like to die. You have lived enough; now life itself has become a boring experience because it is the same round every day, and the wheel has moved for so many years, again and again.

When I say life is a dialectic, I mean it exists between two polarities, and both the polarities help each other. You cannot take one polarity away; if you take one away the other will also disappear. The silence is beautiful – nobody will disagree with you, Deva Gayan – but the great moment is when you understand that the noise of the marketplace is also beautiful because the beautiful silence and the beautiful noise are part of one whole. The day and the night, the summer and the winter, childhood and old age, all have tremendous beauty. The moment you see the beauty of [both] together you have transcended them.

This transcendental experience, you can call enlightenment; you can call awakening; you can call realization; you can call the truth – these are only different names for the same experience. But our mind always goes on trying to keep one and avoid the other.

You are asking, “This silence . . . this moment . . . so precious . . . so beautiful. Then why do we go on avoiding it, missing it?” That too is beautiful. That makes the contrast. It is just a silver line on a black cloud. You can write with white chalk only on a blackboard. If you take away the blackboard, the writing will also disappear.

To see this contradictoriness as complementary is to become mature. Then you don’t want to drop anything, then you don’t want to escape from the world, then whatever happens, you love it. The noise has its own place, and the silence has its own place, and they both enrich each other. There is no need to get out of the game. The game is tremendously beautiful. Just understand that this is the game, and because of the game, we have divided it into two parts; otherwise, nobody is the enemy, not even death. In this absolute acceptance of everything, you have already gone beyond.

Grandma Faginbaum takes her grandchildren shopping and leaves the house empty except for her parrot standing on its perch by the door. The plumber arrives to fix something in the house and knocks on the door.

“Who is it?” asks the parrot.

“It’s the plumber,” replies the man. Nothing happens. The plumber knocks again.

“Who is it?” asks the parrot.

“The plumber,” he replies.

There is silence. The plumber, who has a heart condition, is getting impatient. He knocks again.

“Who is it?” squawks the parrot.

“It’s the plumber!” he yells and collapses in a faint.

Half an hour later, grandma returns with the kids. The little girl points at the body on the ground.

“Who is that?” she asks.

The parrot squawks, “It’s the plumber!”

It is a game.

Let it continue.

Just go on laughing and enjoying – it is the plumber!

From ***Hari Om Tat Sat***, Discourse #11, Q4

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An Unaddressed Gratefulness

Is blissfulness an expression of gratitude toward existence?

It is just the reverse. Blissfulness is not an expression of gratitude; on the contrary, gratitude is an expression of blissfulness. First comes the experience of bliss. First you attain to the state of consciousness where ecstasy is natural, where your potential blossoms to its ultimate expression. A great dance arises in you, a tremendous peace and a deep silence – but it is not the silence of the graveyard, it is a silence fully alive, throbbing with a heartbeat. This whole experience is bliss. And because of this bliss that existence makes available to you, a feeling of gratitude, a thankfulness arises. […]

The authentic prayer arises only to the meditator. It is not addressed toward a god – which is only a hypothesis – there is no proof for any God. Yes, there is absolute proof for godliness: a quality of divineness in the sun rising in the morning, in the starry night, in the beautiful flight of a bird on the wing, in the flowers, in the trees, in the oceans.

All this vast universe is enough unto itself. It needs no God – God is only a consolation for the ignorant. The meditator encounters existence itself. His own being becomes the experience of godliness. He knows that in his own inner being he is part of eternal life. There is no death, there has never been any death. Experiencing this, there arises a dance so subtle . . . there arises a deep gratitude, not addressed to anybody in particular but simply addressed to the whole cosmos. To the stars, to the trees, to the Earth, to the Moon, to the animals, to people . . . it is an unaddressed gratefulness.

And unless you experience an unaddressed gratefulness, you don't know exactly the meaning of prayer. The word *prayer* gives a wrong connotation; it should be changed into *prayerfulness*, just as I am changing *God* into *godliness*. [...]

From ***Om Mani Padme Hum: The Sound of Silence; The Diamond in the Lotus***, Discourse #2, Q1

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35 Witnessing is the Beginning, No-Mind is the Fulfillment

Witnessing is the Beginning, No-Mind is the Fulfillment

How does watching lead to no-mind? I am more and more able to watch my body, my thoughts and feelings and this feels beautiful. But moments of no thoughts are few and far between. When I hear you saying, "Meditation is witnessing," I feel I understand. But when you talk about no-mind, it doesn't sound easy at all. Would you please comment?

Prem Anubuddha, meditation covers a very long pilgrimage. When I say, "Meditation is witnessing," it is the beginning of meditation. And when I say, "Meditation is no-mind," it is the completion of the pilgrimage. Witnessing is the beginning, and no-mind is the fulfillment. Witnessing is the method to reach the no-mind. Naturally you will feel witnessing is easier. It is close to you.

