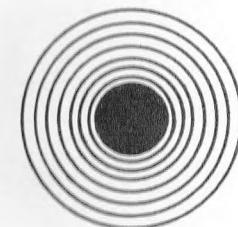


# Contact with Vimala Thakar



Nr.9 April 1981



Vimala in Kensington, California, 1979.

## BEYOND THE KNOWN

In the realm of known  
Life is meaningless.  
Everything is defined.  
Everything classified

In the kingdom of known  
Life is worthless.  
Everything is gathered.  
Everything is stored.

Beyond the realm of known  
Life is full of romance.  
Everything is to be discovered.  
Everything to be lived newly.

Beyond the kingdom of known  
Life is full of meaning.  
Every breath reveals mysteries.  
Every moment unfolds secrets.

## **CONTACT with Vimala Thakar**

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## **ABOUT VIMALA'S WORK IN 1980**

We will tell you about Vimala's work in 1980 by publishing parts out of letters from India.

23-12-'79 Friends are writing: Friends of Vimala are now organizing a Pilgrimage. 12 of us will travel with Vimalaji by a mini-bus through the 3 big states of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in Jan., Febr. and March 1980. We shall cover two villages a day and contact people for distributing relevant folders and pamphlets. We shall cook our own meals and carry necessary provisions with us. At the end of ten weeks touring we shall return to Ahmedabad and plan the follow-up work.

Synopsis of Talks given by Vimalaji from January 15th to February 17th, 1980 in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

"Since January 15th, 1980 we have set out on a "People's Pilgrimage" through three States of India: Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh; mainly visiting the small neglected towns. You may wonder why we have left the peace and solitude of Mount Abu to travel thus intensively for three months. For a number of years we have been observing with concern the moral fibre of the country deteriorating and in recent times we have reached a crisis like situation such that we felt an urgent need to go among the people and share with them our concern over this crisis in character and to remind each one of the Divinity that lies within and the purpose of Life, to be awake to that Divinity.

Though India is the largest Democracy in the world, which means we have a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, yet there are no people in the true sense of the word to uphold this Democratic freedom. That is, none truly expressing the complete integrated nature of man. Man in the progress of evolution has a developed mental faculty and if evolution is to progress and not regress as is the danger now, then man

has to live by his understanding. That is, he grasps an idea with his mind, accepts it in his heart. He speaks what he thinks and he carries out what he says. Right now we do not have the discipline or courage to live our understanding. We think one thing, say something else and do otherwise. These aspects of our life are hardly ever integrated, such that we cannot trust each other or trust each other's word.

Every field of social and political life is ridden with corruption, injustice, dishonesty and anti-social behaviour. Though there may be just a few who indulge in such activities, it affects the whole society because there are none with the courage to stand up and speak up against such anti-social behaviour. We are bowed down by fear and cowardliness and do not realise that the wrongdoer alone is not a sinner but he who silently and passively observes is also a participant in the wrong act.

In order to withstand injustice and corruption one may have to bear up and be a victim to much suffering and sacrifice but there is no other way. Have we forgotten that it was only through such self-sacrifice and forebearance that our forefathers won us our freedom? If we cherish this freedom and want to maintain it, we too must be ready to sacrifice for it. The country right now is divided into numerous sections based on caste, class, religion etc. such that there is no Indian to be found anywhere. Besides dividing ourselves physically by caste and language the psyche of the Indian is also divided. Psychologically we behave as schizophrenics. For on the one hand we think of ourselves as very religious and spiritual minded people; we go to the temples, read the philosophers and quote the scriptures, but in our heart of hearts we are attracted to the material world and all the comforts and pleasures it has to offer. We are not willing to acknowledge or face this fact, which makes us divided within and being torn in this conflict we do not achieve anything in this world or the other. We do not have faith in God or the scriptures we quote, our real faith and security is in money and the bank balance; again a fact we are not ready to face. The country can only progress if it takes a stand one way or the other. Either lock the temple doors, shut the books and put all your energies in attaining material goods and comforts or truly live a Spiritual life and so fulfill the destiny of India of being a Beacon of Light for the world.

As ordinary citizens of the country what can we do?

First we have to realise that we are the country and if we change, the country will change, so we set about changing and building up our own character. Thus we provide a basis for the Divinity within to unfold. It will express itself in our acceptance of the responsibility for the welfare of our community and town. We stop waiting for others, be they social workers or the government to do things for us, but we take the initiative in our own hands and do what is necessary". (Then follows a list of practical activities, which can be organised by the citizens)

Out of a letter from Vimala dated Mount Abu April 3, 1980:  
At last I am back in Shivkuti. It feels mighty good to be back in the peaceful and blissful atmosphere of the mountains! It is mid-spring and the weather is pleasant. Within a few days it will warm up. The days will be warm but the nights will still be cool and charmingly star-lit.

Last evening I watched the moon rise from behind the hills and trees. The deep blue sky was studded with stars. The silver oaks and the palms stood

erect in their silent dignity. All was fragrant with poetic beauty. One was moved so deeply! Gradually the moon rose higher. It flooded the earth with indescribably soothing light.

The tired limbs and the worn out nerves bathed ecstatically in that beauty, they relaxed. The breath became full of the perfume of peace. Mind slept; but no-mind was fully awake!

It was an arduous task - the ten week pilgrimage! We visited 150 places in 75 days! It was a mobile camp! Though strenuous, it was interesting to move through the villages, the townships, the deserts, the forests, the wildernesses and so on!

From the point of view of contacting the people, it was not only successful but most rewarding! The first follow-up camp begins in Abu on the 8th i.e. next week! The second, of University teachers shall begin on the 25th April at a sea-coast village in Bhavnagar district. The third will be a Woman's Conference at Jamnagar in the first week of May. Thus the follow-up work in Gujarat will be finished before I go to the Himalayas for the summer (Dalhousie). The follow-up work for Rajasthan will be taken up in September and so on.

In May and June of 1980 friends out of India, Europe and America have come to Dalhousie. They were together with Vimala to listen to her answers to their questions; one day in Hindi, the next day in English. There were no talks.

We take some parts out of Vimala's talks in the camps with the "social workers".

"Life is for Living". What do we mean by that? In living there are two aspects: Movement and Motionlessness. To live is to be able to move with the movement of life and to be motionless when movement is not warranted. .

We need to educate the mind to be steady in both, to be able to respond adequately, completely, when faced with either. There should be a humility to relax when movement is not necessary and to have an alert sensitivity and attentiveness to move with life. We have to learn to observe the stillness and the movement.

This is what you have to learn by yourself, for which you do not need another, a guru or a teacher, but it is something you can do on your own, without any risks or danger.

### **What is involved in being an observer of the stillness?**

When we sit in silence what do we do? We sit and observe the voluntary and involuntary activities of the body and mind. Slowly the voluntary activities come to an end, but the involuntary activities we have inherited from birth, from our family, religion, race, nationality - which fill the mind - go on, and we sit and observe their unfoldment.

Since we are used to working all the time we may find it difficult at first to sit quiet, or the body may fall asleep due to accumulated fatigue. If it happens it is desirable to rest the body for a few days till it is fresh again. While you sit in silence, thoughts will arise, as the mind has been working for 24 hours. The thoughts cannot be suppressed nor can they be thrown away anywhere, you can only watch them, not naming them as good or

bad. Then you are free from the roles of an experiencer and an actor, you enter into the state of an observer of non-reactual attention.

As soon as the mind begins moving and says: "I like" or "I dislike" what it sees, there is a disturbance, a burdening of the mind and the role of the observer is lost and you are once more immersed into the roles of an experiencer and actor. If you do not react to the thoughts you are observing, if they no longer have the power to elicit any reaction from you then they will subside of their own accord.

### **Effects of observation in relationships**

We have to extend this attitude of observation in relationships. Once the observer state is awakened it changes relationships. It is a tremendous energy that is awakened. When observation becomes a continuous state through-out the day, then:

(1) There is no self-deception. We do not hide anything from ourselves. There is nothing left as subconscious or unconscious it being all revealed in observation. There is now only the conscious level.

