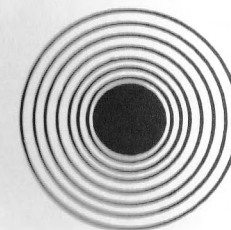


CONTACT with
Vimala Thakar



Nr. 21, March 1987



THE SHADOW OF SILENCE

Speech is the shadow of Silence
Shadow has no substance of its own
Speech has no significance of its own.

Those who try to measure
A Substance by its shadow
Reach nowhere.

Those who try to measure
Silence by speech
Arrive nowhere.

Measure not by words
The depth of Silence.

Evaluate not by words
The content of Silence.

Judge not by words
The quality of Silence.
Speech is the shadow of Silence.

Out of: "Friendly Communion"

CONTACT with VIMALA THAKAR

Editor: Lies and Lau Frankena, Huizerweg 46, 1261 AZ Blaricum, Holland; phone (02153) 83478, and Jaap Terreehorst.

Administration "Contact", c/o Mr. Loek de Beer, Barkhausener Strasse 89, 4520 Melle 5 (Buer)

B.R.D. Tel. 05427-1857.

Payments to **"Bookfund Vimala Thakar"**, Huizerweg 46, 1261 AZ Blaricum;

Bank: AMRO-Bank, Blaricum, Holland, account number 40.10.75.419 -or- Postgironumber 134788. Published twice a year.

Annual subscription fl. 20,--.

Copyright: Mrs. E.A.M. Frankena-Geraets, Blaricum 1987.

EASTER SEMINAR

with VIMALA THAKAR at Woudschoten - talk 5-9-4-85

When one addresses such gatherings, or conducts camps, one is always surprised why the people turn to a religious enquiry. What is it that makes the people turn to enquire the meaning of life, death, or the mystery of relationships?

Is one aware that the religious enquiry might change the whole life topsyturvy? The total old way of living might come to an end, not a part of the whole life, but perhaps the whole of it.

One wonders if people are aware that religion or spirituality implies a total transformation, not only a new acquisition for the intellect, not only a new way of thinking. Religion does not provide patterns of physical or mental behaviour.

It is something much more drastic and fundamental. It brings about complete freedom from the past. One has no moorings anywhere, one has no moorings anymore, to any theory, to any ideology, no sense of belonging to a country, to a race.

To be religious is to be in the light of truth and love, to be with life alone in the solitude of your own understanding.

This morning, let us go into this issue of why one turns to a religious enquiry, what is the motivation behind such an enquiry?

The quality of motivation will go a very long way to determine the quality of discovery, or even the quality of understanding.

Do I turn to a religious enquiry because I have read about it in the books, I have been told since childhood about God, about religious teachers, about spirituality, and a sense of awe, even fear has been created in my mind about God; whatever they mean by the word God.

So I have come to believe that in addition to my daily living there is another living which is called religious living.

Due to the training and conditioning one comes to believe that daily life and what you do in your daily living has nothing to do with religion. You do your job, you go to office, you have your family, or live with girl-friend, boy-friend. You have your quarrels, the greed for money, the craving for security. Well, carry on with it, but in addition to it, go to the church, the temple, mosques, and if they have become out-of-date to some ashram, some guru, master, teacher, and acquire some areas of activity; new areas, new fields of mental activity, intellectual activity. Cultivate new experiences.

I have been told about all this, so I feel jolly well, that I'll carry on with my daily living, the family, the society, the nation, the state as it is. I will not make any changes there. But there is a boredom in that repetitive activity, there are pains and pleasures of humiliation and flatteries, and I am tired of the sensual pleasures, the sexual pleasures, I have had enough of them. Let me turn to something else, besides this.

So one has been conditioned to believe that there

are two ways, two lives as it were: one: the mundane, the material, the social, the economic, the political, the material, the physical, and the other: the religious and spiritual, so religious enquiry begins with the fragmentation of life.

Is that it? So one acquires some new habits, new phraseologies, new relationships, new excitements, and brings the excitement to the old material life, and carries on a double life, a dual life.

This has been the classical, or the traditional approach to religion all over the world; not only here in the occident, but also in the orient.

Do I turn to religious enquiry because I want to earn something in addition to what I have on the material or physical level?

If that is the motivation, you begin with the fragmentation, and that fragmentation of outer life creates a split in your psychological life, and you live a double life. One set of values for your religious life to be adopted, to be practised in temples, in ashrams, in monasteries, and quite a different set of values for social, economic, political life.

So you can afford to be very truthful for a couple of hours while you are with your teacher or master in the ashram, and then you can indulge in all sorts of untruths when you go back to your jobs or socio-economic life.

That has created much hypocrisy, pretensions, airs of superiority, "holier-than-thou" attitudes. Haven't we seen all that?

That's only one aspect of it: the fragmentation, the psychological split, the hypocrisies, the "holier-than-thou" attitude; this is only one aspect of this fragmentation.

The other is more damaging than the first one.

It seems to me that the enquiry of truth or reality has to be conducted in the very movement of relationship, unless you have an academic or theoretical enquiry, or intellectual curiosity.

If you have that intellectual curiosity, one can go

to a college, a university, read books on philosophy, theology, history of theology, biographies of religious teachers, spiritual leaders, and so on. One can very systematically study, and say: "I have studied that, I know what Lao-tse has said, what Confucius has said, what Ramana Maharshi has said, and so on. It is only intellectual interest, academic interest, unrelated to life.

You have additional knowledge, as you have knowledge of medicine, of biology, if you are engineer you have knowledge of engineering, mathematics, and so on. You have knowledge about God, about theology, about spiritual practices, various dogmas and sects, and schools in enquiry, and you can even make a comparative study and talk very scholastically about all that.

It does not touch the quality of your relationships with people and with yourself. It does not change the quality of consciousness or the state of mind in which you live. It's quite an additional burden, if I may say so.

Intellectual acquisition of knowledge has not helped the human race to set itself free of the organic barbarity and violence, of acquisitiveness and aggression. It is high time that we see this plain fact, this very simple fact.

Religious enquiry has to be conducted from morning till night in whatever one does. Not creating a different atmosphere and a different pattern of behaviour or a different discipline for oneself, without relating it to life, to actual life. The daily life is the only life we have.

If we wish to meet the eternity of life it has to be met in the now, the present moment. It has to be met in every moment, every relationship. So, if the motivation is intellectual, obviously it is not going to affect the quality of consciousness or the quality of life. That's a very simple obvious fact. It will only complicate life, create a psychological split, and if that split becomes acute, one may find oneself in a very difficult position, nei-

ther interested in daily living, nor excited any more or enthusiastic any more about the so-called religious life, because that also has become mechanical. One may find that both things have become mechanical.

One has to be very careful about the motivation which leads oneself to religious enquiry.

Is it that one has heard or read that the spiritual life or religious life has mysticism about it, a mysteriousness about it, and the extrasensory perceptions, or the occult powers, the transcendental powers have a charm about them.

So one says: enough of sensual pleasure, let me have the occult, the transcendental: let me run after it; let me cultivate it; let me awaken the kundalini, let me go in for transmission of powers, shaktipat. Let me go to some mantra-yogi, tantra-yogi, and find out those things. Is that what one wants? A new sensation, a new field of experiences, cultivation of non-physical powers, astral powers?

One does not deny that the astral, the occult, or the transcendental does exist, one does not deny that. It is there, and such powers can be cultivated, such experiences can be stimulated. The occident, for thousands of years, has studied all this. And they have a number of sciences. And you will get teachers who can teach tantra, mantra, nada-yoga, the yoga through sound and metaphysics, and so on - many teachers, is that what one wants when one turns to religious enquiry?

If one wants that, if that is the motivation, let us see what the motivation implies.