But witnessing is only like seeds, and then is the long waiting period; not only waiting, but trusting that this seed is going to sprout, that it is going to become a bush; that one day the spring will come and the bush will have flowers. No-mind is the last stage of flowering.

Sowing the seed is of course very easy; it is within your hands. But bringing the flowers is beyond you. You can prepare the whole ground, but the flowers will come on their own accord; you cannot manage to force them to come. The spring is beyond your reach – but if your preparation is perfect, spring comes; that is absolutely guaranteed.

It is perfectly good, the way you are moving. Witnessing is the path, and you are starting to feel once in a while a thoughtless moment. These are glimpses of no-mind . . . but just for a moment.

Remember one fundamental law: that which can exist just for a moment can also become eternal. You are not given two moments together but always one moment. And if you can transform one moment into a thoughtless state, you are learning the secret. Then there is no hindrance, no reason why you cannot change the second moment, which will also come alone, with the same potential and the same capacity.

If you know the secret, you have the master key which can open every moment into a glimpse of no-mind. No-mind is the final stage, when mind disappears forever, and the thoughtless gap becomes your intrinsic reality. If these few glimpses are coming, they show you are on the right path, and you are using the right method.

But don't be impatient. Existence needs immense patience. The ultimate mysteries are opened only to those who have immense patience.

I am reminded . . .

In old Tibet it was customary, respectful, that every family should contribute to the great experiment of expanding consciousness. So the first child of each family was given to the monasteries to be trained in meditation. Perhaps no country has done such a vast experiment in consciousness.

The destruction of Tibet at the hands of communist China is one of the greatest calamities that could have happened to humanity. It is not only a question of a small country; it is a question of a great experiment that was going on for centuries in Tibet.

The first child was given to the monasteries when he was very small, five or at the most six years old. But Tibet knew that children can learn witnessing better than grownups. The grown-ups are already utterly spoiled. The child is innocent and yet the slate of his mind is empty; to teach him emptiness is absolutely easy.

But the entrance of a child into a monastery was very difficult, particularly for a small child. I am reminded of one incident . . . I am telling you only one; there would have been hundreds of incidents like it. It is bound to be so.

A small child, six years old, is leaving. His mother is crying because life in a monastery for a small child is going to be so arduous. The father tells the child, "Don't look back. It is a question of our family's respectability. Not even once has a child in the whole history of our family ever looked back. Whatever is the test to be given for entrance into the monastery – even if your life is at risk, don't look back. Don't think of me or your mother and her tears.

"We are sending you for the ultimate experiment in human consciousness with great joy, although the separation is painful. But we know you will pass through all the tests; you are our blood, and of course you will keep the dignity of your family."

The small child rides on the horse with a servant riding on another horse. A tremendous desire arises in him when the road turns, just to have a look again back to the family house, its garden.

The father must be standing there, the mother must be crying . . . but he remembers that the father has said, "Don't look back."

And he does not look back. With tears in his eyes, he turns with the road. Now he cannot see his house anymore, and one never knows how long it will take – perhaps years and years – until he will be able to see his father and mother and his family again.

He reaches the monastery. At the gate of the monastery the abbot meets him, receives him gracefully as if he is a grown-up, bows down to him as he bows down to the abbot. And the abbot says, "Your first test will be to sit outside the gate with closed eyes, unmoving, unless you are called in."

The small child sits at the gate, outside the gate with closed eyes. Hours pass . . . and he cannot even move. There are flies sitting on his face, but he cannot remove them. It is a question of the dignity that the abbot has shown to him. He does not think any more like a child; so respected, he has to fulfill his family's longing, the abbot's expectations.

The whole day passes, and even other monks in the monastery start feeling sorry for the child.

Hungry, thirsty . . . he is simply waiting. They start feeling that the child is small but has great courage and guts.

Finally, by the time the sun is setting, the whole day has passed, the abbot comes and takes the child in. He says, “You have passed the first test, but there are many more peaks ahead. I respect your patience, being such a small child. You remained unmoving; you did not open your eyes. You did not lose courage; you trusted that whenever the time is right you will be called in.”

And then years of training in witnessing. The child was only allowed to see his parents again after perhaps ten years, twenty years had elapsed. But the criterion was that until he experiences no-mind, he cannot be allowed to see his parents, his family. Once he achieves no-mind, then he can move back into the world. Now there is no problem.

Once a man is in a state of no-mind, nothing can distract him from his being. There is no power bigger than the power of no-mind. No harm can be done to such a person. No attachment, no greed, no jealousy, no anger, nothing can arise in him. No-mind is absolutely a pure sky without any clouds.