(2) We stop deceiving others or presenting a different image of ourselves to others. The seeing of what is, without justification or condemnation, shatters the image. We now have the courage to live and be what we are.

(3) We become aware of all that is happening within us, of the different emotions arising within us, for example if we begin to get angry we are aware of it and so the grip of anger loosens its hold over us.

(4) We recognise and admit our mistakes; asking for forgiveness immediately, thus freeing the mind from the burden of residue.

(5) Through observation thoughts subside, hence the strain and pressure they cause on the neurological and chemical systems is also lifted. It is this tension which brings about anti-social behaviour.

(6) Pain and pleasure are not taken further than the present moment; thus no grudges or attachments are formed. The art of living is to live completely in the moment, not carrying any residue over to next incident, person or day.

### **Emptiness**

First we sat to observe our thoughts, which not being unlimited subside after some time. When they subside there is an awareness of the emptiness within. There is a dimension of emptiness, like there is a dimension of time and space. When we touch the dimension of emptiness and stay steady in it, nothing happens, there is only emptiness. The mind is then afraid, for it has not been educated to live in that motionlessness. When there is functionlessness of the "I consciousness", the I feels as if it is dying, there is fear and one wants to return to the mind, to more familiar grounds. The first touch of emptiness is like death but there is not an experiencing of emptiness, there is no one to experience it; the I and its functional roles not being there any more, even the observer is not necessary any more. There is only a consciousness that this is emptiness and after some time even that goes.

To surrender all activity to the emptiness requires courage. Man must be able to stick it out and not to run away from this state, he must be able to digest it. After all, what is there to be afraid of? It is a fact of the organic

Reality of Life. It is a phase that does not last but it comes in life and if man stays patiently with it, it will leave him as it arose. We are in the dimension of silence, of space. In this state there is nothing to experience, nothing to gain, nothing to see, there is only emptiness. Whenever there is work to do, you do it, when someone comes before you, you respond, and when there is no need to act then the emptiness within becomes the abode of the "I consciousness". The home is no longer the mind but silence. One lives in silence all the time, one remains steady in the emptiness.

### Dhyan

From the attitude of an actor, of an experiencer we moved into the attitude of an observer, from the state of observation we moved into the dimension of silence and from silence we move into the dimension of dhyan. We shall see what dhyan is and what dhyan is not.

The light or energy within us works in many different ways and can be utilised in many different ways. Some people develop this energy by developing the powers of the mind, or the powers of concentration or psychic powers, but all these are activities and not dhyan. You can awaken energies in the body but those who want to know what Reality is, are not attracted or interested in such powers.

Dhyan is not an activity but a state of being, a dimension of being. It is a state of motionlessness where the ego is dissolved and you have let it be dissolved, where there is no experiencing but only a state of non-knowing, non-doing. It has been described by some as the dark night of the soul. There is no tension at all in this state, the space within is being activated, it is a very delicate state that has to be looked after. You need to be alone then and need time to adjust to it.

In the dimension of dhyan you have let the activities of the mind come to an end. The conditioned energy of the mind is quiet. The unconditioned part of the energy, which is within and without now begins to work. There is an awakening of the Perceptive Intelligence, there is a new freshness and ecstasy. Universal Consciousness has taken over. The mystics have called it the marriage of the individual and the cosmic consciousness and in India it is described as the union of Shiva and Shakti.

This is a new dimension and in this state it is difficult to function in society for some time but after a period of adjustment the individual can live in society, the difference will be that he will live in a state of egolessness. He does not want or expect anything from others or from society. There is a divine indifference, there is so much joy within that he needs nothing from outside or from anyone. Living is its own fulfilment. There is no center or circumference of the mind ever to come back. Since there is no center or ego which desires things, there are no reactions of likes and dislikes but only a response to need. Nobody can make him unhappy though he will be affected by the unhappiness of others. There is a difference between suffering and sorrow. Suffering is a reaction of the ego which is always fragmentary. In sorrow events are seen in the context of whole humanity and the response is to the totality of life.

One of the by-products of the state of dhyan is that fearlessness is awakened. Fearlessness is very different from bravery. Bravery is an attribute of the mind which can be and has been cultivated by the state, religion, fami-

ly for their own purposes, but it is an attribute which can also be lost. Once fearlessness is awakened it can never be extinguished, fear no longer enters the mind. Fearlessness is awakened when man has faith either in his own understanding or has faith in the Universal Intelligence. The mind obtains knowledge by grasping ideas, if this knowledge is not lived it becomes a burden but if it is lived in relationship then the knowledge gets converted into understanding. Knowledge can be forgotten but not understanding. Nothing is as sacred as your own understanding. You should start walking in the light of your understanding no matter how small it may be. Faith in one's own understanding awakens fearlessness and it brings about choiceless action.

Out of "Better Life" Nov. 1980:

Vimala Thakar's visit to Delhi: Vimala Thakar, a life long inquirer into truth, freedom and the essence of religion, presently engaged in Lok Sat-sang Yatras in different States of India to emphasise the spiritual foundation of life and to educate the people on non-party, non-partisan, and non-sectarian lines, was in Delhi from 3rd to 10th November, 1980. She stayed in Lajpat Bhawan. On 3rd November she addressed the workers of Lajpat Bhawan and shared with them some of her experiences of Lok Sat-sang Yatra through over 350 districts in the States of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, etc. On 4 th, 5th and 6th November she addressed meetings at the Sadar, South Delhi, and New Delhi constituencies. Three talks were given by her for the general public on 7th, 8th and 9th November at Lajpat Bhawan.

Out of letters December 1980:

In 1980 we travelled in a private minibus through seven northern states of India 1) Gujarat 2) Rajasthan 3) Madhya Pradesh 4) Punjab 5) Himachal Pradesh 6) Haryana and 7) Delhi State.

Throughout the year we conducted thirteen one-week Camps in the above mentioned states. 4 in Madhya Pradesh, 3 in Rajasthan, 3 in Gujarat, 2 in Punjab, 1 in Himachal Pradesh.

Three centres for informal adult education in Meditation as a way of living, reconstructing the village economy with the help of technology - educating the villagers in agrocentred industries, sanitation, local self-government - and lessons in the fundamentals of parliamentary democracy, have sprung up in three states.

One centre has been founded in Bhavnagar district of Gujarat. A friend has donated 160 acres of land with a big mansion that can house 15 persons. There are fruit orchards in 60 acres of land. 25 acres of land is under cultivation and the remaining land is grazing land for the 50 cows that have also been donated. The friend who has donated the land will function, along with his wife, as the residential head.

One centre has been founded in the Bikaner district of Rajasthan with 250 acres of land, 200 cows and a team of five educated, - financially self supporting workers. 2 workers along with their wives will settle down at the centre by February 1981.

Still another centre has started functioning in the Mandsore district of Madhya Pradesh. It has a big house with 17 rooms and about 25 acres of

land around. There is a team of 3 workers who will take care of the centre.

We used to publish one monthly magazine in Gujarati language. Now we have started publishing one in Hindi language. Our association with the "AWAKENING" published by the Servants of People Society - continues.

This year two months of January and February will be spent in travelling. I am leaving for Assam 14-1-'81. From 14th March to 9th May I hope to stay in Abu and from 10th May to 10th July in Dalhousie.

Friends from Norway, Holland, England, Canada and California arrived here in the first week of January. We have had wonderful sessions & discussions. Friends from Roumania & France came here for the first time.

### DALHOUSIE 1981

Also this year people from America, Europe and India will go to Dalhousie in Himachal Pradesh-India, during 15th May - beginning of July, where Vimala again will answer questions in her home "Lovely View".

If you would like to go, you yourself have to care for boarding & lodging; there is not an organised camp.

You can reach this place: 1) from Delhi by train to Pathankot and from there either by public bus (about 5 hours drive) or by taxi-cab;

2) from Delhi by plane to Amritsar and from there either by public bus (about 9 hours drive) or by taxi-cab.

In Dalhousie near the bus-stand you'll find Tourist Office where you can get information about accommodation, etc. (several hotels and a youth hostel are there).