The motivation implies, does it not, that I want to retain the me, the experiencer at the centre of consciousness. That centre, that me, is tired of old mechanistic repetitive experiences, so it wants something new. It is the desire of the ego. It's the ambition of the ego to have something new, and it is fond of experiences. Retaining the ego and providing the ego with new fields and tech-

niques and experiences: whether you do it through concentration, or the practises of tantra and mantra, you still want to be on the mental level.

There was a periphery of knowledge and experience around the centre of the me. Now, I am widening that circumference or periphery, and creating a much vaster circumference for it. I would like to condition my ego in a new way.

One is after experiencing, and one is after experiences and powers.

Now, thinking or experiencing is a material activity. Thought is emanation of matter, it's the movement of mechanism built up through centuries. It is the response of memory, if I may use the term. Experiencing is the continuity of the past, I hope that this is not felt difficult.

You see, an event takes place in one's life, now, one wants to identify the event. How do you identify the event? You refer back to memory, and the memory calls it an ethical experience, an aesthetic experience, it gives it a name, it identifies. The memory identifies, and then the memory tells me how to react to that event.

An event takes place, referring it back to the past, according to the past, name it, identify and react to it, that is how an event gets converted into an experience.

I may not identify the event according to my conditioning or to my past. I can refer back to the teachings of Shankaracharya, Vedanta, Advaita, teachings of some Ramakrishna, some Aurobindo, teachings of Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, I can use anybody's experience and interpret the event according to the experiences of other people.

Events get converted into experiences with the help of the past. We are grafting the past upon the present, and thereby allowing the past to continue.

Is religion the continuity of the past, your past, my past, or the past of the human race? You may modify the past here and there, qualify it here

and there, but every modification implies continuity. Being afraid of total change, being afraid of fundamental, radical mutation, one plays around with small changes here and there, small modifications here and there. Is that what we want?

If one enjoys the I-consciousness with all its conditionings and if one enjoys new fields of experiencing, one may wander in the astral, the occult, the transcendental, but that has nothing to do with a religious enquiry. If one is interested, one may go and one may do it.

But not in the name of spiritual or religious enquiry. One has to confess it to oneself, admit it to oneself, that "I like the ego, with its pleasures, its pains, its conditioning, its powers, I like it, I love it, but I don't like the old fields, so I am creating the new ones, and the sense of adventure."

All right, one goes ahead. If that is the motivation, I think that the religious enquiry will find out fields for the ego and remain on the mental plane, and when one uses the term mind, one implies the conscious, the subconscious and the unconscious together of the individual as well as the whole race.

Supposing this is not the motivation. Then, is the motivation behind the religious enquiry a need to escape from the boredom of life, a need to escape from the sense of loneliness? Is one busy finding out some groups where one can belong to? Some ashrams, some centres where one can belong to, and escape from the boredom of life? Please let us be ruthlessly honest with ourselves. Understanding is the flowering of the motivation. If the motivation is polluted, then the understanding and its quality will be affected.

Am I looking for an escape? There is a network of escapes that organized and institutionalized religions have provided.

So I say to myself: Look, I'm not looking for truth and freedom and all those things, love and compassion. I'm a simple person, I'm looking for

an escape from boredom. People go to clubs or theatres. I would like to go some place, not like club or theatre. But I would like to have a place where I can go to, two hours a day, twice a week, if not once on Sunday, or every day. I would like to go there, so that for a couple of hours or a few hours I can forget myself.

Are we finding out fields for self-forgetfulness, and imagining that there will be a release from the clutches of the ego when we forget ourselves? One can forget oneself through music, can't one? Drama. One can forget oneself through sports. When the athlete is playing, cricket or tennis, he is not aware that he is playing. The play is more important, the game is more important than the person. Otherwise there would be no game and play.

So like other fields of self-forgetfulness, are we trying to find out new places? We may find such places and there would be an escape from loneliness. There will not be understanding of loneliness, but running away from loneliness.

A religious enquiry cannot be conducted by running away from life. If there is any realization, if there is anything like liberation, enlightenment, it is in the midst of relationships. Illumination or enlightenment away from the movement of relationship would be dead. It wouldn't have any life.

Freedom is something that vibrates in the midst of relationships. Freedom is not an abstraction to be found out in isolation.

My friends, in isolation there may be physical survival and existence, there is no life in isolation. Life is relationship. Living is a movement of getting related to, responding to challenges, objects, persons, nature.

Even if one finds some place of escape, the sensation of newness fades away with time. The new pattern of behaviour becomes old; within weeks, within months the newness, the sensation, the excitement fades away. Then one goes on hunting

for another, and still another.

Does one feel that one is weak, and that one cannot do it alone, and therefore one is looking for some help, some aid, some teacher, some master? One would like some help, and therefore one is looking for some realized person, liberated individual? Is that the motivation?

If that is the motivation, please tell me, how you and I, having a conditioned mind, are going to recognize whether a person is liberated or not?

What is the criteria by which you and I are going to measure that X is liberated and Y is not?

We are going to measure the individual according to our measurements and they say: "Yes, he is liberated", or "she is liberated and he is not"?

Are we going to depend on the appeal that the individual creates for me emotionally? Some personalities appeal to some people and others do not. Are we going to depend on the emotional appeal of the person, look at the physical beauty, the dress, the handsomeness, the ugliness, the style, the sophistication; is that what we are looking for?

You know, religious enquiry is something rather serious. We cannot play around with it, otherwise we will be fooling ourselves, we will be deceiving ourselves, and precious life will be wasted.

So in the name of one's imaginary weakness, is one looking for some authority, afraid of freedom that life gives you? Is one afraid? Is one looking for authority? Does one create that authority, bask in the light of that personality or celebrity, and feel lighted oneself? You know, the ego, the self, the me, having thousands of years behind it, is a very cunning entity. It has ways of deceiving; hundred and one ways of hiding behind things, concealing itself.

So one has to ask oneself: "Why am I enquiring?"

Enquiry, investigation, exploration, and at the end of all that, understanding of truth. That's the voyage in a religious enquiry. You arrive at an

understanding of what life is, and the understanding places you in communion with life. That is all that happens to it. Not something sensational, romantic, extraordinary, spectacular. You investigate, you discuss with people, you explore, you experiment, and you discover the truth, you arrive at the discovery. You understand it.

And either you live your understanding, or you leave it. Your life your understanding in everything that you do, in utter sense of freedom; without the worry and anxiety for what the consequences would be, one says choicelessly: "I can't do anything else, I have enquired, I have understood, and this understanding is now the essence of my life."

A religious enquiry is not for the retention of the me at the centre, not for giving experiences to the centre, and enriching it, or deepening it, strengthening it. It's not for an escape from life. The discovery of truth will put you back again in the midst of life, in the midst of relationships, the ordeals, the difficulties, the ugliness of life, the harsh realities of life. You are back there with a new understanding. With the essence of holistic perception, and non-dualistic consciousness, you are back again in life.

To live anew. You are born anew, as it were, and you begin life from that moment of understanding.

So may I warn those who have come here for the first time, that there is no romanticism, emotionalism, or sentimentalism about a religious enquiry. May I point out that there is nothing to acquire and gain.

If that is clear, and still there is that urge for enquiring, and learning, just finding out what is what: have you watched small kids, two years old, three years old, going out with their mothers or fathers? They are all eyes, the whole body, and they keep on asking: "What is this, what is that?" Not for acquiring knowledge, but there is this urge to understand what is what.

And you point out: this is a dog, that's a cat, that's a tree, that's a flower, and there is an end to it, not a sense of 'I know about it'.