Anubuddha, you say “How does watching lead to no-mind?”

There is an intrinsic law: thoughts don’t have their own life. They are parasites; they live on your identifying with them. When you say, “I am angry,” you are pouring life energy into anger because you are getting identified with anger.

But when you say, “I am watching anger flashing on the screen of the mind within me,” you are not anymore giving any life, any juice, any energy to anger. You will be able to see that because you are not identified, the anger is absolutely impotent, has no impact on you, does not change you, does not affect you. It is absolutely hollow and dead. It will pass on and it will leave the sky clean and the screen of the mind empty.

Slowly, slowly you start getting out of your thoughts. That’s the whole process of witnessing and watching. In other words – George Gurdjieff used to call it non-identification – you are no more identifying with your thoughts. You are simply standing aloof and away – indifferent – as if they might be anybody’s thoughts. You have broken your connections with them. Only then can you watch them.

Watching needs a certain distance. If you are identified, there is no distance; they are too close. It is as if you are putting the mirror too close to your eyes: you cannot see your face. A certain distance is needed; only then can you see your face in the mirror.

If thoughts are too close to you, you cannot watch. You become impressed and colored by your thoughts: anger makes you angry, greed makes you greedy, lust makes you lustful, because there is no distance at all. They are so close that you are bound to think that you and your thoughts are one.

Watching destroys this oneness and creates a separation. The more you watch, the bigger is the distance. The bigger the distance, the less energy your thoughts are getting from you. And they don’t have any other source of energy. Soon they start dying, disappearing. In these disappearing moments you will have the first glimpses of no-mind.

That is what you are experiencing. You say, “I am more and more able to watch my body, my thoughts and feelings, and this feels beautiful.” This is just the beginning. Even the beginning is immensely beautiful – just to be on the right path, even without taking a single step, will give you immense joy for no reason at all.

And once you start moving on the right path, your blissfulness, your beautiful experiences are going to become more and more deep, more and more wide, with new nuances, with new flowers, with new fragrances.

You say, “But moments of no thoughts are few and far between.” It is a great achievement because people don’t know even a single gap. Their thoughts are always in a rush hour, thoughts upon thoughts, bumper-to-bumper, the line continues, whether you are awake or asleep. What you call your dreams are nothing but thoughts in the form of pictures . . . because the unconscious mind does not know alphabetical languages. There is no school, no training institute which teaches the unconscious language.

The unconscious is very primitive; it is just like a small child. Have you looked at the books of your small children? If you want to teach the child, you have to make a big picture first. So you will see, in children’s books, pictures, colorful pictures with very little writing. The child is more interested in the pictures. He is primitive; he understands the language of pictures.

Slowly, slowly you make the pictures and the language associated – whenever he sees the mango he knows, “It is a mango.” And he starts learning that underneath the picture of the mango there is a certain word describing it. His interest is in the mango, but the word “mango” slowly becomes associated. As the child grows, pictures will become smaller and language will become more. By the time he enters the university, pictures will have disappeared from the book; only language will remain.

By the way, it reminds me to tell you that television has taken humanity back into a primitive stage because people are again looking at pictures. There is a danger in the future – it is already apparent that people have stopped reading great literature. Who bothers to read when you can see the film on the TV? This is a dangerous phenomenon because there are things which cannot be reproduced in pictures. Great literature can be only partially reproduced in pictures. The danger is that people will start forgetting the language and its beauty and its magic, and they will again become primitives, watching the television.

Now the average American is watching television for seven and a half hours every day. This is going to destroy something which we have achieved with great difficulty. Now, this man who is watching television for seven and half hours per day . . . you cannot expect him to read Shakespeare, Kalidas, Rabindranath Tagore, Herman Hesse, Martin Buber or Jean Paul Sartre.

The greater the literature, the less is the possibility of putting it into pictures.

Pictures are colorful, exciting, easy, but they are no comparison to language. The future has to be protected from many things. Computers can destroy people’s memory systems because there will be no need – you can keep a small computer the size of a cigarette packet in your pocket. It contains everything that you will ever need to know. Now there is no need to have your own memory; just push a button and the computer is ready to give you any information you need.

The computer can destroy the whole memory system of humanity that has been developed for centuries with great difficulty. Television can take away all great literature and the possibility of people like Shelley or Byron being born again in the world. These are great inventions, but nobody has looked at the implications. They will reduce the whole of humanity into a retardedness.

Anubuddha, what you are feeling is a great indication that you are on the right path. It is always a question for the seeker whether he is moving in the right direction or not. There is no security, no insurance, no guarantee. All the dimensions are open; how are you going to choose the right one?

