

Three Audiences
with
His Holiness Shantanand Saraswati

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R.G. Would you tell His Holiness what a joy it is to be in His presence once again and will you thank him most sincerely for granting me this great privilege, which is so much appreciated not only by myself but by all my friends in London.

Just before his death Dr. Roles said: "The connection with a Realized Man is not subject to physical presence, or death, and belongs to a different time. The Realized Man has accepted us, all our Society, and nothing can break that bond. We were admitted to the Tradition of H.H. in a formal ceremony. The bond between master and pupil is never broken. It is for ever."

Could H.H. tell us more about this? What is expected from us as a Society to maintain this connection from our side?

H.H. The statement made by Dr. Roles before his death is not only good but very important in relation to proper understanding of the Advaita system. Even the original Shankaracharya himself said something similar.

Within all this creation—whatever there is—there is no duality of any sort. All individuals are aspects of the same Atman or Brahman. In spite of this Advaita, a tradition to communicate the knowledge received by one to another has been evolved for practical purposes. This is the tradition of teacher and disciple. Unless the tradition is held with some respect the communication of true knowledge is difficult to materialise.

The message of Advaita is that the creation in its genesis, existence and dissolution is held by a constant principle in its full glory of consciousness and bliss. This is expressed in the term Sat-Chit-Ananda, that is—Sat for existence, Chit for consciousness and Ananda for bliss. This principle always remains the same. Shankara in his own words and deeds treated his teacher as an embodiment of Param-Atman, and therefore paid him respect by calling him Dakshnamurti, the deity whose form is propitious and conducive to the well being of the world. This tradition which has been fully understood, and very ably described, by Dr. Roles is for the eternal advancement of knowledge, leading ultimately to one's liberation and the realization of oneness of oneself with the Brahman.

As far as maintaining the connection is concerned there are two ways. One is the way of the natural phenomena, or objects of pleasure. Everyone is desirous of things which create a sense of pleasure such as objects of vision, sound, taste, touch and smell. As in nature they have a cyclical relationship. One approaches these objects with great intensity and relish but sooner or later, according to one's physical capacity, one reaches a moment of satisfaction after which no more pleasure may be had. This saturation may be temporary but very real

and any application of force to prolong the pleasure ends in revulsion. Only after a gap of time may the desire and intensity arise again and so on goes the cycle of search and revulsion of pleasure in worldly things.

The other way is the way of Ananda or bliss which arises from the conscious search for liberation. This is the spiritual desire for union with the limitless consciousness and bliss. Because it is limitless there is no question of saturation and revulsion. Bliss, being limitless, simply keeps on increasing. If by any chance one feels saturation and revulsion in the spiritual work—that now I have had enough—then it must be said that the desire is not purely spiritual and is therefore bound to a cycle of time. In the flow of spiritual bliss, neither the giver or the taker ever feels the need to stop. Such is the relation between a real teacher and a real disciple. Everything else is propelled by ego which is limited. The Society, if really engaged in spiritual work, will keep the relationship continuous.

R.G. As this desire and connection belongs to a different time, is there any need, when the teacher is replaced by another teacher, to seek for a further connection with the inner circle of Realized Men?

H.H. Consciousness is eternal and independent. Knowledge is the aspect which transcends the usual cycle of time. The realm of eternity is held by True Knowledge and traditions are created to manifest eternal consciousness in the changing world. The Knowledge of Advaita is the only sure means and the tradition involves teacher and disciple. Any suitable person appointed to carry on the tradition takes over all the responsibilities and thus participates in the eternal time. By the forces of nature every individual is different in qualities but not in substance. Therefore it is obvious that although teachers, through the tradition, manifest the consciousness in their own way the principles of Advaita remain the same. This is how the tradition and the relationship with the tradition works.

Here we have four centres of Shankaracharya and they all convey the same knowledge in their own way; only the truth and the discipline remain the same. There are three ways to put this wisdom into practice according to the nature of human beings. These are the systems of Karma, Upasana and Jnana: action, devotion and knowledge. Everyone uses all three in certain measure but one may be predominant. Those who work on knowledge are Nirakara-vadin and they follow the Nirguna Brahman. They believe that knowledge of truth burns away all impurities of body and mind (Antahkarana) and having realization of Advaita the individual becomes totally liberated. People choose one of the ways according to their capacity.

The tradition of the Shankaracharyas begins with Narayana and is kept alive—and will be kept alive—through the tradition in eternity. Everyone who is appointed to the duty is called Shankaracharya. Thus the tradition is eternal and the relationship with it is eternal. A district magistrate takes his place in court and administers the affairs of Justice, Law and Order. If he is transferred or passes away another will take charge and carry on the work. The

only difference is of personality; some are gentle, others are hard or very hard; some are mature while others may be less mature. But these differences are superficial; they all ultimately learn to do their work and such differences must never be given undue importance.