The sense of 'I know about it' is developed in the child in schools, and we teach the children to own their knowledge instead of remaining with their understanding, owning and possessing knowledge and using it: you know, the mess that education is, the universities that are nothing more than museums, and schools at the centres where the minds are polluted, and so on.

I understand, I see, that a religious enquiry has to be conducted in my daily living. Not to create another field of activity in the name of enquiry. That's a very great temptation. It has been the tradition, that's the first thing.

Secondly, when I begin to conduct the enquiry, supposing I do, I have the seriousness and the strength to sustain the seriousness; not an emotional enthusiasm which lasts for a day or a week and then fades away, but sustained seriousness. Then I begin to watch my movement, my behaviour. I am alone, no authority. The life and myself.

And now, where will I get the clue? I will get the clue of what is the truth in my movements, through my movements, what I do with others, how I react to others, what I do with the objects in the house from morning till night, what do I do with my body, my diet? What do I do with the sleep?

Now, that is the field. The daily living is the field where I am going to enquire, with whatever little understanding I have, with whatever little sensitivity I have. If there were no sensitivity, there would be no enquiry, there would be no urge to enquire. That there is an urge to enquire, that's the proof that I have sensitivity.

Now I know the field: daily life. It is the only life. Even if there is an eternity, it has to express itself in the now, the present, in what is. One thing I have seen, the field of my enquiry.

Secondly, I begin with whatever understanding and sensitivity I have. They are my companions, I am not lonely, the faculty to understand, the faculty to feel. The human body has been sensitised, even since birth, they are my companions, I am not lonely.

Now I enquire, I want to find out: what is freedom? How do I begin?

Not by striving to find out what is freedom; but rather by trying to find out what is not freedom. Even an ordinary person like me has the sensitivity to see that if there is repetition, day after day and year after year, if there is repetition and mechanistic behaviour, there is no freedom.

Instead of finding out what is freedom, I am now identifying what is not freedom, a kind of negative approach.

If I want to take a positive approach, this is freedom and therefore I am going to educate myself in that freedom, I am creating an authority of an idea. The description of freedom according to so-and-so.

But if I would like to conduct the enquiry in total freedom, I'd better begin by discriminating, distinguishing, identifying what is not freedom, when am I not free?

Then I notice that I go on repeating. My life is just a repetition of habits, nothing is spontaneous. So this lack of spontaneity, lack of initiative and mechanistic movement of repetition is not freedom.

I watch my behaviour and find out the areas where I am repeating. Do I repeat activities when I brush my teeth and bathe the body, when I take my meals, when I talk to my wife or husband? Am I repeating, am I behaving mechanistically? Have I constructed an image of my husband like a finite object, and then I respond to it as I respond to a car? One can know about the car as a finite object. You get the map, the graph and read about the various parts and their interconnections, and you learn to drive a car and so on.

You cannot drive a human being. It's not a machine, it's not a finite object. It's an organic part of the mysterious wholeness of life. The wholeness of life is condensed in that human being. It's condensed even in dogs and cats and birds, but we are not going that far. If we spread a very big canvas, it will not be possible for us to deal with it. So let us limit our enquiry to the field of human relationship.

Now I learn that wherever there is repetition, there is no spontaneity, and there is no life. See, to live is to be related. Now if I am repeating, I am allowing the past to continue and I have moved away. I am allowing the past to continue through me, I allow myself to be used by the past as an instrument of expression.

Repetition, mechanistic behaviour, is not freedom.

Now I will begin by watching my behaviour in relationships, and I will see if I have accepted the authority of people, books, theories, ideologies, and am I busy in the act of living just comparing my behaviour to that idea, to that person's life? Comparing it, approximating it, and making hard effort to imitate that, to adopt that, to adjust to that? Have I accepted authority?

If I have accepted authority of individuals, of theories or books, and I am trying all the time to imitate them, to approximate myself to them, I am not living. I am allowing that idea, the image of a person, to live through me. Please do see this. I want to become like a Buddha; then I begin to imitate everything that the Buddha has done. And maybe I sit under the same bodhitree for thousands of years and nothing happens to me. Then I say: "Well, he attained Nirvana in 48 days, it has not happened to me, so something is wrong with the tree."

Do you see the sadness? This is not criticism. This is the sorrow in my heart that I am sharing with you. How we are misled or how we mislead ourselves, and then in the evenings when hands

are empty, we say: "Oh, nothing happened to me. I did this, I did that, nothing happened to me." But one is never careful about the motivation that led one to enquire, and the quality of enquiry, and the relation of enquiry with the whole life, one never is concerned about all that. One is concerned about the result.

Please do see this, that if we create authority out of ideas, ideologies, personalities, their phrases, their terminology, if we create an authority, all the time comparing ourselves, we are running away from what we are. We have created a new "ought": ought to be like this, must be like this. I'm running after that "must" and "ought". There is no way to understand myself.

Acceptance of authority does not seem to lead us to freedom.

You see, we are watching ourselves, we are watching our behaviour throughout the day. The daily relationships are the field of enquiry. Watching and observing are the means that one can employ tentatively for the investigation. I am investigating verbally, I am investigating psychologically. Let me use the reason as far as it goes. Let me use the words as far as they go. And when the words cannot carry me any further, when thought and intellectual investigation cannot carry me any further, then I say: "Well, this instrument is no more relevant now. It was relevant for verbal investigation, now it seems that a non-verbal investigation has to be conducted."

One sees the frontiers. One takes the reason, the thought-mechanism, the words, as far as they can go. You can't deny their existence, and can't wish it away. But you cannot attribute absolute reality to them.

You see, for investigating what freedom is, we are investigating what it is not. A negative approach is something one can learn from science, the physical science. Science is a method of investigating the truth. The methods that they have

employed are tentative, negative. If you start from a positive assumption, there cannot be any invention.

Unless you break away from the past, the creation of new is not possible. And if you say: "Let me carry on with the past for some time, and then, at the last step, the breaking away will come", that is also a delusion.

If there is no freedom in the first moment of enquiry, there is no freedom at the last moment also.

In my investigations or observations, I notice that what I call the I, which sits tight at the centre and regulates the whole behaviour, is the root of pain, pleasure, suffering, misery. It's the root of fear, it's the root of urge for security, I notice all that.

After having noticed the mechanistic and the repetitive behaviour, now I come to the centre itself, and I say: "Well, what is this I?"

One has lived one's life up till now, accepting the authority of the mind. If the mind says "it pains me", we help it to run away from it. If the mind says "I want to get attached to it", we help the mind and provide it with the objects and persons of attachment. We have been pampering the mind.

We thought that was living: caring for the I, succumbing to it, withdrawing when it is afraid, attacking when it is aggressive. You know, we have been living through the I, the me which always divides life into the me and the not-me, the I and the other.

So I say to myself: "By jove, what is this I? Where did the I start? Is I the body, the name given to the body, is I the qualities of the body? What is this I?"

It's very important to probe into the very existence and the roots of this I-consciousness; because it is creating disorder, misery and suffering in relationships. It says: "I like this person, I don't like that person", so one becomes exclusive, one begins

to hate people. It says: "I like this idea, I don't like that idea", so one identifies with the idea. The process of identification is the process of self-enclosure.

What is this I, what is this me? I notice the existence of the me through the likes and the dislikes it projects, through the references and prejudices it projects, it manifests. I notice the existence of the me through its manifestations. I: the Indian, the American, the Russian, the Hindu, the Christian. Now supposing, even for investigation, I put away the identification as one puts away the clothes, when one goes bathing, swimming, having bathed at home.

Now, supposing for the sake of enquiry, we begin to analyse, one after another, the conditionings that have been amalgamated in the name of I, the me. Supposing we put away the identifications. What remains?