These are the ways and the criteria of how one has to choose. If you move on any path, any methodology, and it brings joy to you, more sensitivity, more watchfulness and gives a feeling of immense well-being – this is the only criterion that you are going on the right path. If you become more miserable, more angry, more egoist, more greedy, more lustful – those are the indications you are moving on a wrong path.

On the right path your blissfulness is going to grow more and more every day, and your experiences of beautiful feelings will become tremendously psychedelic, more colorful – colors that you have never seen in the world, fragrances that you have never experienced in the world. Then you can walk on the path without any fear that you can go wrong.

These inner experiences will keep you always on the right path. Just remember that if they are growing, that means you are moving. Now you have only a few moments of thoughtlessness . . . It is not a simple attainment; it is a great achievement because people in their whole lives don't know even a single moment when there is no thought.

These gaps will grow.

As you become more and more centered, more and more watchful, these gaps will start growing bigger. And the day is not far away – if you go on moving without looking back, without going astray, if you keep going straight – the day is not far away when you will feel for the first time that the gaps have become so big that hours pass and not even a single thought arises. Now you are having bigger experiences of no-mind.

The ultimate achievement is when twenty-four hours a day you are surrounded with no-mind.

That does not mean that you cannot use your mind; that is a fallacy propounded by those who know nothing about no-mind. No-mind does not mean that you cannot use the mind; it simply means that the mind cannot use you.

No-mind does not mean that the mind is destroyed. No-mind simply means that the mind is put aside. You can bring it into action any moment you need to communicate with the world. It will be your servant. Right now it is your master. Even when you are sitting alone it goes on, yakkety-yak, yakkety-yak – and you cannot do anything, you are so utterly helpless.

No-mind simply means that the mind has been put in its right place. As a servant, it is a great instrument; as a master, it is very unfortunate. It is dangerous. It will destroy your whole life.

Mind is only a medium for when you want to communicate with others. But when you are alone, there is no need of the mind. So whenever you want to use it, you can use it.

And remember one thing more: when the mind remains silent for hours, it becomes fresh, young, more creative, more sensitive, rejuvenated through rest.

Ordinary people's minds start somewhere around three or four years of age, and then they go on continuing for seventy years, eighty years without any holiday. Naturally they cannot be very creative. They are utterly tired – and tired with rubbish. Millions of people in the world live without any creativity. Creativity is one of the greatest blissful experiences. But their minds are so tired . . . they are not in a state of overflowing energy.

The man of no-mind keeps the mind in rest, full of energy, immensely sensitive, ready to jump into action the moment it is ordered. It is not a coincidence that the people who have experienced no-mind, their words start having a magic of their own. When they use their mind, it has a charisma, it has a magnetic force. It has tremendous spontaneity and the freshness of the dewdrops in the early morning before the sun rises. And the mind is nature's most evolved medium of expression and creativity.

So the man of meditation – or in other words, the man of no-mind – changes even his prose into poetry. Without any effort, his words become so full of authority that they don't need any arguments.

They become their own arguments. The force that they carry becomes a self-evident truth. There is no need for any other support from logic or from scriptures. The words of a man of no-mind have an intrinsic certainty about them. If you are ready to receive and listen, you will feel it in your heart: The self-evident truth.

Look down the ages: Gautam Buddha has never been contradicted by any of his disciples; neither has Mahavira, nor Moses, nor Jesus. There was something in their very words, in their very presence, that convinced you. Without any effort of converting you, you are converted. None of the great masters have been missionaries; they have never tried to convert anyone, but they have converted millions.

It is a miracle – but the miracle consists of a rested mind, of a mind which is always full of energy and is used only once in a while.

When I speak to you, I have to use the mind. When I am sitting in my room almost the whole day, I forget all about the mind. I am just a pure silence . . . and meanwhile the mind is resting. When I speak to you, those are the only moments when I use the mind. When I am alone, I am utterly alone, and there is no need to use the mind.

Anubuddha, you say, "When I hear you say 'Meditation is witnessing,' I feel I understand. But when you talk about no-mind, it doesn't sound easy at all."

How can it sound easy? – Because it is your future possibility. Meditation you have started; it may be in the beginning stages, but you have a certain experience of it that makes you understand me. But if you can understand meditation, don't be worried at all.

Meditation surely leads to no-mind, just as every river moves toward the ocean without any maps, without any guides. Every river without exception finally reaches to the ocean. Every meditation, without exception, finally reaches to the state of no-mind.

But naturally, when the Ganges is in the Himalayas wandering in the mountains and in the valleys, it has no idea what the ocean is, cannot conceive of the existence of the ocean – but it is moving toward the ocean because water has the intrinsic capacity of always finding the lowest place. And the oceans are the lowest place . . . so rivers are born on the peaks of the Himalayas and start moving immediately toward lower spaces, and finally they are bound to find the ocean.