The tradition of Advaita is beyond moving time. The true knowledge will always be available to those who seek it and make efforts to realize non-duality.

The relationship which Dr. Roles spoke of is equally eternal but it can only be kept operative by a conscious relationship. It can be kept alive when the next Shankaracharya takes over. Just as after the passing away of Dr. Roles the relationship is kept alive. The same will be true for the future.

Not long ago, the Shankaracharya of Kamakoti visited this place. Their language is different and daily routines are different—even their eating habits are different—but fundamental principles remain the same. The apparent differences do not hinder unity because principles remain the same.

Personal likings should not be allowed to overwhelm one's mind, and the main thrust must always be towards Advaita and true knowledge. This alone is the real link and the real relationship. Real aim of this relationship is the realization that 'I am the Brahman'. Once realized, all differences simply disappear as if they had never existed—which is truly so.

R.G. To put it quite simply, and thinking into the future, will the new Shankaracharya know about the Study Society?

H.H. The new teacher takes over everything but apparent differences cannot be ruled out. The relationship is not really of the body where differences abound. The teacher does not give importance to differences; in the spiritual context—there being no difference in principles and procedures—there is no problem for unity. Apart from the new teacher, one should also consider the new disciples. The connection is only of knowledge and it is the responsibility of both to work in the direction of ultimate unity. The flux is cyclical and continuous but knowledge of truth is constant. As long as true knowledge remains the point of contact the relationship gets readjusted in the course of time.

At this point the tape recorder broke down. General consternation, and even H.H. left his dais to help in trying to get it going again. No success, so the Ashram tape recorder had to be borrowed. All this robbed us of precious time.

R.G. Could His Holiness say that on a different time scale the Society will be able to get help in future from H.H., Dr. Roles and Mr. Ouspensky?

H.H. The relationship between teacher and disciple is on three levels based on physical body, subtle body and causal or spiritual body. The spiritual relationship never breaks down

and remains constant, but this needs no help because fundamentally the Atman is the same everywhere, pure and One. When the physical body falls it simply disintegrates into its constituent elements and no connection or relationship is possible. The subtle body is the realm of knowledge and reason: communication through knowledge establishes a relationship. Since knowledge is left by the teacher it can be used for help at any time one wakes up to the wisdom it embodies that has been recorded but not truly assimilated. To presume to receive direct help from a departed soul seems unnecessary if his counsel went unheeded while he was alive. Nevertheless, the body of knowledge left by the teacher is almost like his subtle body which can be of help only if the search is acute and the attention is pointed.

There are cases when people seem to receive visions or messages. In most cases such as dreams etc., the content is usually a product of personal intensity or just imagination triggered by certain pre-conditions. Not much importance should be given to these. Even if the contents of such visions are useful it cannot be presumed to be necessarily coming through direct communication. For individuals or for a Society, the best course is to receive help by attending to the real meaning of the knowledge made available—by discussion, reflection, contemplation and a strong resolution for transformation. All that which has been given by Dr. Roles, Mr. Ouspensky or His Holiness is alive and helpful, ever-ready for assimilation and help.

R.G. When we were last here, we asked His Holiness questions about the connection with our teacher at the spiritual level. He made it very clear that this was possible, but that it is very rare because one needs a very pure Buddhi with no element of Rajas or Tamas. However, would he confirm that it is of great benefit to the disciple to be in the physical presence of the Teacher? Surely this brings benefits which could not be had in any other way? Would it be possible therefore to organise small groups of people to come and just be in his presence and perhaps meditate? This is a great wish expressed by a number of people in London.

H.H. Basically the door is open to anyone to receive whatever influences one can. But if the desire for physical presence is motivated even remotely by ego or personality then such a union could not be advised because it would rather create obstacles instead of removing them. It does sometimes happen that persons use such an opportunity to enhance their position, not so much on the spiritual way but at a social level. It is much better to avoid such misfortunes. But if the heart is clear and mind is devoid of egotistic plans, people with Sattvic Buddhi and devotion may be allowed.

17 April

R.G. The belief in the practice of the Meditation is what unites all shades of opinion at Colet. It is our strength and growing point, the corner stone of all our activities. Yet people feel they are not taking it far enough, that there are obstacles which are not being surmounted.