If the American, the Indian, that identification is gone, identification in the name of religion, identification with the preferences, and prejudices is gone, identification with the thought system and pattern of behaviour, if all the identifications are put away, what remains in that nudity?

Why have I accepted the authority of separation that the I creates at the moment of perception?

You know, these fundamental questions have to be asked. A religious enquiry is an arduous task, hard work. Go on questioning, and questioning, go on doubting your own experiences, your images, question the validity of whatever you have built up. A very unpleasant thing, and yet, one has to do it, choicelessly.

Unless you penetrate through the I, find out the roots of the culprit, there is no freedom from it.

Understanding of the nature of bondage is the beginning of freedom. There is no freedom away from the bondage.

So one says: one has accepted the authority of separation and fragmentation that this me, the

sense of I creates at the very moment of perception, and at the moment of response.

Is that separation and that fragmentation valid? Can there be a perception without this fragmentation? If one works with doggedness, with perseverance, if one enquires and questions, one finds out that the sense of me has been cultivated, inherited to some extent, and then cultivated at home by the parents, then at school by the teachers, and by society at large. It is something that is cultivated systematically, encouraged, rewarded.

So it's man's creation. The life contained in the body, seen through the eyes and listening through the ears, is a nameless thing. That life is neither male nor female, neither American nor Russian. It is neither brown nor black, yellow nor white, it has no colour, no name. It has engaged itself in this human body as it has engaged itself in the trees. But it is life!

Individuation and separation are relatively real on the physical and mental level. But beyond that is the realm of reality where individuation is neither possible nor existent. The totality of life is non-individualized wholeness. When we say, it is indivisible, non-fragmentable, we imply thereby don't we, that it is a non-individualized wholeness.

One sees that the I has only relative reality, relative utility, it is not the absolute root of existence, and it is not necessary to accept the authority of the I. Do you see how learning can take place?

If one observes one's life, one is watchful, alert, vigilant. Then the watching and observing results in learning and discovering the truth. The essence of religion is personal discovery of truth, and a religious life is the simplicity to live one's understanding. There is nothing glamorous about it. All the elegance that a religious life gets is due to its simplicity and spontaneity.

For a religious enquiry one has to put not only the intellectual energy, but one has to put all the

energy that one has into the act of enquiry.

When you are enquiring intellectually, you can sit down quietly, take a book, listen to a tape, and there's an end to it. You have acquired, you have known.

But this enquiry, which is conducted throughout the day: what kind of food do I eat, when do I eat, is my diet, is my nutrition related to health or is it something I eat because it is a tradition, following certain patterns? Do I eat things which do not agree with my body? You know, is there slavery, is there bondage? I ask these questions because I want to enquire: what is freedom?

In relation to diet, is there freedom? Or do I have to say: if I cannot have five cups of coffee a day, I get headaches. Or, if I cannot get seven cups of tea every day, then I can't work. My bowels don't work if I don't have tea in the morning, coffee in the morning. My mind cannot work, I get headache. You know, slavery in these things, do you think that having five or seven cups of tea or coffee have nothing to do with enquiry?

Long back, many, many years back, perhaps in the late sixties, I was in Saanen, attending J. Krishnamurti's talks. One day I was visiting him, and a group of young people from Australia who were attending his talks, came to see him. I was asked to stay on, and see what happens in the group discussions. So I stayed on.

And those young people you know, youth is so beautiful, those young people, robust, healthy, enthusiastic, vital and vigorous, said to Krishnamurti: "We want to found a new society, a new community in Australia."

"Yes, a community?"

"Yes, a community for new education, for freedom."

"Oh yes." He listened very carefully for a few minutes, and then he said, turning to one of them - there were many, I think about ten - so he turned to one of them.

He said: "Sir, you have been attending the talks

in the tent over there, haven't you?"

"Yes", said the young man.

Krishnamurti said: "I've noticed you every day smoking a cigarette outside the tent. Can you free yourself from the habit of smoking before you try to found a community for freedom?"

The young man had never related the freedom to his smoking. As if the act of smoking was outside the field of enquiry.

There is nothing outside the field of enquiry, and there is no authority which cannot be and should not be questioned, doubted, discussed.

One has pointed out only a few aspects of enquiry. If one wants to find out what love is, one does not start, reading books about love. One watches one's life and says: "Well, I think there is attachment, and attachment has made me dependent upon that. Surely attachment is not love."

One begins to find out what love is not, what freedom is not, what truth is not. If I understand the truth inside and I have no courage to speak out the truth, and immediately I speak untruth, then by observing such a behaviour I know that I am betraying my understanding. I am betraying the truth that I understand, and I engage myself in untruth to please the other person, whosoever it be. Just pleasing for one moment, two moments, in order to be in the good books of the person.

Is that the way to live; not that we are out to displease people, that's not the meaning. But if I can suffocate the truth that I have found out, and I can indulge in untruth for some momentary gratification of the ego, in being accepted, recognized, acknowledged, you know, all sorts of things, then I am betraying myself. I am not concerned with truth, I don't mind living in untruth.

That's why we go back now to the motivation of enquiry. If there is a genuine motive to find out the meaning of life, to find out the essence of reality, to discover what the mystery of love and compassion is, it's not difficult. It is not for the

chosen few. It's not for some extraordinary persons, it is for everyone. Common people like you and me, who have to live in the midst of people, all sorts, having all sorts of problems, all sorts of temperaments, of conditionings. We have to be right there, in the midst of all that.

It is the genuineness and integrity of the motivation that is required. We will find what we seek for. If the motivation is to escape from loneliness and boredom we will find out places and individuals. If there is the desire for cultivating experiences, we will run after mantra yogi's, tantra yogi's and cultivate those powers, and we will deceive ourselves in believing that we are engaged in religious enquiry.

So let us not deceive ourselves. Let us be mercifully honest.

It's not that everybody must want to discover truth. It's not a "must". But one has to understand what is the nature of enquiry.

The time is over. This morning we have gone into the issue of the motivation of enquiry, the field of enquiry, how the enquiry can be conducted in freedom, and why a negative approach is necessary for such an investigation.

Thank you.

**VIMALA THAKAR - Woudschoten - Holland -
talk 6 - 10-4-85 - Morning**

As the people in the occidental parts of the world have been busy with the analysis of matter and energy through natural or physical sciences, the people in the oriental parts of the world have been busy analyzing the space, the emptiness within oneself as well as around oneself.

Not analysis of matter or energy, but exploration as well as analysis of that which is beyond matter and energy. They have been busy with the science of life as it was mentioned yesterday.

This science of life has been called yoga, the science of yoga. It is a very significant word that has travelled all over the world and I hope everyone of you has heard the word. It is a sanskrit word, derived from the root yuj, to unite. That which unites you to the roots of your being is yoga.

One is not going to go into the whole science of yoga this morning, but it is relevant for our inquiry to see how the science of yoga, in ancient days, 553 B.C. proclaimed that the purpose of human life is to be in a state of yoga, and they mean thereby a spontaneous equipoise of the mind in the midst of relationships. Balance on the sensual level and equipoise on the psychological level, that is the essence of yoga. The yoga sutra's proclaim that the state of yoga is manifested in the psychological equipoise and sensual balance.

It seems that mankind has realized, thousands of years ago, that it is not necessary to live in a state of psychological imbalance, in the name of relationships.

There seems to be sufficient potential contained in us which would enable us to live in the midst of a variety of relationships, without getting disturbed and perturbed every second minute, annoyed and irritated every ten minutes, without getting angry every second hour. You know the imbalances

in which we live. We cannot live without relationships. We feel lonely without people and whenever we are with people, every second minute we are imbalanced.

Inwardly and outwardly on the sensual level, our lives are miserable chains of imbalances, which are impurities.