Just the reverse is the process of meditation: it moves upward to higher peaks, and the ultimate peak is no-mind. No-mind is a simple word, but it exactly means enlightenment, liberation, freedom from all bondage, experience of deathlessness and immortality.

Those are big words, and I don't want you to be frightened, so I use a simple word, no-mind. You know the mind . . . you can conceive of a state when this mind will be non-functioning.

Once this mind is non-functioning, you become part of the mind of the cosmos, the universal mind. When you are part of the universal mind, your individual mind functions as a beautiful servant. It has recognized the master, and it brings news from the universal mind to those who are still chained by the individual mind.

When I am speaking to you, it is, in fact, the universe using me. My words are not my words; they belong to the universal truth. That is their power, that is their charisma, that is their magic.

From ***Satyam Shivam Sundram***, Discourse #7, Q1

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Witnessing is Enough

I have always heard you say, "Stop doing, watch." Several times lately I've heard you say that the mind should be the servant instead of our master. It feels that there is nothing to do except watch. But the question still arises: Is there anything to do with this unruly servant but to watch?

Prem Niren, there is nothing else to do with this unruly servant but just to watch. Apparently, it appears too simple a solution for too complex a problem, but these are part of the mysteries of existence. The problem may be too complex; the solution can be very simple.

Watching, witnessing, being aware seem to be small words to solve the whole complexity of mind. Millions of years of heritage, tradition, conditioning, prejudice – how will they disappear just by watching?

But they do disappear because as Gautam Buddha used to say, "If the lights of the house are on, thieves don't come close to that house, knowing that the master is awake." Because the light is showing from the windows, from the doors, you can see that the light is on and it is not the time to enter into the house. When the lights are off, thieves are attracted to the house. Darkness becomes an invitation. As Gautam Buddha used to say, the same is the situation about your thoughts, imaginations, dreams, anxieties, your whole mind.

If the witness is there, the witness is almost like the light; these thieves start dispersing. And if these thieves find there is no witness, they start calling their brothers and cousins and everybody, "Come on."

It is as simple a phenomenon as the light. The moment you bring the light in, the darkness disappears. You don't ask, "Is just light enough for darkness to disappear?" or, "When we have brought the light, will we have to do something more for the darkness to disappear?"

No, just the presence of the light is the absence of the darkness, and the absence of the light is the presence of darkness. The presence of the witness is the absence of the mind, and the absence of the witness is the presence of the mind.

So the moment you start watching, slowly, slowly as your watcher will become stronger your mind will become weaker. The moment it realizes that the watcher has come to maturity, the mind immediately submits as a beautiful servant. It is a mechanism. If the master has arrived, then the machine can be used. If the master is not there or is fast asleep, then the machine goes on working things, does whatsoever it can on its own. There is nobody to give orders, there is nobody to say, "No, stop. That thing should not be done."

Then the mind becomes slowly convinced that it is the master itself. And for thousands of years, it has remained your master, so when you try to be a witness it fights because it has completely forgotten that it is only a servant. You have been so long absent that it does not recognize you. Hence the struggle between the witness and the thoughts.

But final victory is going to be yours because nature and existence both want you to be the master and the mind to be the servant. Then things are in harmony. Then the mind cannot go wrong. Then everything is existentially relaxed, silent, flowing toward its destiny.

Prem Niren, you don’t have to do anything else but to watch. [...]

Mind has become accustomed to being a master. It will take a little time to bring it to its senses. Witnessing is enough. It is a very silent process, but the consequences are tremendously great. There is no other method which can be better than witnessing as far as dispersing the darkness of the mind is concerned.

In fact, there are one hundred and twelve methods of meditation; I have gone through all those methods – and not intellectually. It took me years to go through each method and to find out its very essence, and after going through one hundred and twelve methods I was amazed that the essence is witnessing. The methods’ non-essentials are different, but the center of each method is witnessing.

Hence, I can say to you, Niren, there is only one meditation in the whole world and that is the art of witnessing. It will do everything – the whole transformation of your being. It will open the doors of satyam, shivam, sundram: the truth, the godliness and the beauty of it all.

From ***Satyam Shivam Sundram***, Discourse #22, Q3

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36 When Eternity Penetrates Time

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih

I am always intrigued by Eastern scriptures that begin with Om Shantih Shantih Shantih and end with Om Shanth Shantih Shantih.

Would you please talk about this?

Maneesha, the East has approached reality in an almost diametrically opposite way to the West. First, the simple meaning of the word should be understood, and then, all the implications. All Eastern scriptures begin with Om Shantih Shantih Shantih and they also end with the same.