How does one recognise different states of consciousness in oneself—like Samadhi? Although I am devoted to the practice of meditation and find great refreshment in it, yet nothing I have experienced in meditation comes anywhere near to the power of an extraordinary experience I had many years ago (during the War) when everything I saw outside me was united in me and through me in the most astonishing way. I was everything. It is this experience which has kept me in the work—through many vicissitudes—though I have never tasted anything like it again. Is it wrong to expect such glimpses to come from sincere meditation?

H.H. When a definite and positive turning towards the spiritual way does take place, events such as described manifest. This is a turning point or a point of departure from the material realm for the divine realm. Although it may be felt as an experience in fact it is establishing a relationship with the spiritual realm. This impulse expresses itself as total unity with the cosmos. The unity of the Vyashti with the Samashti. Since the event establishes a positive relationship it can not and need not be repeated. If repeated it will lose its worth, and become commonplace. Once the relation is established it is for ever and beyond cyclical repetitive time. Thus it is good that it has not been repeated. It must last a lifetime and its memory is enough to keep one on the way through all vicissitudes, high or low, arising in one's life. The event itself is not the fulfilment of the way but the beginning of the way and leaves enough to work on. This is also not Samadhi.

Samadhi is the state of equilibrium which is the state of consciousness as it is in reality—without any involvement with Nature (Prakriti). Samadhi cannot be equated with the void because consciousness cannot be eliminated from anywhere at any time. What happens is that the body and the mind become still. The physical body comes to complete rest and balance, the activities of mind stop and the Pranas—the breath between the two—become harmonious and gentle. This brings about complete stillness from within and without, but certainly not the void. This still awareness is either Savikalpa or Nirvikalpa. Savikalpa samadhi is a lower type during which intuitive aspects or ideas of divine glory do persist. The

superior samadhi is Nirvikalpa, when, apart from the awareness that is Self, or the consciousness in its original form, there arises no intuition or any other concept—divine or otherwise. This is the real state of the Self and this is the real samadhi, the state of equilibrium without Sankalpa or Vikalpa (primary and secondary desires)

R.G. Could His Holiness tell me something about this? I am aware of a glowing radiance when I have become quite silent. Is this the beginning of the experience of 'reality'? Is this a glimpse of what permeates and unites everything with its radiance? Or is it just a manifestation of energies re-adjusting themselves through the body?

H.H. The experience described arises from the radiance of Sattva. Like every other activity in the universe, the three gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are always present even in Meditation. But one may predominate. Sattva always manifests as light because this is its nature. If Rajas predominates, the circling thoughts and other mental activities will predominate. Tamas dominating brings about heaviness and totally mechanical movements and sleep as well. When meditation is proper, Sattva must predominate. This is quite natural and not a necessary product of any effort. Meditation is proper only when the three factors, the mantra, the meditation and the meditator become one and the divisions are lost, though all are present. This light of Sattva is subtler than the light of the Sun or Moon. It is the light that is consciousness. This is the best situation to arise while meditation is being practised. Moments may arise when in that light of Sattva no forms, not even of one's own body or Antahkarana would come into one's awareness. There is light and light alone and nothing else whatsoever. Another aspect of this fact is that it is not an experience once only in life, it must naturally and necessarily be repeated. The more the better and, if possible, every time one sits for meditation. This alone is the evidence of proper meditation. As far as the knowledge of reality is concerned, one knows the reality of the Self internally but it may not have any valid relationship to reality outside.

R.G. May I ask a practical question? When meditating I am conscious of a continuous tension at the bridge of my nose. Is this to do with Ida, Pingala and Sushumna and should we know more about breathing?

H.H. At the upper extremity of the nose, (the bridge, not the tip of the nose), is located one of the Chakras. What arises there is just an awareness, not a tension, and one will find that the light shines from this place itself. Here, the Ida, Pingala and Sushumna come together. Breathing becomes very gentle and harmonious, almost imperceptible. All this happens from the rise of Sattva. In Yogic literature, this centre is called the seat of Shivashakti union. Shiva represents consciousness and Shakti its power. They form the active force of consciousness in the individual. During the proper act of meditation the power of consciousness within the individual begins to rise from its natural location at Muladhara,

the basic Chakra, which is a location associated with Ganesha. If it is not hindered it rises and passing through all the other Chakras [*plexuses of the autonomic nervous system*] it reaches this location and shines as the light of Sattva. While rising it naturally regulates all the other centres. Just as when the director of a factory goes on a tour of inspection, all the workers and officers become alert and conscious of their responsibilities. Thus this movement upwards regulates every aspect of bodily functions as well as the functions of the subtle body or Antahkarana. The light may begin in a small way but as meditation deepens the light expands and will eventually enlighten the whole creation in which neither one's own bodily form is known nor any other form. In this state everything seems to merge into the light which is in any case its Cause.