### SELF - DISCOVERY

Liberation is a matter of self-discovery

Let us find out what happens —  
When Eye sees not forms without.

Let us watch silently what happens —  
When Ear hears not sounds without.

Let us note what takes place  
When Nose smells not scent without.

Let us observe what takes place  
When Mind thinks not nor imagines.

Let us discover what then remains  
When I is resolved into is-ness.

Let us abandon unto the Silence  
And watch alertly what happens then.

Then perhaps it will dawn upon us  
Reality is enveloped not in mystery  
It is in the process of Self-discovery.

### DISCUSSION in ZEIST-HOLLAND ON 30-6-1978

Q. Sometimes there is a wave of depression, it takes all the energy and ends with thoughts of suicide. The other wave is deep sadness and then a demonical aggressiveness to destroy everything is coming up. The third wave is one of joy and it gives energy, all three are coming and going when they like, and they linger from a few hours till weeks. They are not kept under control and sometimes they are merely unbearable. They are not coming from self-pity or the opposite, there is a warning finger in me not to go into them, so there is fear. Sometimes they go away by the thought "this also is going by", sometimes by doing very attentive work as gardening, cleaning, etc.

What are they, where do they come from, what shall I do or not do, how to manage this? Is it possible if wave one and three, the one of depression and the other of joy, were together operating? It was an extreme situation and this only lingers in me.

V. This morning we have to take up a question about the waves of depression, sadness and joy coming over and overwhelming a person.

Now in the beginning let me share with you a fact that I am not a psychologist. The nature of the question is such that a psychologist or a psychiatrist could deal with it perhaps in a better way than a religious enquirer. I would deal with it from the point of view of a truly religious life.

Now it seems to me that depression or sadness are not a causeless phenomenon. It's a reaction. Depression is a state of mind that can be a result of reactions and when the reactions cannot be expressed, due to some difficulty or the other, then those reactions are pushed mercilessly, skilfully or crudely into the background. I think this is a common experience with all of us - that we have reactions.

We live in a society, are born in a family, we have to live amongst people with a variety of physiological and psychological idiosyncrasies. Even in one family, though the children are conditioned in the same way, their physiological or psychological temperamental idiosyncrasies and ways of behaviour are different. Born of the same parents, eating at the same table, conditioned by the same way of living, children have different ways of behaviour.

When we move in society, first of all we are confronted with the fact that there are people of different temperaments, then different conditionings: racial, religious, cultural, and also persons having ambitions, desires, shortcomings, and so on. We don't know the people with whom we are living, we don't know them totally.

We can't understand them totally because even the known in that person and the known in myself is so vast that one can guess what is happening on the conscious level, but one cannot come face to face with the inner movement of another person, and what is happening on the subconscious level - we may guess, we may interpret according to our judgements, our criteria. It is either a guess-work or a theoretical approximation to some standard of ours, or a judgement according to the sharpness of our brains, and so on. But it is so difficult to understand what is happening in the totality of the conditioned mind of the other person. This is a fact. Even we don't know what is contained in our own psyche. When we are pushed into situations, and we act upon them - then after that incident we

become aware that it was not a conscious action, but we were pushed into a situation by our own subconscious or unconscious. We become aware of it after the event has taken place.

This is a given fact in which you and I have to live that in the jungle of innumerable varieties of patterns of behaviour, in a wild jungle of temperaments and temperamental idiosyncrasies, you and I have to live, get related with the people.

Now being sensitive, alert persons, when something happens that displeases us, then we are not at ease with ourselves. This is the reaction that takes place as we watch ourselves. We have calculated, we have planned something, it does not happen, then we get hurt. We have planned, we were working on something and somebody puts up an obstacle, so there is irritation, there is annoyance. We had hoped for something, from someone, it doesn't happen, so there is disappointment and annoyance, and then irritation out of disappointment.

We had idealized someone, or even idolized someone and that someone falls short of our expectations, so there is the pain and agony of disillusionment and then again irritation and annoyance. These are the reactions that take place in our everyday living: with political and religious leaders, husband, wife, boy-friend, girl-friend, neighbour, newspapers, television programs, and so on. We have hope, expectations, calculations, manipulations - this is the way we live. All this happens quite naturally, it's a very healthy reaction that takes place.

But now the reactions cannot be expressed, there is no time, life moves so fast that the very speed of our lives makes it impossible for us to express the annoyance or irritation. We have to move to the next situation, the next work, so the reaction unexpressed gets pushed into memory.

There is time to express it, but we are afraid. We are afraid that if we express our annoyance or irritation, the other person will turn away from us and we need the other person for some reason or the other - not only for company, but also for that person's cooperation, or living with us.

Out of fear we cover it up and push it into the background. We do not express it because it hurts us to see that we can get irritated and annoyed. We have an image of ourselves: that we are very peaceful or religious persons, or that we never get perturbed and disturbed, or upset. Suddenly we catch ourselves getting annoyed or irritated, it hurts our image, it shatters our image about ourselves, so that we cover it up immediately. The irritation comes up, but instead of looking at it we cover it, put a mask over it, or push it into the background and there it goes into the pit of memory where all this hurt of the ego gets accumulated - either there is no time, if there is time there is fear that the image about ourselves gets shattered, we can't afford to do it, and so on. Therefore every day a little of this gets accumulated here or there and goes back into the subconscious. And while living, this accumulated agony, pain, displeasure, irritation finds its way suddenly, and we feel it as a depression.

The questioner says "depression, not out of self-pity".

It needs not be out of self-pity, but the accumulation of all these unexpressed reactions, out of some inhibition or the other, this creates depression. It visits us, it doesn't last because we are busy living, it overwhelms us, overtakes us and then it disappears. It is there sometimes for hours and the questioner says sometimes for weeks.

Depression is not something causeless. Let us not look upon it as something very mystical or mysterious or inexplicable, it's a simple thing. It does take place - because this is happening unnoticed, we are not conscious of it, we are not aware of it, but memory of every hurt, wound, displeasure, irritation, annoyance is going to tell upon our system some day or the other, so suddenly it comes. It appears as if it is coming up suddenly, but it is not suddenly, and it is not without a reason or a cause. If I am a person who by nature, by temperament gets quickly afraid, has no self-confidence, is very diffident, very shy, then if this depression comes up abruptly at some moment in a very acute form, then there is the desire to commit suicide.

Because I can't be violent against others, I can afford to be violent against myself. As a fearful, shy, diffident person I could not express all the frustration, irritation, annoyance, anger, hatred and bitterness in relation to someone else, I am afraid even to hit someone else verbally, through a glance or through words, so the idea of committing suicide comes, it can come up there. Not that the person commits the suicide, but it can push a person into the idea, and one imagines that one has committed suicide: then what will happen, how many people would feel sorry and how many would shed tears and one gets into that day-dreaming mood; suppose I commit suicide. The person only commits it ideationally, in imagination, in the mind and gets into a sad mood because there is the fear, the shyness and the diffidence even in committing suicide. This can happen.

Now depression can take place and we have to see that the reason, the cause is not physical. Depression as a mood can overtake those whose digestive processes are weak or distorted, some chronic trouble, the inclination of the intestines: there is some trouble in the colon, chronic constipation, chronic diarrhoea, patient of colitis or dysentery - some stomach trouble. The stomach is directly connected with the brain, the pituitary gland - and with the women the uterus is very closely connected and interwoven with the pituitary gland on the crown of the head, the brain and the stomach - and all the organs in the stomach are very intricately interwoven together. The state of one affects the other. If there is tension in the brain it affects the liver, the kidneys, the intestines, specially the pancreas gland, a.s.o.

The pancreas gland is one of the most subtle glands in the body and if a person is very tense and if the tension is carried there as a habit, unresolved, then it can affect the stomach, or if physically, organically there is something wrong with the stomach, it can affect the brain.

If depression or excitement come alternatively and we don't see any immediate reason for it, then I think we could better explore if the physical condition is alright or if there is some trouble on the physical level. If we are suffering from depression what would we do?

We would look and find out if we had not been giving proper food and proper sleep to the body due to some urgent work, job or responsibility that needed keeping late hours for weeks and weeks - something that was troubling us.