Om is the symbol of the universal heartbeat; it is not a word. And as you come closer and closer to the universal heartbeat, the by-product is a deepening silence. *Shantih* means silence and it is always repeated three times because by the time you reach to the fourth, you are no more – just the silence has remained. You have disappeared as an entity separate from the universe.

The West has not been able to begin even a single scripture with this intention. It is understandable. They never went into the deeper communion between your heart and the bigger heart of the universe. They have taken a wrong route, that of fighting, that of conquering, that of being victorious. They have chosen to be extroverts.

Their world is true, but they don't know anything about themselves.

The outside is true, and the inside has not been explored. […]

The Eastern meditators found as they entered into their inner being, they are first surrounded with a tremendously beautiful and musical sound. It is not the sound of any music being played, it is simply the heartbeat of the universe. And once they come in tune with the heartbeat of the universe, silence descends. They would like to dance and declare to the world about silence, but they can only say three times, "Silence, silence, silence" – and they are melting and merging.

Rather than their declaration of silence becoming louder, it is becoming more and more like a whisper, and finally, they are not – but they have witnessed the end. Now, it is a logical conclusion that the end and the beginning cannot be different.

The seed grows into a tree, blossoms, brings fruits and again seeds. In existence everything moves in a circle, the Earth, the Moon, the Sun, the faraway millions of stars . . . all move in a circle that meets at a point.

The end and the beginning are the same.

That's why the Eastern scriptures begin with the declaration, Om – the sound of the soundless, the very music of the heart of the universe. And as they go deeper, silence becomes the only

reality. They want to declare silence to the world, but nobody has been able to go beyond the third because each time they say silence, it becomes more of a whisper. […]

The beginning we cannot know, we are already here; the beginning has happened. But the end we can know – the disappearance into absolute silence. But if we know the end, we can conclude with absolute certainty that this is how the beginning must have started: from silence, not from words.

Silence is the beginning and silence is the end, and if you are a meditator, silence is the middle.

Silence is the whole fabric of existence.

Maneesha, this is not a hypothesis, nor is it a philosophical idea. It is the experience of thousands of mystics who have entered into their own being. First, they have heard Om, and as the Om becomes overwhelming, silence follows. We are made of sound and silence.

Sound is our mind; silence is our being.

Sound is our trouble; silence is our liberation.

It has been discovered by some unknown explorer of the inner, it has been followed by thousands of people – but you are not to repeat it. That's where the masses have got lost. They think that by repeating "Om Shantih Shantih Shantih" they are doing some spiritual meditative act. […]

These things may be beautiful, creative, but they are not in any way religious. Every Hindu temple is resounding with the sound, everybody is praying, but they have misunderstood the whole thing. It is not your repeating Om that is going to lead you to the reality; it is your becoming utterly quiet, and from your very being arises the sound Om.

You are just a witness; you are not a doer.

And as the sound settles, you feel silence, silence, silence . . . then everything disappears, there remains only a universal reality of which you are just a part. Just as a dewdrop disappears in the ocean, you disappear in the ocean of existence.

The East has found this to be the only spiritual experience, not God, not your holy scriptures, not your prophets; they are all creating fictions. Not even your prayers because they are nothing but your desires. The only thing that is really significant is to be quiet, centered, grounded, in the very life source, in your very being. This sutra of Om Shantih Shantih Shantih is heard when you are at your very center. It is not by your repeating it that you will reach to it. It is not exactly the same either. We have invented it . . . approximately, just to communicate what has happened: something similar but far deeper; something similar but far more delicate; something similar but not the same.

The mystics' writings start exactly the way the universe has started, and they end exactly as the universe finally goes to rest. There is a statement relevant to this sutra by Gautam Buddha. It is very significant. He says that it is absolutely foolish to think the way all the theologians of the world think about the beginning – how the world began.

I can see the significance of a statement that you can never come to a conclusion about how the world began – because you were not there. How can you be before the world began? – you are part of the world. So all that you say about the beginning is just imagination, hypothesis, guesswork.

Buddha says that the mystic is not interested in how the world began, his interest is in how it ends, because in that very ending you will find the beginning too. But without finding the ending, you can only guess and argue and fight about the beginning – and it is all futile. The philosopher's work is absolute nonsense. The mystic is very earthbound, very pragmatic, very realistic. Buddha says, "First find how it ends" – and it is to be found within you.

You cannot wait for the whole world to end. That way it never ends. It is always there – beginningless, endless. But within you, how did the world begin? And within you, how does the world end?

Those who remain clinging with the world are the materialists. Others start looking inside and try to find how everything ends, and *still* you are – but just a pure consciousness, just a pure awareness.

The flower disappears.

Only fragrance remains.