If there is impurity in the blood and there are blood-clots, the circulation does not take place and the body becomes diseased.

In the same way, when there are these constant blockages of anger, irritation, annoyance, jealousy, brutality, violence; the energy of intelligence cannot get released, cannot get activated and there is a kind of suffocation, strangling.

Why should the science of yoga proclaim that it is possible, it is within the reach of human beings, to be in a state of spontaneous, effortless equipoise and an effortless balance at the sensual level?

Is it a theory? Is it a narration of some idea? Is it some goal that they are setting for the people to reach?

As far as one has seen, it is none of these. It could be that there was a simple observation that the universal life is full of harmony and a kind of equipoise in nature.

Nature is a manifestation of harmony. There is harmony, co-operation even between mutually exclusive principles like fire and water. Not only that they co-operate with each other, they even make their abodes in each other. Fire dwells in water and water dwells in fire, or earth in water and water in the earth, or the empty space of the skies containing earth, fire, water, three together.

It is worth observing, even for the fun of it, how nature functions. How the water of the oceans evaporates, rises high in the skies, becomes clouds, come down to the earth in the form of rains, provides the fountains to the rivers and goes back to the ocean again. It is the same with the sunshine and the moonshine. There is a harmony, there is

a co-operation; not confrontation.

Harmony seems to be the basic principle of universal life. And if we are organically related to the universal life, to the earth, the fire, the water, the skies, the light, as we are, is it not the responsibility of mankind, the human beings, to awaken that harmony in one's own life and to create societies based upon co-operation and harmony, rather than on confrontation and violence? This is a religious responsibility.

And yet in nature you find freedom. The mountains have their freedom and they can abide in eternal peace, steadiness, solidity. And the rivers can flow and the emptiness of the skies can envelop everything that exists, and so on.

Along with harmony, freedom seems to be another spiritual value existing in life around us.

It is only mankind which has not been able yet to create a basis for relationships, where we could live in freedom with each other, in harmony and co-operation. Not in fear and mistrust or in distrust.

Before we proceed to the issue of 'creating new societies', we will have to turn to our own lives and see that a new human being is born within us. Without the new human beings, new societies will not come into existence.

One begins to observe one's life and inquire. One will ask oneself whether one is an individual, capable of living in freedom or not. You know what an individual is, a self-conscious being. We are born with this faculty of self-consciousness. There is consciousness in everything around us. Consciousness is not the monopoly of the human race. There is consciousness in rocks, in minerals, in trees, vegetables and so on.

But human life is evolved and complex. We are born with self-consciousness, that is to say: we can move into activity and simultaneously, while moving, we can be conscious why we are moving, why we are doing what we are doing, and what

would be the probable consequences about what we are speaking or doing.

This faculty of self-consciousness is there. One would ask oneself: 'am I an individual, living self-consciously? Am I conscious of what I do from morning till night?'

It is a responsibility to utilize this capacity to be self-conscious; not repeating patterns, mechanistically, without being conscious, without being aware, not reducing oneself to a machine for the continuation of the past.

If I am repeating patterns available to me, or selected and chosen by me, I am not an individual. I become an individual when I question the patterns that exist, understand why they are there.

I can probe and find out if patterns or habits are necessary. In the freedom from habit patterns is the beginning of freedom, is the beginning of wisdom.

One says to oneself: 'In order to live as an individual, let me first find out if I can wash out all the habit patterns and begin living anew, as if it is the first day of my life.'

And this freedom is not something abstract. One has to awaken that freedom in very movement, while you move through words, verbalization, you move through your senses, physically, alert, sensitive, attentive, without any habit whatsoever.

Self-consciousness, the utilization of self-consciousness is the beginning of a religious life.

When we become self-conscious and we observe ourselves, we see very clearly that our physical structures are very complex and so are the psychological structures.

We are not born with empty brains. We are born with brains containing an immense, cultural heritage: a capacity to think, to reason, to analyse, to synthesize and so on.

The sophisticated and refined brain and sensitized human body at our disposal, is a very rich heritage

which has to be used properly and correctly. When an inquirer goes home and looks afresh at everything that he or she does; right from clothes to the diet, to exercises, to the kind of sleep, the kind of bed one uses, to the language that one utilizes, the gestures that one makes, then one begins to observe, gets acquainted and understands. And if there is any disorder on the physical level, if the physical or psychological structure is not used properly, one learns to use it.

It's a religious responsibility to utilize the heritage properly, not to get imprisoned by it, but also not to throw it out, not to reject it but to understand it for what it is.

One feels the necessity to mention this at the end of the talk, because in the name of religion, spirituality, inquiry, people turn away from rationality, from reason, from using their brains, and enter into something sentimental and emotional.

This rejection of the brain or rationality has nothing to do with a religious inquiry or a spiritual life. If you kick the ground on which you stand, you cannot walk. In the same way, if you kick the conditionings, ignore them, despise them, or reject them, obviously you cannot conduct any inquiry for seeing what is beyond them.

Now, "to use the brain or the physical structure properly" is a phrase, is an expression, which one has to go into rather carefully. Is there any criteria, according to which one could find out what is the proper, and what is the improper use?

One does not know whether to call it a criteria or not, but it seems to me, that to use the brain and the physical body in every moment, in every movement, without causing any imbalance to it, chemically or neurologically, could perhaps be called the proper use; if we could feed the body in such a way that there is no excess, no malnutrition, not overfeeding the body, if we could help the body through nutrition to keep healthy, pliable, supple and sensitive, not an imbalance of

laziness, sluggishness, slowness, passivity, inertia; they are not the qualities of life.

Life is pulsating and vibrating with passion and energy.

It doesn't mean that there will be no old age or no decay. It would be silly to ignore that. But in the midst of the flowering of old age there could be vital energy, psychologically, intellectually. So, to educate the brain, to function in a precise and accurate manner, to educate it to operate it in such a way that after the event or relationship is over, no residue or segment of the event is left behind, that is religious education, that is religious inquiry.

So when we get home and get back to our jobs, family life and responsibilities, we will learn to educate the body and the brain to function in a precise and accurate manner.

When we speak, we utter the words consciously, we speak what we mean, and we mean what we say. It's a kind of precision in verbalization, precision in diet, in sleep, in exercises. That orderliness, that precision and accuracy is a beauty of life. Not only that it has vitality, but it has a tremendous beauty about it. That orderliness and precision result very often in what you call health. When there is no disorder, when there is rhythm, when movements are gone into consciously, mindfully, then that mindfulness naturally results in healthiness.

This health of the body, vitality of the nervous system is very necessary for further explorations, because the intensity, the depth and the momentum of the energies contained in silence, is much more than the momentum, the depth and energy contained in thought mechanism.

Our nervous system is used to the intensity and the velocity of thought, feeling and emotion. It is not used to be soaked in silence, to dive deep into the inner emptiness containing innumerable energies that are unknown to us.

We have to help the body before plunging and growing into a state of meditation, through precision, orderliness, and a rhythmic life, to become vitally strong.

One has seen young people interested in such explorations getting sick because they cannot stand the intensity, the austerity of silence. Their nerves cannot stand the contact with the emptiness, they get shocked when there is real silence. When they come to the realm of silence their nerves begin to tremble, they get headaches, they feel a heaviness; it has nothing to do with meditation. Meditation does not cause it, but only indicates that the nervous system hasn't got the strength to bear the contact with that tremendous dimension of emptiness, of vacancy. Some people begin to hear sounds and see lights. You know all sorts of things begin to happen.

When a body is physically weak, it cannot stand the cold, the heat, strong winds or rains. It is susceptible to every exposure and then something goes wrong.