If the body has not slept and been fed properly, then also the neurological system gets into a depressed condition. It's a physiological condition that can come about: too much worry, too much anxiety, fear and no proper feeding and resting for days and weeks.

Then we feel very energetic because of the tension: the work to be done,

the responsibility to be discharged, someone sick in the house. The tension provides the energy and when that is over then the depression can take place.

We can't look into all the aspects, but one more aspect and then we will leave this question of depression.

You know the quality of consciousness to a very great extent gets conditioned at the moment of conception. If the child is conceived in fear by one partner, or the child is conceived in a mood of violence, aggression or assertion - if one of the partners, man or woman is in a violent, aggressive, angry mood, or in a very fearful mood, then that can condition the psyche of the child to a very great extent. The genetic scientist will tell us about it. The prenatal psychology of the child is a special study that people have started in the last decade here in Europe and America and about which Patanjali deals in the science of yoga and which also has been known to the Orient since 553 B.C.

If a person is visited by depression, fear or excitement without any cause in the circumstances, immediate or distant, then maybe it's a psychological conditioning with which the child is born. In that condition, in that state, I think we would have to consult a doctor and correct that chemical imbalance that causes it. If the mood at conception is violent, aggressive or fearful, there is a chemical imbalance that takes place at the very moment of conception. The education of the child begins there. But we are not careful, and we are not angels, so the sanctity of that moment, the holiness of that moment is not appreciated, not realized, nor is the responsibility that we undertake appreciated. Those are the days of youth, and we go through these things rather recklessly or in the grip of some emotion, but that can damage the consciousness of the child.

Depression or excitement coming over, overwhelming us to the extent of the thought of suicide or destruction of something, is something serious. We can correct the chemical imbalances in the body, even the chemical imbalances in the brain cells can be corrected. These days people have found out ways of correcting them and the Chinese way - acupuncture - also deals with this problem. It is needless to mention the Indian medicine system which also has been dealing with these problems for centuries and centuries.

When we notice that we are getting into a depressed mood we should look upon it as a sickness that is coming on. If we have a cold we take some medicine, if there is fever we take rest. We don't feel shy about taking rest if we are not well. We say "I have a flu". or "I have a fever", or "I'm feeling tired, there is pain and an ache in my body". So we retire and take rest. If we feel depressed and we notice that it is there for more than an hour or two, we better retire from the daily responsibilities, take the day off, either we take a nice bath and go to sleep, or we go out for a long walk and are with nature so that the company of nature can wash out the depression.

Moving to the next aspect: sometimes it is sadness that overwhelms us. Well, any way, living in this world cannot be a very joyous thing - the man-made world, the man-made structures, the surroundings, the way of living, the exertion that we have to go through to earn a livelihood in this society, the very way of living makes us nearly neurotic if we are not care-

ful. The aggressive demand of science and technology upon us, the aggressive demand of the speed in which the modern industrialized civilization on compels us to live is something sad.

The sensitivity inside us feels hurt when we have to rush through things the whole day. The sensitivity does not like rushing through, being inhumanly fast; it gets hurt somewhere.

Then the context in which we are living, the way of living obliges us to spend more time with machines and gadgets than with human beings or with nature - whether we are home or working in the office, we are spending more time with machines, with pieces of furniture, with different gadgets, with the cars, with television, or with the tape recorders. We can watch it for ourselves. How much time is spent in a week with human beings, with trees, with birds, with animals, with the open skies by people living in the affluent, industrialized, fast speed countries? How much with ourselves and how much with other things?

The brain gets completely tired and worn out by the evening, and we feel sad. The brain enjoys work to a certain limit, it enjoys complications which it would like to solve to a certain extent, it likes speed to a certain extent. But if a loud, aggressive sound is attacking us when we move in society and if loud, aggressive, very powerful lights are attacking our eyes and the company of machines attacking our sensitivity, then we get benumbed, we feel dull, worn out, and this results in an inner sadness. This is not a sadness because something has specially happened to us, but as the total way of living, the human system, the human sensitivity becomes sad.

I think there will hardly be a human being educated, sensitive and alert, living in the industrialized society who is not hurt somewhere.

Because one likes to fit in the society, one earns money and enters that raca for money and power and does everything. Not all people deal with these structures because they are ambitious, but because it is a compulsion and the awareness that we are working under a compulsion to earn our livelihood, and to go through all this year after year for forty years of our lives, that sense of compulsion hurts the sensitivity. To whom are we going to complain?

We can't complain to anyone, there is not a specific individual against whom we are feeling a kind of bitterness, a kind of cynicism, but it is against the total way of living.

Haven't we witnessed a whole generation starting right from the Beatles, hippies, beatniks and drug addicts and a young generation running to the Orient not because individually something was happening to them, but the sadness. There is nothing to turn to - neither the organized religions of the East or the West, nor the ideologies; not every person can dream of going and landing on the moon and living there.

The realization that one has to live upon this earth, in this society which cannot be changed overnight, or over weeks, makes us sad.

Sadness may not be something temperamental, but is the net result, the by-product of the total way of living that we have been evolving as a human race through a few thousand centuries. But without waiting for the whole society to change, can we step out of the social, economic structures that are created and that surround us, can we step out of this way of living and grow into a different way where the speed, the noise, the consu-

mer goods, the gadgets whatever it be, is taken in according to the capacity of the body and the mind and where the nerves are not taxed too much, with the desire to live in a sane, peaceful, healthy way. This we have to find out. We can deal with it individually without waiting for the whole society and the governments, the rulers of the big countries or the supper powers to change the political and economic conditions.

I don't think that we can avoid sadness. We will have to live with it, or we will have to explore a new way of living - a totally new way of living where there is nothing to create that sadness in our heart, nothing to benumb and tax our system, to create pressure on the chemistry of our body, to make our nervous system tense and so on. There is no compromise: 50% this and 50% that.

Either we take the whole way of living and share the sadness involved and wait for something to happen, or wait for someone who could change it, or we can explore individually a way of stepping out of this.

The person says: "sometimes there is a wave of joy that overwhelms you". Thank God it does, because there is the untapped, unexplored part to our being - man is not only body and mind - there is much more to a human being than this conditioned body and conditioned mind. The mind is the subtle body, and body is the gross mind, put it any way you like. But there is the other thing.

As we noticed this irritation and annoyance, we noticed the kindness of people. People are not 100% totally good nor totally bad, 100% cruel or 100% tender, that doesn't happen. Everyone of us has his or her share of stupidity and brilliance, kindness and callousness, restlessness and peacefulness. Everyone of us has his share. It's a very rich and colourful animal this human being - so many aspects.

We come across a kindness, somebody is kind to us without any reason, or without any cause somebody gives us an aesthetic smile - just for a second, but that has lit something in our heart which lives with us for all our lives. We were sad and somebody came and put his or her arms around us and said: "why are you sad?", wanting to share your sadness.

That spontaneity of urge for sharing and concern and care expressed for you, touches the tender love in you. So as the other could happen in daily life this also happens, sometimes it may be your baker, sometimes the man in the groceryshop, sometimes a child from the neighbour, sometimes you see beauty, the beauty of a tree, the beauty of a bird on wing, the beauty of light on waters; anything can touch the sensitivity, the silence, the depth, the love in you - something touches it, something stirs it.

As there has been accumulation of the irritation and annoyance, there is also accumulation of these flashes of kindness, gentleness, love, friendship, concern, care and so on. They are there, and when we are not busy with the mind it comes up and explodes. We may be listening to something on the radio or wireless or seeing something on the television and suddenly that which was accumulated in the heart explodes. There is no reason for it, no immediate reason, we can't put our finger upon some immediate cause, but joy surges and wells up in the heart, and everything becomes worth living in that moment of joy, everything gets a meaning that we have not seen before, but the difficulty with us is we cannot control it. Joy like love cannot be controlled, cannot be cultivated. Pleasure and suffering can be cultivated, but not joy. It comes and goes, and the question

ner says "what do we do about it". Nothing.