R.G. If sex energy is the source of power in one's search for Self-Realisation, does the lessening of the sexual urge in old age mean a lessening of the power available for this search?

H.H. Meditation is a natural antidote to the natural ageing process and loss of energy. Thus there is no question of a lessening of the power available for spiritual work if one has taken to meditation. The energy is conscious energy and in its physical form it is manifested as sex energy. The conscious energy works in two ways. One is the active rôle and the other is the passive. Usually the active rôle is accepted as the one that matters, but this is not so. What is known as sex energy is associated with desire and its active expression on the physical level. The spiritual work involves transcending desires and withholding activity and its realm is metaphysical. Sex energy is rather the crude application on a gross field which cannot really operate on the spiritual field unless it is transformed and transmuted. Meditation does this.

Astanga Yoga (the eight classical steps of Patanjali) prescribes various ways and means to conserve the sexual energy and then transmute it for spiritual work. Very few succeed because most practitioners get involved in the first half of the discipline so that the transmutation is either delayed or misused in refined physical activities or in the supernatural field. The system of meditation as proposed now is called Rajayoga—the regal way. It is neither hard nor cumbersome but very simple and also comfortable. If practised simply and thus properly, it is capable of replenishing all lost energy for further spiritual work. Any one, no matter whether young or old can take to it.

H.H. says that whenever meditating he used to take Padmasana—the lotus position. Now he has changed to a natural, comfortable position, but this change does not affect the quality of meditation.

When through the proper practise of meditation the Sushumna begins to rise, it carries with it Ojas and Tejas (pervading vitality and brilliant light) which shine at the Ajna chakra (in the forehead) through the rise of Sattva. This energy moves upwards, whereas all sexual use of energy moves downwards. One is for Rama (spiritual) the other for Kama (physical).

Even when one has lost most of one's physical energy, the meditation can be practised lying flat. But this is rare and yet is effective as a help on the spiritual level. Astanga Yoga is the hard way. Raja Yoga of meditation is the simple and royal way. The third is an exceptional way for the disabled. It is, therefore, unnecessary to be alarmed at the approaching ageing process. Meditation will act as an antidote to that fear of lessening of power.

R.G. Now that I have virtually retired from my professional work, I have more time and opportunity for meditation. Is it important to set a pattern of time for morning and evening and keep it un-altered, or can it be varied, above a set minimum, according to circumstances? Would H.H. advise?

H.H. Nature has provided two transitional periods when darkness is overtaken by light and when light is enclosed in darkness. At these periods neither is predominant. Light charges with activity and darkness brings the activity to rest. Meditation is neither a vigorous activity nor is it intended for sleep, and yet there is an awareness. The natural transitional periods in the morning and evening are most suited to meditation and this is why they are called periods of Brahman. Therefore it is advisable to meditate regularly at these periods as meditators are in a way connected to each other on the universal level at this time. Just as one can tune into radio, one can easily tune into meditation at these transitional periods without much Vikshepa or disturbances. If, due to unavoidable circumstances, it is not possible to meditate at these junctures one can meditate in any secluded place which is not affected by too much activity of the day or indolence of the night. The place chosen must be peaceful.

One can meditate as much as possible but only as much as one naturally feels like. Under no circumstances should it become compulsive or oppressive in order to force one's way into the Self. At least half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the evening must be kept to, regularly.

The Audience ended with a question from Dr. Peter Fenwick, who also sent messages of loving gratitude to His Holiness.

P.F. Could His Holiness let me know about the precise process of the moment of enlightenment? Does the thinking mind become suspended? Could he tell me whether there is an actual act on the part of the disciple or is the moment of enlightenment quite spontaneous?

H.H. The moment of enlightenment is also called the moment of Self-Realisation. Fundamentally the Self exists as pure light and is ever present within every individual. Thus Self Realisation or enlightenment implies the elimination of ignorance caused by worldly education, untrue philosophical systems and imperfect religious traditions. All that a disciple is expected to do is to undo the false knowledge and it cannot be done very quickly. So a course of discipline becomes necessary. The process is only of elimination of impediments

caused by ignorance. Discipline cannot work without the help of mind and its ability to reason. When enlightenment takes place then mind becomes still but not suspended. It is therefore true that disciplined action is called for from the disciple to pave the way for enlightenment. The rest is spontaneous. Mystic traditions call this spontaneity by another name such as the Grace of God, which just happens without any known external cause—that is, automatically. Automatic is Self-matic. The question of Grace has been much misinterpreted. If one takes its literal meaning then one needs to wait upon the God out there and this creates duality and in duality true enlightenment is not possible. Real Grace is of the Self.