In the same way, the nervous system, due to wrong ways of living, is generally so weak in most of us, always used to distractions, partial and fragmentary activities, to stand the contact of the wholeness within oneself, to be enveloped in that inner emptiness.

It is necessary to avoid such eventualities of feeling giddy and getting headaches, you know, all those sorts of things.

Without equipping the nervous system and the chemical system with sufficient vitality, people enter into kundalini yoga's and God knows what; tantra's and mantra's. Many a life is ruined because of this.

Handsome young lives have been ruined, damaged, wrecked, as they have been wrecked and ruined by drugs. They have been ruined and destroyed, damaged seriously by hurrying through things.

So one has to lay the foundation in one's life. No

disorder in any field of life, but doing things when they have to be done without friction, without grudges, doing them in an orderly way, taking the meals when they have to be taken; but we don't do it.

If you are hurt by something you say: "I am not going to have the meal." If you are disturbed, you don't go to sleep.

Two of my friends from America, once went to Japan to a Zen-monastery, and they found that the Zen-master was a very simple person. When they started living with him they found that he would work with them in the garden, he would work with them in the kitchen, he was doing practically everything that they had to do in that monastery.

On the fourth or fifth day they started talking amongst themselves. They said: "Why have we come all the way to Japan? This master is just like us. He eats his meals with us, he works in the kitchen, the gardens etc., etc., cleans the house. Why have we come here? There doesn't seem to be anything that we can learn from him." So the other said: "Well let us ask him."

That day when they were sitting with the teacher they said: "Look here sir, we came here to learn from you, but we find that there is no difference between you and us. You are doing things exactly as we were doing at home, or we are doing here." And the teacher smiled and said: "No it is not so. There is a very great difference and a basic difference. I eat when I eat and you do not. That is to say, you are thinking, you are worrying, your mind is somewhere else. You are not totally present in the act of eating. When I work I work, when I eat I eat, when I sleep I sleep, and you do not."

To eliminate all disorders and to learn to be there, to be present in every action with all the sensitivity. That action, that relationship is the most important relationship for you at that moment, in the whole of the universe.

You are with the universe through that relationship,

through that activity, through that conversation. Through that individual you are with the whole of humanity.

Unless such orderly, precise, accurate, rhythmic lives are created within us, and we are born anew, the responsibility of exploring what is beyond the brain and beyond the conditioned mind cannot be discharged.

The first responsibility is to utilize the heritage correctly, not to get imprisoned by it, to see it for what it is, and utilize it in its relative field correctly. Now we went into some details, into the practical matters.

The second point is: In the heritage we have this physical world and then we have the psychological world: the world of knowledge, experience, conditionings, and by knowledge and experience one means the world of ideas, concepts, theories and the world of symbols that have been created to represent the theories and ideas.

The physical, the visible is so vast but still vaster is the non-physical, the conceptual, the psychological life.

So there too, as we get acquainted with our bodies and relate to food or sleep or exercises with precision and accuracy, we will have to learn to relate to the contents of the psychological world, and also to utilize them properly.

We come across a variety of symbols and concepts contained in our brains, which we call our mind.

There is one concept of psychological time. We have seen how it is created by the human mind as a currency, as a measurement, to relate to eternity, and we have to use it properly, very competently. Being aware that it is not the absolute truth, we use the symbol of time, the concept of time, in its relative field properly, with punctuality, regularity.

I was in Chile a few days ago, and I had to address a meeting at the peace committee of the United Nations. The meeting was declared at 6 p.m. I

even saw the invitation cards printed by them that the meeting would begin at six o'clock. But the friend who had invited me rang me up and said: "Miss Thakar, please come at 6.30 not at 6 o'clock." I said: "Well the card says the meeting will be at 6 o'clock." Then the lady said: "It's Chilean time, 6 means 6.30."

People know that the meeting is at six o'clock but they won't be there. Ten past six, 15 past six, and I did reach there by 20 past six and people kept coming in till 35 past six. Is this the way to utilize time?

Chile is not an exception, there are many other countries, where this happens. They have the watches, the clocks and when there is an agreement six means six, why should 6 mean 6.15 or 6.30? But that is what we do with ourselves.

Now we feel that it is something ridiculous, but we do it with ourselves. We promise ourselves and we don't utilize time, we postpone.

Proper utilization of symbols like time, symbols like words; do we realize what a great responsibility it is to use a language, to use speech? Animals don't have speech, they have sounds. But our ancestors created the language: manipulating, engineering sound energies. What a great event it must have been to formulate a language - a beautiful thing. Words are meant for communication, not to hide what we feel inside, but to communicate what is there. And how do we use words, how do we use verbalization: exaggerations, overstatements, understatement, non-committal words, expressions, hypocrisies, pretensions; you know all the impurities on the verbal level.

It does not happen only in the political field, in family relationships see what games we play with ourselves and our partners. The brutal misuse of verbalization is one of the most important causes of psychological misery, suffering.

That word is a symbol, the languages are symbols. There are many other symbols, we cannot go into

all of them. The music that you heard last night or perhaps you are going to hear this evening, the notes, the minor, the major keys, they are creations of the human mind, the human brain.

To see the symbols as symbols, to realize that they are limited, they are conditioned and to use them in their relative fields with competence and skill, is our responsibility.

To be aware of the timelessness of life, and yet to be able to use this symbol and concept of time properly, that's the beauty and complexity of human life. One cannot say, "Well life is timeless, therefore I don't care for time." There are people who do that, if they become aware of the totality they ignore and neglect the particular. They forget that the particular is involved and included in the totality.

In the parts of the world in which I was born and brought up, there is a very criminal negligence of the details of life. They get intoxicated with the idea of non-duality, divinity, timelessness, but watch their daily behaviour. They say that is all maya, that is all illusion.

Our relationship with particulars in all precision, accuracy, with great respect for life, along with the awareness of the wholeness and the totality, that is what equipoise or balance implies.

When there is an awareness of the timelessness of life and there is consciousness of time being the symbol necessary for collective life, one uses that and is still rooted in the awareness.

The state of yoga implies: awareness of the whole, of the total, awareness of the immeasurable, unnameable, indescribable reality, while you are in the midst of particulars, fragments, symbols and ideas.

To be able to be aware of one, and deal with the other, then there is grace, beauty and elegance in life.

Up till now people have been devoted or dedicated to either of these, either to the particulars or to

the totality. And the awareness of totality has caused people renouncing life, retiring from life in the name of meditations and samadhis, isolating themselves; and on the other hand those who became engrossed with the particulars lost the contact with the total.

So a new perspective where the two will be blended together: grip on the moment and awareness of eternity, grip on the particular and awareness of the whole, the total. A new perspective, a religious or a holistic perspective is vitally necessary in order to resolve the problems with which we are confronted.

We will turn to our psychological world, observe the contents of the psychological world and learn to deal and to utilize that properly without imbalance, without impurity, without violence.

If and when that is done, one can turn to the third aspect of our inquiry.

When one has and if one has dealt with the physical and the psychological, put it in order, put it in rhythm, put it in a spontaneous equipoise and balance, when and if this is done, then one can turn to the transpsychological world, that which is beyond the brain and the mind, beyond time and space.

Why do we have to turn to the transpsychological or the spiritual, the religious?

Obviously because the psychological world, the thought has failed to give man peace with himself or with the world, thought has failed to set man free of inhibitions, imbalances, thought has failed to enable human beings to create a society without violence and barbarity.

It was a god that was worshipped; this thought.

But we see all around us on one hand magnificent inventions that have taken place through the exercise of thought: the spaceships, the missiles, the computers, magnificent things, biological engineering, inventions in medicine, in surgery.

On one hand in the framework of time and space

thought has conferred many beautiful things upon human life, and on the other it has failed us in making us whole, or enabling us to live in peace and harmony.