We live with this unpredictability of joy and love. We receive it with open arms when it comes and blesses us and when it enriches our lives. But if the mind says "how shall I control it and manage it so that I can have some of it tomorrow", the "some of it" is not left. It is not something that we can carry in our hand like a pearl or a diamond saying that this is mine. It has come, has lived through us and that expression is over. Joy cannot be repeated, joy cannot be continued.

So we have to live with this beautiful unpredictability and insecurity of love and joy - it comes, it goes. We can live in such a way that there is a possibility that the relaxation of peace, the emptiness of silence, may bring forth from the depths what we call "joy".

We can create a way of living in which it may happen, but it is a happening. It's not the result of our doing.

The gratification of the pleasure is of our doing; we make an effort, we struggle and we get it. Pleasure is a relationship between the "I" and an object or an individual, or circumstances, but joy is a happening and we can't control it. We can live in the openness of vulnerability, we can live in the openness of receptivity, being alert and attentive, so that when love with its pure joy visits us we are not dozing or in a deep slumber, or caught in a state of inattention. Unless one is attentive it cannot be received.

Reception requires the willingness not only of the mind and brain, but the willingness of the physical organism.

Sensitivity which is an other name for attentiveness, that energy of sensitivity has to be there otherwise the mind may be willing and waiting for the joy, but the body may not be equipped with the sensitivity to feel it in the situation.

Q. That the observer and the observed are one is not a reality yet to me, but could it be that if we sit in silence as we are doing in the camp then we would learn how to look at our customs, thoughts and the movement of the mind? Do you also advise us to sit in silence at home, and what's the best time for it, or must everybody find that out for himself, and must we sit in silence once or twice every day for half an hour or more?

V. What is it that prevents us from seeing the fact that the observed becomes the observer? What is it that prevents me from seeing this truth? When we sit before a mirror and we look at ourselves - the looker is the looked at. The reflection is the observed, and myself sitting before the mirror is the observer. They are not two. This is on the physical level and the mirror helps us to objectify our body and look at it.

Is it that we are not used to objectify our inner being? Is it the difficulty in objectifying even in words, to put something into words? To verbalize the happening of inner life is this study of objectifying the inner happening. Words are the pictures into which we are putting them. So if we are not used to look at our emotions, to look at our thoughts as they come, as they travel through us, as they get expressed through us in the relationships, if we have not done it before, then doing it here for a week or two is

something so new that it doesn't come.

One would like to tackle it in a different way. Now there is no doubt in my mind that the "I" looks and the "I" listens, the "me" listens to something, looks at something, at someone.

The eyes are looking, so the actual looking takes place through the eyes, but the eyes have no ideologies, no memory, they cannot interpret. They only are an optical organism and optical nerves connected with the brain-cells, so the eyes only look.

What is looking through the mind that gives a name to an object and says "it is a microphone"?

The eyes look, and we think that the eyes are looking at the microphone or the flowers or the light, but the eyes don't give a name.

What is giving the name is the "me", the "I", the "ego". Where did the "me", the "I", get the name, where did the "me" get the knowledge that this is a light and that is a flower - discriminating the light from the flower, and flowers from the windows. Who taught this? Were it the parents who taught us, the books taught us, the schools, the colleges? Where are these words written? We don't carry books or notebooks with us, so all these words, descriptions, definitions are contained in our brain. Inside us is the reference book.

We see something and we call it beautiful. When we call something beautiful, where did the object touch us inside, and what is it that interpreted the shape, the size, the colour, and called it beautiful?

It's an evaluatory perception. We call something beautiful and unless we had an idea of beauty, unless we were conditioned to call something beautiful, we wouldn't call it that. In some countries they would call flat noses beautiful and in others they would call sharp noses beautiful, in some countries they call large eyes beautiful and in others the smaller the eyes and the more they disappear when you smile, the more beautiful they are considered.

Unless the norms and criteria are there as a framework of reference, we cannot call something beautiful or ugly.

Now the "I" has a fountain somewhere inside; the "I" is already not like a hand, it is invisible, it is untouchable. We can't touch it, we can't see it, but it is there, it operates and when it operates all these words and standards and criteria are functioning. The movement of the "I" is the movement of the conditionings: there is the racial conditioning, a religious conditioning, a community conditioning, a family conditioning - it functions. So the eyes looked, but the eyes didn't interpret. The "I" looked through the eyes and the "I" interpreted, but according to what?

According to the conditionings. The actual seeing was done by the conditionings through the so-called "me" with the help of the eyes. Isn't it so? This is how it happens. This is how I have seen it operating here in me, because one has to work hard and has to discover it for oneself.

What is happening now? The "me" is the observer, but what is the content of observation where the "me" is watching, looking, listening with the people and reacting? The conditionings are the observer.

The conditionings are the observer when they look at a person or an object, but the conditionings have a self-conscious energy. The mind is this conditioning. The energy of mind is the energy of these conditionings: the value, the thought, the experience, the patterns of behaviour, the judgements - you know aesthetic, ethical, religious, socio-economic judge-

ments. The mind is this conditioning. The mind is a kind of energy, conditionings are that energy. These conditionings become the observer when we are looking, when we are moving.

When we sit in silence, quietly, we sit with ourselves and we learn to look at the movement of the mind - we are not looking at an object, and thought does not appear before our consciousness as a picture, even the words are silent there, the thoughts have a vibrational existence.

We are sitting quietly, something is moving in us, the memory of yesterday or the ten thousand yesterdays are moving into us, or the dreams of tomorrow are moving into us, we are the looker and the content of our mind is that which we are looking at. We are the observer and also we are the observed. Is that difficult?

Why doesn't it become a reality for us that in observation when we are with ourselves the self-conscious energy divides itself as the "me" and "my thoughts", "me" and "my feelings", "me" and "my reactions"? It is dividing itself into two; as physically we divide ourselves into reflections and our being, and the reflections have no existence separate from us, apart from us, as also the thoughts have no existence apart from our "I", our "me". The observed is the observer - they are one.

If we accept it because someone says it, puts it into words logically, beautifully step by step, it is only verbally explained; the logic may be flawless, but then it will be an idea; it has not become a reality for us.

We are not in a camp to carry home anything at all. How nice it would be if we can go empty-handed, not with memories of what has happened here or what was said here but only with the light of understanding - whatever little understanding has taken place - and that understanding is nobody else's, it is our own understanding. It is the assimilated substance of our being.

We go home, you and I, with whatever understanding has taken place, but with no memories - otherwise these will be ideas that we carry home and they will become a burden. We are not here to add to our burden, which is already very heavy.

If it is not a reality, we say "well let us not accept it; let us sit down and watch and see if they are one". When we see that they are one they are real for us, if we don't see them let us be honest and say "we don't see that the observer and the observed is one". We will not be hypnotizing ourselves, we can't hypnotize ourselves with the words of "observed" and "observer".

If we try to create self-hypnosis with the help of words, however beautiful and crystal-clear they may be - hypnosis is hypnosis, it doesn't help inner growth, it doesn't help inner transformation. We simply refuse to accept it and to believe it, we are not going to replace old beliefs with new ones, not substitute new words for old words, we are not going to create new scriptures for us or for the human race. We say to ourselves "let's sit down and watch". We will try to learn how to look - perhaps we did not know how to look and therefore we are missing something. Sometimes it happens that somebody shows us a bird perched on a twig or a branch, and still we don't see it, the next moment the bird flies away, still we don't see it and miss it.

Sometimes it can happen in the psychical subtleties that we have not seen

it. There is nothing wrong if we have not seen it. Let there not be any inferiority complex and let there not be the credulity to believe that all except myself have seen it. Perhaps none have seen it, or perhaps many have not seen it and it has happened to me. It might have happened to others too, so we shall not create any complex out of this simple fact.

You know, facts cannot be converted into issues, problems, complexities. If the facts are allowed to remain simple facts, then one day it will speak to us. If they can speak to others and uncover the truth contained in them, they shall do this for us too. Have we missed looking?

Perhaps yes. Why did we miss looking? Perhaps we don't know how to look. We begin to look and our reactions come up, they clutter the action, they don't allow us to see, so we would like to learn how to look.