I agree with Gautam Buddha that if you have found the fragrance within you, you know the whole secret of existence because every individual is a miniature universe. What is happening on a vast scale in the universe is happening on a very small scale within you.

If you have tasted a simple dewdrop, you have tasted all the rivers and all the oceans and all possibilities of water anywhere. And you are the dewdrop . . . Rather than running here and there, just taste yourself. […]

This sutra contains the whole – the beginning and the end. But it starts from the end and reaches to the beginning. The statement of Gautam Buddha was: "Ignorance has no beginning and enlightenment has no end, and both make a circle." You know you have been utterly ignorant of yourself because now you are so alert, so full of joy, so much is dancing in your every cell, every fiber. This is an experience; it is not a hypothesis, and it has never been argued.

There have been Hindu mystics, there have been Buddhist mystics, there have been Jaina mystics . . . but as far as this sutra is concerned, they have never quarreled about it, they have never argued. This is simply accepted because it is the experience; it is not theoretical guesswork. It is not philosophy. It is *philosia*, it is darshan.

They have seen it within, in their own being, and there is no way not to agree with others who have also seen it. But by repeating it one is simply being stupid.

One has to come to an inner space where it explodes on its own and you are just a witness. Then it transforms your being, gives it beauty and grace, gives it sincerity and truth.

-Osho

From ***Om Shantih Shantih Shantih***, Discourse #1, Q1

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When Eternity Penetrates Time

You once said, "The moment is rare when eternity penetrates time." Can you speak more on this?

Vadan, the question seems to be simple but the answer is very complex. And the complexity becomes multidimensional, because the answer can come only from your own experience, not from outside. Just as the question is arising in you, the answer has to also be part of your interiority. But I will go into a little detail, to explain what I mean when I say that the moment is rare when eternity penetrates time.

Time is that in which we live – it is horizontal. It is from A to B to C to D; it is in a line. Eternity is vertical. It is not from A to B and from B to C. It is from A to more A to still more A. It goes on upward. The moment is rare because it happens only when meditation has reached ripening, maturity, when you have touched your innermost core.

Then suddenly you become aware that you are a crossroad. One line goes horizontal; in other words, mediocre, ordinary, meaningless and leading finally to death. The horizontal line is continuously moving toward the graveyard. […]

It is strange that every moment our graves are coming closer to us – even if you don't move, your grave is moving toward you. The horizontal line of time is, in other words, the mortality of man.

But if you can reach to the center of your being, the silences of your innermost center, you can see two roads: one horizontal, another vertical. […]

In a moment of meditation, you suddenly see that you can move in two directions – either horizontal or vertical. The vertical consists of silences, blissfulness, ecstasies; the horizontal consists of hands, work, the world. […]

Once the vertical is discovered, one starts moving on the vertical line. That vertical line does not mean you have to renounce the world. But it certainly means that you are no more of the world, that the world becomes ephemeral, loses importance. It does not mean that you have to renounce the world and escape to the mountains and the monasteries. It simply means that you start – wherever you are – living an inner life which was not possible before.

Before you were an extrovert; now, suddenly, you become introvert. As far as the body is concerned, you can manage very easily, if the remembrance is there that you are not the body. But the body can be used in many ways to help you to move on the vertical line. The penetration of the vertical line, just a ray of light coming into your darkness of horizontal life, is the beginning of enlightenment.

You will look the same, but you will not be the same. Those who have a clarity of seeing, to them you will not look the same either. And at least for yourself, you will never look the same. And you can never be the same. You will be in the world, but the world will not be in you.

Ambitions, desires, jealousies will start evaporating. No effort will be needed to drop them, just your movement on the vertical line and they start disappearing – because they cannot exist on the vertical line. They can exist only in the darkness of the horizontal, where everybody is in competition, everybody is full of lust, full of will to power, a great desire to dominate, to become somebody special.

On the vertical line all these stupidities simply disappear. You become so light, so weightless, just like a lotus flower: it is in the water, but the water does not touch it. You remain in the world, but the world has no longer any impact on you. On the contrary, you start influencing the world – not with conscious effort, but just by your sheer being, your presence, your grace, your beauty. As it grows inside it starts spreading around you.

It will touch people who have an open heart, and it will make people afraid who have lived with a closed heart – all windows, all doors closed. They will not come in contact with such a person.

And to convince themselves why they are not coming in contact with such a person, they will find a thousand and one excuses, a thousand and one lies. But the basic fact is that they are afraid to be exposed.