Obviously one cannot live without freedom, peace or love. One suffers when there is lack of freedom of harmony which is love or peace.

You know freedom is a spiritual necessity, it's a transpsychological need. You may give one the best house, the best food and the best clothing, but if there is no freedom the person is going to suffer. The state may provide everything that the person needs physically, and even psychological entertainment, leisure and even organize for them the minutest detail of daily life, but if the individual is not free inwardly, or not free in the sense that there is no freedom of expression or action, then the best of the food becomes like ashes in the mouth.

Freedom is not only a political value, it's a spiritual, a religious value, it's a transpsychological need of man. It is as much necessary for the flowering of human beings as bread is necessary for the body. Organized religions, and thought through those organized religions, political ideologies, and thought through the political ideologies has failed. There is no love, no peace and no freedom. Obviously it's the challenge now to transcend this thought mechanism and to find out what is beyond the brain, what is beyond the conditioned mind.

Meditation is necessary for such exploration. When one says: "Let the mind go into abeyance"; one is not creating a ritual. But the exploration cannot take place through the movement of mind, not through knowing and experiencing. Therefore scientifically it is necessary to let the mind go into abeyance. One will have to educate oneself, allot some time, dedicate some energy for that relaxation, which we, for the verbal convenience call "being in silence, being in solitude."

The mind doesn't go into abeyance immediately, it

has been used for centuries so automatically. The momentum is there and it exposes itself, well let it expose. One sits there patiently and quietly, just watching that, doesn't do anything to that momentum, doesn't choose or reject anything from it, just watches it, so that from conscious watching one grows into the state of observation, where there is no observer sitting consciously saying "I am observing."

In that duration, while one is learning, it may happen that for some moments the state of observation, reaction free attention, is there and then again one lapses, begins to float with the thought current. Again, after some time one becomes aware that there was a lapse. This does happen during the period of education. It happens when you learn anything, whether it is music, art, painting, dancing. That's why, with patience, one has to sit with oneself till one has grown into the state of observation where there is no observer.

As we are sitting here, you do not have to remember or you're not conscious what your name is, where your house is, it is there, but you are not conscious of it.

In the same way, observation becomes such a natural thing that throughout the day, whatever you may be doing, the state of observation is there. Then one doesn't have to sit anymore. But relaxing into non-action physically, relaxing into non-speaking verbally and creating an opportunity for the complex mind to go into abeyance, willingly, seems to be necessary.

Perhaps if a generation does it with itself, their children may not have to do it at all. They might inherit the state of observation as we have inherited the state of self-consciousness.

In the state of observation without the observer, without the consciousness that one is observing, what we call the dimension of silence comes to life, all the cerebral conditioned energies have gone into non-action or abeyance. There is no

experiencer, please do see this. In the dimension of silence there is no experiencer, there is no observer, there is no doer. It's a vast ocean of inner emptiness, inner space.

If this is allowed to happen then that whole inner space or emptiness, if one is not afraid, if one does not turn away in fear, then the whole space begins to vibrate with energies which is non-cerebral.

Energy, born of that silence, could be called intelligence, which has nothing to do with inheritance.

This activation of the universal energy of intelligence can take place as a physical fact in every human being if and when a human being explores personally. Beyond the brain and intellect is the unconditioned energy of intelligence, which has no center, and therefore, which does not separate life in the 'me' and the 'not-me', which has a perception born of non-duality and a response born of spontaneity.

We were talking about the birth of a new human being. The transformation in the content of consciousness, this is where the transformation takes place.

Instead of functioning through the consciousness, which is heavy with the total human past thought and knowledge, one grows into the energy of intelligence, which is lighter than a feather. It has no content, it's a perceptive sensitivity, which begins to vibrate not only in the brain, not only in some one part of the body, it vibrates in the whole of the body. Through the vibration of that energy the eyes perceive and the ears hear and listen. It's quite a new relationship with the world. Instead of functioning on the psychological level one grows into a transpsychological dimension of intelligence, where there is no fragmentation, therefore no fear and no isolation.

We were talking about freedom as a spiritual need. Here in the dimension of intelligence is unconditional freedom. On the mental level we are tethered

to the past. Whenever we try to move through the mind, the past moves along with it. It doesn't allow us to move without the whole paraphernalia of the heritage. But in silence there is the freedom to move without the burden of the past, then perceptions have quite a different quality.

Perception born of non-duality, the awareness of the totality, it's quite different and the response also is not for the preservation of the I-consciousness, or the identity of the 'me', but the response is with the awareness of the whole in relation to the particular.

I don't know if I am making it sufficiently clear.

So freedom lies in this non-cerebral dimension, non-cerebral energy of intelligence.

In the spontaneity of response, love comes to life, as in the cessation of the movement of the conditioned mind, freedom comes to life. Peace is the by-product of this non-dual state, it is the by-product of the movement of intelligence.

Because there is no image of oneself, because there is no past to carry, there is no possibility of getting hurt, getting wounded, there is the state of innocence.

My friends, freedom, love or peace are not mere words. They are as much a reality as the sunshine, or the drizzling rain or the raindrops have a reality for you.

Love is the sunshine of inner life, and freedom is the air without which it is difficult to live.

So this morning we went into the proclamation of the science of life, which is yoga, which proclaimed thousands of years ago, that every human being without an exception has a potential to move through relationships of being inwardly in peace and equipoise and outwardly precise, accurate and balanced at the sensual level. This is what we have to learn.

We proceeded to say that harmony seems to be the basic principle of life around us. So it is the responsibility of a self-conscious human animal to

awaken that harmony in oneself and create societies on the basis of that harmony and co-operation.

We proceeded to say that for that one has to become an individual, to watch one's life, to realize that we are just machines, that we are moving mechanically, repeating habit patterns. There is an urge for freedom. One observes, watches, first creates orderliness, rhythm and then learns to live without habits and becomes an individual. Not living a second or third-hand life, repeating somebody else's experiences, conditionings or habit patterns, dished out by religions. One finds out what the rhythm is for one's life. There may be different rhythms for different individuals.

So one becomes an individual, and then one learns to utilize the heritage properly, the physical, the psychological and then explore what is beyond the brain.

In the timelessness of inner silence, in the non-separateness or non-fragmentation of inner silence, and in the release of that energy of intelligence, which vibrates and pulsates in life without a center and without a circumference one finds what we call truth, freedom and love.

It's impossible to find them on the mental level. Love is not of mind, and freedom is not of thought, it is not born of thought. They are the flowers that bloom in the non-cerebral realm.

This morning we have gone into the transpsychological needs of human life, the spiritual value of truth, freedom and peace. And how it is within the reach of every human being to probe, to explore and be there!

Thank you.

THE YOGA OF LIVING

A newsletter for friends of Vimala Thakar

VIMALA'S WORK IN INDIA & THE WORLD

Vimala's entry into public life began very early in her life while she was in twenties. She joined Land-Gift Movement in 1953. That involved travelling and speaking throughout India.

While at University she had represented India at the World Youth Assembly in 1952. In 1959 she travelled through Europe in connection with the Sarvodaya work. She worked on World Peace Brigade along with Donald Groom, Rev. Michael Scott & Martin Luther King, in the fifties.

We are presenting a short resume of her work in India and abroad for the benefit of "Contact" readers.

1953 to 1963: Land Gift Movement.

Collected 200,000 hectares of land and distributed it. This work took her to all the states and their districts. Her meetings were exceptionally big ranging from 5,000 to 50,000 people in rural and urban areas.

1959 to 1962: Worked on the international level.

Went as a delegate of Land Gift Movement to Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Norway & Sweden.

1962: Dropped from Land Gift Movement.