Now obviously if we have to learn how to look, how to watch, how to observe, we have to spend some time with ourselves when we are not busy with any voluntary activity. We gather the voluntary activities for some time of the day, whenever it is suitable according to our job, situation at home, our physical condition. Whenever it is suitable for us we say to ourselves "By Jove, we have discovered in the camp we don't know how to look. Where it is looking at something separate from us we can do it, but we can't look at our inner life. So let us learn to look at invisible things, let us grow into more sensitivity so that we can notice thoughts getting born in us, travelling in us, compelling us to behave in certain ways. Let us look at them, let us learn". We go home with this flame of enquiry, the desire to learn. We have to be with ourselves.

If I say that you have to sit in silence, it can become a new ritual, it can become a method or a system. It doesn't have to become a pattern or a system. If we see that it is vitally necessary to spend some time with ourselves during the twenty four hours in order to learn to look, then we will do it: whether we sit in a chair, we sit on the floor or we stand, or we go for a walk is secondary, but to be quiet; there is no physical, voluntary activity, there is no mental voluntary activity, and we are in a state of non-action.

The knower, the experiencer, the centre does not move out voluntarily, because if it is constantly moving it can't watch. In order that observation may take place, voluntary non-action is absolutely necessary.

If we constantly move we cannot watch anything. If a camera is moving we can't take a picture. We may have a beautiful binocular, but if our hands are shaky we can't see what is on the distant horizon. So in order to make the physical system and the mind steady, in order to steady the precision instrument within us, we gather all the voluntary activities and spend some time with ourselves - which time of the day or the night is up to us.

Now who will decide or advise how long we have to educate ourselves? A child learns to play football, cricket or any other game, but the child does not require a time-table. The moment the child is free it rushes to the game, rushes out to play with others. Whenever there is leisure, the urge to learn creates an inclination in the whole of our being and we sit down and we do it - not because it is the time-table, not because it is a new discipline that we have acquired in some camp, but we have understood that it is necessary. We do the ordinary work that has to be gone through in our daily life and we turn to it as a creative thing of our leisure moments. We may

have half an hour leisure in our office, we turn to this learning. When we are eager to learn then the urge creates an inclination of the whole being; that is the difference between a discipline or a pattern imposed upon ourselves as a "must" or an "ought". There are no "oughts" or "musts" in learning. We are eager to learn, so we turn to it spontaneously. We have to go through this inner voyage without any external compulsion and without creating any inner compulsion.

The questioner asked "Would you say that any part of the day is better than the other"?

As an objective observation I may share with you a friendly note, not as a "must" or an "ought", but it has been observed that when the day is dawning and the night is receding - in those hours everything is quiet. If we study, even in our schoolbooks, in the early hours of the day, when the world is quiet, there is no crowd of vibrations in the space, there is no pressure, the air is clean because people have been sleeping at night, so the air is light, the atmosphere, the surroundings help us, the nature is happy at dawn. If we enter upon this adventure of learning, learning something about ourselves which is an invisible world - these morning hours do help. By morning hours I mean the dawn and the hours before the sun rises, the early morning. One has equally observed that when the day meets the night, the day is receding and the night is coming, how the darkness takes the whole universe in its embrace: the falling and the spreading of the night, the darkness taking over, spreading a dreamland like feeling over the earth. Whatever we perceived vividly, distinctly, we now can't see anymore; it's getting darker and darker, the discriminating, distinguishing, demarcating lines are all disappearing and everything becomes an ocean of darkness. In the towns and cities we can't see that because there are so many lights wherever we look.

Those hours, when the day is receding and the night is coming, are also very helpful for such an adventure into the invisible. For learning a quietness, a peacefulness is necessary.

## LAST DISCUSSION in ZEIST-HOLLAND ON 1-7-1978

The body and mind are slow to respond to understanding, that is the crux of the whole issue. Understanding is not the problem, it takes place and it happens in everyone of us, but the body including the mind hasn't got the suppleness, the sensitivity, the sharpness to respond, to keep pace with understanding. There is a time lag between the happening of understanding and the response of the body. Even after the time lag when the body, when the mind through the ego responds it is very slow. What is this slowness, this sluggishness, this heaviness of the body and the brain?

Could it be that the body and brain have been fed upon ready-made food? When the mind is fed with theories, ideologies, forgone conclusions, when the mind is given patterns to cultivate and through that cultivation acquires experiences, it is a kind of instant, ready-made food that has been the propaganda.

Thousands of years the minds and bodies have been fed upon these theories: religious ideologies, political ideologies, cultural, economic standards, criteria, norms are provided. If you conform to those patterns, if you imitate somebody's experiences, if you gather somebody's ideas and ideologies, then for your effort and struggle to approximate your life to those ideologies there is a reward, and if you don't there is a punishment. If you don't approximate your behaviour, your motivations, your utterances to the religious scriptures, then there is a punishment here and if not here in the other world - there is the heaven, there is the hell. All organized religions provide their peculiar hells and heavens to the human race. The mind has been given Gods to worship, to admire, so that the human being does not look at himself, at the quality of life that he lives, but he is always either imitating some pattern, conforming to some authority, repeating conditionings or worshipping someone - either it's a God in a church, a temple, a mosque, or it is the state that is to be worshipped. So what more do we need?

All the time we have something to worship, to admire, to look up to, so that the ugliness of our inner life does not get exposed to our intelligence. There is the fear of punishment, there is the temptation of reward, there is a pat on my back of social prestige, respectability, fame and power when I conform to patterns. This is what I imply by the term "the ready-made food for the brain". The brain cells have been dulled and benumbed by being fed upon all this the world over.

The human being has become a repetitive, mechanistic, imitative animal. When it is given the words, the symbols, the theories, then it can play around the intellectual, the emotional gymnastics and circus and then it goes on with a ring-master somewhere - but there is not the sensitivity to be active without fear, to be active and to take an initiative when there is no compulsion. We have become skilful in responding to compulsions, we have become clever in imitating or becoming terribly active when there is a compulsion: social, economic, political, religious, compulsion of the different modes of society; either we imitate, conform or we respond to compulsions. Please do see this. We get up early when there is the compulsion; we have school or we have a job - getting up early for us does not become a way of living. A habit of responding to a compulsion does not lead a person to growth or maturity, does not activate the initiative.

In the state of freedom there is initiative, there is the creative energy to

respond to life without anyone or anything compelling or obliging us to do so.

We go to an office year after year for forty years because there is the compulsion of earning a livelihood. We respond to the husband or to the wife because there is the religious or social compulsion. Under compulsion we have to respond, and respond according to the norms of society; so who cares to look at the husband or the wife for what they are? We go on responding to the individual called the husband, the wife, according to the religious, cultural, social expectations out of fear, out of the urge for security and lives are spent together that way.

Understanding, when it takes place within us like a flash of lightning, then everything inside is lit up and does not stimulate any compulsion because there is no tension.

A thought has a tension, and emotion has a tension, a compulsive urge has a compulsion - that is to say when an impulse is stimulated it works upon the chemistry and the nerves of our body, and unless we give an outlet to that impulse we are suffocated. There is a chemical pressure and a neurological tension that is aroused by impulse, by emotion, by sentiment, and even by a thought. So we have to respond to it: we get angry and anger stimulates its own pressures and tensions, we have to do something about it. Then under the pressure of anger we say something or we do something, we give it an outlet, a channel to express itself, but we are doing it under the pressure, under the compulsion: envy, jealousy, anger, violence, sex impulse, impulse to sleep, to eat, to drink. Culture and civilization have enabled us and equipped us to respond to all this.

But understanding when it happens gives a relaxation. A light does not create a new tension, it's just an occurrence, it is an event that takes place within us, leaves us with a coolness and a relaxation. We don't know what to do with it.

If it could stimulate a new tension then we would learn to respond to it. So when the questioner says "there is an intuitive understanding but the body and the brain are slow to respond to it", it's quite natural. This is a very faithful observation of life. This is what happens to most of us.

When somebody lights our candle then at least there is a feeling of obligation, gratitude and loyalty towards that person, so again a new compulsion under which we behave.