The man who is moving vertically becomes almost a mirror. If you come close to him, you will see your real face – you will see your ugliness, you will see your continuous ambitiousness, you will see your begging bowl. […]

On the horizontal line, only beggars exist, because they are all rushing for more, and because the more cannot be fulfilled – not that you cannot get to a position you want, but the moment you get it, there are higher positions. For a moment maybe a flicker of happiness, and the next moment, again the same despair and the same race for more. You cannot fulfill the idea of more. It is intrinsically unfulfillable. And this is the horizontal line, the line of more and more and more.

What is the vertical line? Of being less and less and less, to the point of utter emptiness, to the point of being nobody. Just a signature – not even on sand but on water. You have not even made it and it has disappeared. The man of the vertical line is the authentic sannyasin, who is immensely happy in being nobody, immensely happy with his inner purity of emptiness because only emptiness can be pure, who is absolutely contented with his nakedness because only nothingness can be in tune with the universe.

Once this tuning with the universe happens, you are no more in a sense. In the old sense, you are no more. But you are for the first time the whole universe. Even the faraway stars are within you; your nothingness can contain them. The flowers and the sun and the moon . . . and the whole music of existence. You are no more an ego, your “I” has disappeared. But that does not mean that you have disappeared. On the contrary, the moment your “I” has disappeared, you have appeared.

It is such a great ecstasy to be without the feeling of “I,” without the feeling of any ego, without asking for anything more. What more can you ask? You have nothingness. In this nothingness you have become, without conquering, the whole universe. Then the singing birds are not only singing outside you. They appear outside because this body creates the barrier.

On the vertical line you become more and more consciousness and less and less body. The whole identification with the body disappears. In nothingness, these birds will be within you; these flowers, these trees and this beautiful morning will be within you. In fact, then there is no without. Everything has become your vision. And you cannot have a richer life than when everything has become your within. When the sun and the moon and the stars and the whole infinity of time and space is within you . . . what more do you want?

This is exactly the meaning of enlightenment: to become so nonexistent as an ego that the whole oceanic existence becomes part of you. […]

On the vertical line, you become less and less and less and less. And one day, you are no more. […]

This is the ultimate peak human consciousness can reach. This is the ultimate benediction. And unless one reaches to this peak, one will remain wandering in dark pathways, blind, suffering, miserable. He may accumulate much knowledge, he may become a great scholar, but that does not help. Only one thing, a very simple thing, is the essence of the whole religious experience, and that is meditation. […]

This silence is meditation. […]

Excerpt from ***Hari Om Tat Sat***, Discourse #27, Q1

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Sammasati

What exactly is the right remembrance that Buddha talks about? [...]

Anand Agyeya, what Gautam Buddha calls the right remembrance is not what you understand by remembering. To create the distinction between what he means and your understanding of remembering, he uses the word "right"; otherwise there is no need to use that word.

His original word is *sammasati*; *sati* is remembering, it is memory. It is all the experiences that you have passed through. Right remembrance is not memory; it is remembering yourself – who you are.

Not your education, not your culture, not your civilization, not your religion, not your profession – who you are. The moment you remember yourself – "I am this . . . this moment, this consciousness, this bliss, this eternity" – it is right remembrance.

It is the same poverty of language that each mystic has suffered from. Even Buddha could not do much more than that. He had to use a word from the language which knows nothing about the self – which knows about everything else in the world – but doesn't ask "Who are you?" because that creates great anxiety.

Just think: if somebody asks you, "Who are you?" – Not your name, obviously; not your caste, obviously; not your nation, obviously. Who are you? Not your body because it changes every day. [...]

But in this whole changing, river-like being . . . who are you? Only the stupid will speak out; the wise will remain silent. One who knows not will say, "I am this; I am a man, I am a woman, I am young, I am Hindu, I am a Christian . . ." Only the stupid will speak out.

The wise will become absolutely silent. He is also answering – his silence is the answer. Buddha calls this silence "right remembrance" . . . *sammasati*. [...]

There is only pure consciousness in you. This pure consciousness is in itself the remembrance – not of many things but only of one thing – of itself. [...]

What Gautam Buddha or what I am saying to you is to be in a state where there is no thought, no insight, no imagination, no emotion, no sentiment.

Just simple consciousness, utterly empty.

Only in that utterly empty consciousness blossoms the mystic rose. That is your very being. Out of that being arise all kinds of ecstasies, but it is not a thought. It is not part of the mind.

On the contrary, it is called no-mind, no-thought, no-insight. Gautam Buddha was very particularly insistent that unless you achieve a state of nothingness, you have not found yourself. [...]

When everything is discarded, when nothing remains, you are. Only you cannot be discarded.

How can you discard yourself?

That's why Buddha is absolutely right – he tried to negate, to eliminate everything – till there is nothing to negate. But you are there, who has negated everything.

This great negator has been called by many names. One of the names is enlightenment.

From ***Yaa-Hoo! The Mystic Rose***, Discourse #29, Q2

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