Started speaking on her own in Europe. The "Work" began in Holland and spread over to Switzerland, France, England, Norway and Sweden by 1966. In 1968 she visited U.S.A. for the first time and has been visiting it since then practically every alternative year.

1968: Vimala Prakashan Trust was formed in India.

1972: Jeevan Yoga Foundation was organized.

Vimala Prakashan Trust began publishing Vimala's talks in Hindi and Gujarati. Gradually they started publishing English talks also.

Meditation Camps, Self-education camps and lecture

series at various universities brought Vimala once again to the national stage of India.

1979: Vimala wanted to curtail her visits to Europe, U.S.A., England etc. She even dissolved the Foundation in her name operating in Holland. She dissolved "Friends of Vimala" group in U.S.A.

1980 & 1981: Vimala spent in India travelling with 10 companions throughout the North Indian States. She accepted responsibility of guiding the projects for rural reconstruction and elimination of unemployment in: (1) Bikaner District - Rajasthan (2) Bandal in Ahmedabad District - Gujarat.

1982 - 1986: By 1982 the international pressure to visit U.S.A. and Australia was so intense that she visited Australia in 1982, U.S.A. & Holland in 1983. She visited Chile in South America the same year. It began all over again. Australia in 1984 and U.S.A. - Canada, Holland, Chile, Argentina in 1985, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, Australia in 1986 and so on and so on.

1983: In 1983 she toured through Punjab which was terror-stricken, with a view to bring it to the notice of the Sikhs and Hindus that they were **to live together** as Indian citizens, and human beings.

1984: In 1984 September a Human Brotherhood was launched in Punjab to conduct peace work. The peace work includes organising youth camps, lecture tours to emphasize that violence can never solve human problems.

1985: In 1985 Gujarat was aflame. Riots broke out among the Hindu and the Muslim communities. Houses were burnt down. People were burnt alive. Hundreds must have died and thousands had become homeless. Vimala was in India during May, June and July 1985. She marched through the riot stricken areas of Ahmedabad city which has three million people. In the midst of burnt down houses and sorrow stricken inhabitants a "Peace Centre" was established to help relief work and arrest communal hysteria.

Human Brotherhood - Biradari - was launched in

Gujarat. It has spread its work in eight districts of Gujarat. It conducted a survey of the Gujarat-Pakistan border area with the help of rural youth living in the villages.

Rural Reconstruction Centre

A rural reconstruction centre was founded in Rajkot district in 1982. It does research and experiments in:

1. Making cows and oxen economically viable to the farmers.
2. Exploration of solar energy and its application to cottage and village industries.
3. A workshop for training rural youth in intermediary technology.
4. It has opened basic education schools in surrounding villages as well as a hostel for post-basic education school started recently by the Rural Reconstruction Centre.
5. The project covers 25 surrounding villages and has succeeded in getting cooperation from the people as well as the state government.
6. A youth camp for age group 18 to 28 is organized jointly by the Rural Reconstruction Centre and Jeevan Yoga Foundation every year in December. This year the camp would be held from 24th to 30th December. 175 young men and women will participate in the camp.

Vimala would visit Blue Mountain School at Ooty to conduct a series of talks and discussions in January 1987. She will visit Sri Lanka also in January 1987 to give three public talks in Colombo and conduct a Meditation Camp at Kandy.

Besides this work Vimala spends at least 8 weeks at Dalhousie to conduct intensive self-education work with serious enquirers.

Vimala's General Schedule:

Two months at Mount Abu

Two months at Dalhousie

Three months outside India for Meditation Camps

and discourses

Three months travelling through India, visiting the projects and conducting youth camps as well as Meditation Camps

Two months for Human Brotherhood work

It has been and is a life of constant travelling and being with people. Not that Vimala claims to solve any problems. She shares her love and understanding wherever she lives or travels. Vimala does not belong to any organized religion though is born in a Hindu family in India. Her spirituality embraces total life. Communication is her medium of Action.

The countries that invite her to speak arrange her passage and lodging - boarding. Vimala is generally accompanied by a lady assistant. She is a strict vegetarian but not a vegan.

VIMAL PRAKASHAN TRUST

1. Publishes her talks given in India
2. Publishes monthly magazines in:
 1. English
 2. Hindi
 3. Gujarati

Address for correspondence: Mr. Arvind Desai, 5 Theosophical Housing Society, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad 380 009, India.

JEEVAN YOGA FOUNDATION

1. Organizes youth camps
2. Organizes Meditation camps
3. Restructuring of Rural Economy Projects in Gujarat:
 1. Mandal - District Ahmedabad
 2. Gopaldham - District Rajkot

Kalyanbhai Shah, 18 New Brahma Kshytriya Society, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad 380 006, Gujarat, India

HUMAN BROTHERHOOD (INSANI BIRADARI)

Human Brotherhood work is being carried out in:

1. Punjab

2. Gujarat

3. Bihar

This work is meant to consolidate the forces of secularism, Humanism and Democratic Socialism
Vishnu Pandya, Jansatta - Loksatta, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad 380 001, Gujarat, India

WORK WITH ENQUIRERS' GROUPS

Work with enquirers' goes on in:

1. Mount Abu

2. Dalhousie

SYNTHESIS OF SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY

The work of synthesis of science and spirituality is carried on mainly at

1. Chandigarh (Punjab)

2. Dalhousie (H.P.)

3. Mount Abu (Rajasthan)

Dr. Sampurna Singh, 586 Sector 10D Chandigarh
160 010

VIMALA THAKAR SEMINAR

during Friday 7 - Saturday 15 August 1987

Subject: "SPIRITUALITY in daily LIFE" and a SILENCE CAMP during Sunday 16 - 20 August 1987

Place: The resort Bovendonk in Hoeven

Registration address: Vimala Thakar Seminar, Marianne and Cees Smit, Top Naefflaan 77, 1403 EZ Bussum, Holland. Phone: 02159-12834. Each participant has to send a registration card. On April 15th, 1987 the possibility to register will be closed. You will find more details in Nr. 20 of CONTACT or in the special folder. Concerning the SILENCE CAMP, Vimala has written that the max. of 30 persons can be dropped and some explanation about the program of this camp.

1. people shall live together in silence.
2. they will be able to communicate with one another at lunch and dinner-time. The rest of the time they shall observe silence.
3. the participants shall sit together in silence

with Vimala three times a day, 9.30-10.30, 11.30-12.30, 15.30-16.30.

4. after supper there will be an informal session with Vimala in which the participants could ask questions about silence and meditation. Approximately the time would be 20.00-21.15.

FRANCE: Session from 22nd to 28th of August 1987 included. Near to DIE (in La Drome, 60 KM from Valence). Price: about 1100 FF with full Accomodation-Campers 400 FF. Possibility to have meals in the Center with additional fees.

Forty beds are available (in 2-3-4 pers. rooms). Forty people for camping. Vegetarian food. Bus service from Valence, for people coming by train. Daily program: Silence with Vimala in the morning, followed by a talk. Silence and question/answer meeting in the afternoon. Possibilities for Yoga, tai'chi, etc. early in the morning. The demands being already very numerous, it will unfortunately be impossible to accept everybody.

Information: Maryse Vergné, 20 rue Lisse St. Louis, 13100 Aix en Provence, France.

CANADA: 16th-29th Sept. 1987, Gatherings in Ottawa.

Information: Pramad Mehta, 284 Somerset St. East, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6V8, Canada

U.S.A. Boston-Gatherings

Sunday Oct. 4, 1987, 1/2 day

Evenings Oct. 5 and 6 and a 5 day camp Oct. 8-12-'87.

Information: Spiritual Education and Enquiry, 29 Burberry Road, Lexington, MA. 02173, U.S.A.