But when understanding takes place within us, and the candle is lit by itself within us, if it so happens, then there cannot be a sense of gratitude, loyalty or faith. There is nothing and no one to admire, to worship - so we get lost. The unconditional, total relaxation of the understanding when it happens within us makes us feel completely lost. When there is restlessness we know what to do with it. But when there is peace we don't know what to do with it. When there are words we know how to play around with them, but when there is silence we are lost. The "I", the ego, the "me", the operative agency of the past is lost.

That is exactly where self-education comes in: to learn to move in daily life, in every little activity - that's the traditional way of calling the details the "little activities". They are looked upon as insignificant trivialities, but as I see and understand life there is nothing trivial. Life is a whole and the eternity of life is ever present around us, so the slightest movement is in the movement in that reality.

There is no luxury of being casual, inattentive if we would like our bodies and brain to wake up from the slumber of this inattention, of this passivity of moving only under the whip of a compulsion - to educate ourselves so that the sensitivity and the organic intelligence in the body, the sensitivity in the brain cells, gets so activated that they are alert, active and sensitive all the time, equipped to respond.

In alertness and sensitivity is the momentum that can keep pace with understanding. Repetitive, mechanistic movement of the brain cannot keep pace with the momentum of understanding. Our sense-organs, our nerves, our bodies are trained to keep pace with the speed of thought which is already too much, but understanding has a qualitatively different momentum. It is a momentum of the whole.

Thought has a momentum of the brain behind it and then the nerves, the chemicals can follow. The time lag is tolerated by thought, but understanding like love is a movement of the whole, the wholeness; and therefore there cannot be time lag between understanding and action there. So the nerves, the body has to be as sensitive as possible, and we cannot make it sensitive by some systems, methods, techniques or formula.

But if from today as we go home, we begin to look at the day, and what we do in the day with a new approach, a new attitude, then the whole day and everything that the day contains become holy and sacred for us; whether it is polishing the shoes, washing the car, cooking a meal, typing a letter, talking to the conductor in the tram or bus, whatever it be - because holiness is something that your behaviour can manifest. It is the quality of relationship, the sanctity, the sacredness. Life becomes sacred by the quality that we confer upon it, the way we live it.

As we go home, as we depart from this place, if we can get related to the day, to our bodies, to our clothes, to the way we sit down, we stand - not making a fuss about it or getting emotionally fanatic or romantic about it - but to understand what we do and to see that we respond to the needs of the day actively - not passively being dragged into a reaction - but actively responding out of attention and doing things out of understanding.

We have to swim against the current. This is an uphill task, because all the conditionings are of responding to patterns, reacting to compulsions, and now here a religious life begins from today, from the moment we understand it. It begins, an uphill task of doing everything attentively, and doing things out of understanding. That is how the whole of the body including the brain cells, will grow into a new way of living.

Religion is a way of living, it's not an intellectual acquisition of an idea, it's not an emotional activity of cultivating experiences, it's a total way of living.

If we begin to live in a new way, then the response of the body and the brain will become quicker. It has been rusted due to repetitive, mechanistic activity out of habits and patterns. It's rusted, it has become slow and sluggish. A new way of living can wash off all that dirt gathered on the senses, on the mind, wash them clean.

Secondly, the sensitivity increases and becomes deeper when we do things, when we say things, when we behave with people out of the clarity of understanding while we do it, not because somebody has asked us to do it. When we lit the candle of our own understanding, even death cannot put it out.

But if we borrow the prelit candles from individuals, organized religions,

teachers and preachers, then the lit candle may be in our hand but it is a borrowed candle. If it has been lit by another, someone else can come and put it out.

But when understanding is lit within us, our life becomes the flame of that. Nobody can ever put it out. It is ours, it is the substance of our life; so there is no fear.

When we behave according to the knowledge there is the fear, and with the knowledge goes forgetfulness, with the knowledge goes the authority of memory.

Understanding never gets pushed into the pit of memory, understanding blends with the very blood, with the very plasma, understanding blends with the very marrow of our bones. It becomes you, it is you, and it's yours. There is no fear of forgetting it, no fear of losing it. That's the second thing that happens.

You become a light unto yourself. However tiny that light might be, it is the light of your life and my life. Not huge, spectacular lights are needed for our daily living, when the light gets lit from within, whether it is big or small does not remain an issue any more.

You live with that light, you and that light become inseparable. That's the beauty of religion - the little we understand, a little truth that we discover becomes the substance of our being and gets expressed.

A new way of living implies becoming an unknown disciple of our own understanding and let the understanding flow into our daily activity.

If we block the way of understanding "oh, it was nice to understand it in the camp", but we go home and then we accept the authority of society, its values, its courtesies, its etiquettes, its expectations, so we accept the value structure of society, and we begin to talk to our friends, to our daughters, to our husbands according to the social expectations, so gone is the understanding. Then the understanding gets reduced to an intellectual abstraction and it doesn't change the quality of our life. When we, who are fond of those ideas, get together and very fondly begin to talk about those ideas: Hindu, Buddhist, Theosophist ideas, teachings of Krishnamurti - we become very eloquent, the understanding has become imprisoned, it's a prisoner of the brain, it's an abstraction for us. But if we allow the understanding to become our flesh and blood and flow in our daily activities, then life is changed.

Abstractions don't change life however beautiful they might be: quotations from the Sermon on the Mount, or from the Upanishads, the Vedas, the Dhammapadas, teachings of Buddha or from a Zen Buddhist master - they may be beautiful and when we utter them we may get intoxicated by the emotional content of the words and the dictionary meaning of the words, but that is only a form, it has no substance.

A new way of living implies the humility and the fearlessness of that humility, that we live our lives in the mad, neurotic, comparative, competitive society. We live our tiny bit of life in the light of our understanding, come what may.

Then the way of living becomes a choiceless way of living, we can't do otherwise because the clarity of understanding has brought us to a point, where our doing anything else and anything different would be a crime against ourselves.

That fearless living of our own understanding increases the sensitivity of the body, it sharpens the intelligence of the body and the brain because

there is no authority outside of us, there is only light within, and when we have a light within we do not require authority - this worldly or the other worldly.

It's only when there is darkness around that we like to look and find out somebody's hand and grope it.

When there is light then there is no fear. When we live out of our understanding there is no desire to compare ourselves with others.

The temptation to compare ourselves with others is there as long as there is the authority of a pattern, of an ideology, of a person, of some scriptures. When the authority of all these theories and ideologies, the authority of the total past has disappeared, his vanished completely, then there is no need to compare.

Comparison has become our way of living today. We cannot look at ourselves without comparing with others. Authority of the past leads to comparison as a habit and a way of living, and when we compare there is the sense of competition, so we want to compete.

When we are competing we like to project an image upon others. And while we are projecting an image, building up our image day by day, we are crushing ourselves under that responsibility of building up an image for others and presenting it to them. Then we are very much terrified that others might find out what we are under the image.

When we meet people we are terrified: will they discover us as we are? Will they discover that I am a liar and have been pretending that I am a truthful person? Will they discover that I am a coward, that I have been pretending to be a brave person? Will they discover I have pettiness and anger, while I have been pretending to be non violent?

You know, when we take up this ugly undertaking of building up our image for other people and presenting it to others, we know what we are inside and we take up the responsibility of constantly presenting it.

We have to live in society, there are people near our elbow, how can we carry on projecting an image all our life? That becomes a burden, and then the fear that others will discover it, fear that we will fail, we will not be up to the mark in our own eyes - that inhibits us and we shrink within ourselves. We can't come out.

You know, life is for living. We are here on this earth to live. But if we shrink away from the act of living and if all the time we try to hide behind an image, there is no joy of living, then relationship wears out and tires out.

But a religious person throws away all this ugly business of building up an image for the world. A religious person lives in the light of understanding, has no authority on the basis of which he will compare, no fear, and therefore no need to build up an image. He moves in life as one is, with the ease and grace of humility. If others discover, let them discover. If others point out that there is violence in me, then I can face it. If I have neglected it, if I have dodged it, I can face it, I can see it.

Then seeing of the fact becomes more important, and who has pointed out doesn't become important at all. That does not become the issue, but that we have seen or we see, that becomes important. The seeing of it and the living of understanding - they become the important issue, and everything else fades away into insignificance. Humility knows no fear. hypocrisy is a coward.

Thus we live, the religious enquirers: committing mistakes, faltering, feeling the pain, the agony of the travail of life, but we don't carry the pain and agony, convert it into issues, grudges and become rigid under their pressure.

The body and the brain have been heavily conditioned only to repeat patterns and to react to pressures, therefore there is no momentum, there is no creative active initiative.

What we have been talking about all these 15 days is to begin to live in a new way. So one is always in meditation, learning, discovering the truth of life within oneself, around oneself, behind the facts, behind the pleasure and pain. One is learning, one is discovering, and one who is busy learning is ever fresh, ever alert. That is how simplicity and the elegance of humility, the freedom and relaxation of understanding grows around a person, and the person becomes a living cell in this mad, neurotic, violent society.

That person in whichever corner of the earth he lives becomes a living cell of a new life, of a new approach to total human life, a new attitude towards human problems.

A revolution in an individual's way of living is a new beginning for the whole human psyche. The human psyche travels through you and me, and the joy of living our understanding fills the heart and fills life to such an extent that we never bother to see if people know about it and if people praise or admire us for that. The freedom and the joy of living our own understanding and living in the relaxation of a non comparative way, fills the being with bliss and joy. You are you, and you are expressing what you are in every relationship, so you feel fulfilled in expressing and you are joyful even in the pain because you live the pain first-hand, and not through a theory.

We go through the agony of separation that death brings not second-hand, not third-hand, not through some theories and ideologies, but we go through that sorrow, wholly we eat it, drink it, put our teeth into it and we live through it - let the sorrow do to us what it does, and then we come out of it. But if we try to live through the sorrow on the crutches of some ideologies and theories we haven't even tasted the bitterness of sorrow. When joy visits and if we try to interpret it according to some Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim theories, try to define it, describe it and interpret it, then joy gets reduced to a pleasure. To live the joy first-hand, to live the sorrow first-hand, to bite into it, and drink of it whatever it be. Joy cannot be repeated. Pleasures are repeated, but joy that visits us is unique, love is unique.

To begin to live in a new way where we go through the experience without taking up the crutches of patterns, ideologies, theories, personalities, then there is a beauty in life.

Such camps, such verbal communications, such living together has a value that enquirers come together and cooperate by their presence with one another's enquiries. If 30 or 40 people living together for 24 hours a day, can really focus their attention and energy all the time for 15 days on understanding, learning, discovering - the very atmosphere can get charged with a sensitivity.

If our energies are not frittered away in habitual, paternistic or repetitive ways of behaviour, if we are learning not only in this room but through-

hout the day, then such camps can become a dynamo because we cooperate with one another through our presence, by our affection, and so on. I hope when we depart or go home we will not be burdened with any new knowledge or any ideas, but that whatever little understanding has happened and taken place and which has become substance of our being in these two weeks that that will go home with us. We shall not take it with us but it shall accompany us wherever we go, because it is ours. It does not belong to anybody, and it surely does not belong to the speaker.

The talks were born here in the rooms wherever we have been sitting. The talks were born out of the communion between the listeners and the speaker and if understanding and learning has resulted, it has resulted in the speaker as well as in the listener.

I have learned a lot in all the camps: in "De Hoorneboeg", in "De Tiltenberg" and here. My audiences have taught me so much: their difficulties, their problems, their questions, their withdrawals, their presence, inside and outside the room, one watches, one observes, one learns.

My hope is that we shall not take anything home at all, and if the light of clarity and the energy of understanding accompanies us, it is not an acquisition of the "me", the ego", the "I", but it is a happening.

The world is getting torn to pieces, and whether we pay attention to it or not the last quarter of this century is going to be very critical and crucial for the whole civilization and culture. The nature of political and economic problems will be different in different countries, but the content of the problems will be the same.

We will need all the energy and vitality of understanding to return to the neurotic, violent society. If we can go back to it with the peace and assurance of understanding, then we will not be swept off our feet.

To be religious is to be a light unto oneself.

However little and whatever little we understand if we begin to let that understanding flow into action without fear, life enriches understanding and understanding gives depth to living. It is a reciprocity that goes on.

Society does not care for this essence of religion, freedom, meditation as a way of living. The societies, the governments, the present social, economic, political structures don't bother as they have their vested interests and have this vested interest in the structures to be maintained.

Science and technology might have destroyed and wiped out the state boundaries but we are still nations conscious of national superiorities, cherishing the myth of national sovereignty, though lives are becoming interwoven politically and economically to such a great extent that this national sovereignty and independence is just a myth, so there are new scientific myths and political myths that we carry. Society, leaders and governments won't bother about these fundamental revolutions, radical transformation in the content of the psyche.

So we will be like an oasis - individuals will be like an oasis in a desert. But even if a handful of individuals see the truth and begin to live the truth fearlessly, then a new energy begins to spread in this corrupt and rotten society.

Sometimes it is a Socrates who has the humility and fearlessness to live his understanding, surrounded by sceptics, and gets punished for that adventure of living religiously. Sometimes it is a Jesus of Nazareth who is put on the cross because He had the humility to challenge those who were cor-

rupting His Father's House, and had the fearlessness to go around and say "why do you corrupt and spoil My Father's House"; you know what He meant.

Living love, living understanding is not a path of roses without thorns - otherwise we will go home and begin to live our understanding and we find that the husband doesn't understand, the wife misinterprets me, and my mother ... you know we will start worrying. They may not understand, they may misinterpret because they have not taken up the enquiry of the meaning of life - you and I have taken it up. It is not a path of roses, it has never been a path of roses for anyone: in India Ghandi was called the Father of the nation and they shot him down for speaking the truth, or a Martin Luther King for showing the negroes a peaceful way got shot down too.

In our private lives also we have to carry our cross, but the ecstasy of living in the clarity of one's understanding, the joy of having an opportunity to unfold the essence of our being is there, and when death is there not only as the end of physical life somewhere far away but around the corner with every breath, what is there to fear? What is there to lose?

For the individual willing to allow the inner transformation to occur and to take place is the hope of humanity.

The hope of humanity does not lie in organizations and institutions where the very patterns are going to be liquidated, and something new might come up. The individual is the unit as far as the human consciousness goes, so you are the world and the world is you. If the violence, the aggression and the neuroticism gets wiped out in our lives, if the confusion and disorder disappears in your life and my life, then the human race shall see a new light through us. These are not vain words of pride, this is only stating the dignity and the majesty of a religious enquiry.

Don't carry a new tension that we are going to change the world, oh no, I don't mean that.

I'm only stating a fact that the human race travels through the individuals the journey of the consciousness.

So let us go back to our homes, to society and to the respective countries from where we have come in the simplicity of a religious enquirer, in the humility and fearlessness of living our own understanding, and the freedom of a non comparative approach to our daily activities.

The word "light" sounds old and ancient, but when one becomes a light unto oneself, there is an ending of misery and suffering in personal life.

## **ENOUGH OF IT**

Come with me,  
Do not follow me.  
You have followed many for centuries.  
I say — enough of this childishness.

### **WHO IS AFRAID**

He needs a code of conduct  
Who is afraid of his own self.

He needs a religion to save him  
Who is afraid of Life vibrating.

He needs a God to protect him  
Who is afraid of death overpowering.

He needs a Society to love him  
Who is afraid of Solitude enveloping.

He needs a Virtue to purify him  
Who is afraid of Passion's consuming.

Listen to me,  
Do not repeat my words.  
You have repeated words for centuries.  
I say — enough of this repetition.

Understand me,  
Do not adore me.  
You have adored many for centuries.  
I say — enough of this infantile adoration.

Love me,  
Do not worship me.  
You have worshipped holy persons for centuries.  
I say — enough of this immature authorization.

Embrace me,  
Do not bend and kneel.  
You have bent down and knelt for centuries.  
I say — enough of this self-humiliation.

Befriend me,  
Do not condemn me as an authority.  
You have condemned enlightened ones for centuries.  
I say — enough of this callous condemnation.

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