There are two approaches to enlightenment. One flashes as “All this I am”. This is the way of Anvaya, the process of positive reckoning and understanding. This approach is incomplete. The other approach is called Vyatireka and it flashes as if “There is nothing else but I”. This is total enlightenment—the real Advaita—after which one sees the same Self everywhere all the time.

Aham or the feeling of oneSelf is primary and the knowledge of Idam—‘that’—is secondary. The reason is simple. Without the existence of Aham or ‘I’ there is no possibility of the knowledge of Idam or ‘that’. When unity is seen from the position of Idam or ‘That’ which exists in the Universe, the enlightenment is incomplete. When one sees only the Self and nothing else, then enlightenment is complete through the process of Vyatireka, elimination or transcendence until the reality of the Self alone flashes.

For example, one can count all manifest forms of the element of earth, Prthivi. The stones, sand, clay, pebbles, vegetation, animals, birds and even human bodies, their houses and costumes and ornaments are all made of Prthivi. To see all these forms separately as made of Prthivi is Anvaya and to see Prthivi alone is Vyatireka without Anvaya; one can never reach complete enlightenment without Vyatireka.

This is the process.

18 April

R.G. May we start with some questions from people in London, which are mostly about Meditation? As I said yesterday many people feel that the practise must be taken further, they feel 'stuck' and some feel the need for a new start.

But before that, in the light of what H.H. told us yesterday, which was so extremely helpful, may I ask if the manifestation of Sattva during meditation is the same in everybody or do different types of people have different experiences?

H.H. Since every individual is different in their physical body, mental content and emotional disposition, every activity, even that of meditation is done differently. The difference in the balance of the Gunas, their character and nature, accounts for these differences. Therefore the result of meditation is different. It is not possible to say that everyone's meditation will result in the rise of Sattva, although the eventual possibility is there. Some might activate the rise of Rajas or Tamas according to their backgrounds. But as they progress in doing their meditation in a simple manner they would reach a level when the rise of Sattva would result.

In relation to the feeling of being stuck with the activity of meditation and the subsequent desire to begin afresh, one should understand the reasons for such feelings and desires. All activities have physical involvement but command and impetus is given only by the mind. If one gets stuck in any activity the cause is that the mind has got stuck and therefore the importance is minimised. One need not feel frustrated and wish to begin afresh, for meditation does not work like that. One should begin from the same point where one feels stuck.

To rekindle these particles of reverence and vigour one needs prayer. The prayer should praise the glory of the Atman and Param-Atman while putting worldly attractions on the level they really deserve. One must surrender oneself; remind oneself of the early blissful moments, pay less importance to worldly achievements and request the Atman to help. The particles responsible for sloth or complacency will be purged of their effects and one will find the original enthusiasm and vigour will return once again to help unstick the situation. Accept the situation as it is and apply sincere prayers without looking for quick results. The path will be unlocked and progress will be definite.

Importance given to the qualities associated with the spiritual world or the divine world initiates a rational process of correction in the mental set up and this will release what seems to be stuck.

The decision to get unstuck has to be made by one's own Buddhi, with prayers, to pick up meditation with enthusiasm and vigour, the loss of which has almost stifled the act of meditation. The impediments and Viksepas of the mind will be dissolved if one has a prayer from the heart to do so. A new start is no answer to this problem.

R.G. May we now turn to some questions I have brought from London, although the answers which H.H. has already given makes it unnecessary to ask some of them.

E.G. It seems that meditation if constantly practised produces a more even functioning of the mind. Is it possible that this, in itself, produces complacency and stops further progress?

H.H. If the regular practice of meditation produces a more even functioning of the mind, there can never arise a situation of complacency. It would be unnatural. Therefore, if complacency does arise then meditation is not being practised properly. When meditation is practised properly the effect should be a new charge of energy, natural enthusiasm and vigour to use in works of the spirit. Just as after taking rest during the night one wakes up fresh and full of energy, the practise of meditation is also designed to recharge the spiritual energy. Half an hour of meditation is enough to keep one fresh and fit for 12 hours without any loss of energy or enthusiasm. After meditation one rises with a new fresh mind and when it has become an even-functioning mind then there is good reason for it to work rather better and not be complacent. This practise is not for creating better positions in the heavenly world of hereafter but in the earthly world of here and now. The good results must be seen even just after meditation. After having nourishing food one becomes capable of work, so after having spiritual nourishment during meditation one must necessarily engage in works of progress either of body, mind or spirit. Thus if complacency stops further progress, the meditation is not being practised properly.

A.B. In meditation, how can the vibrations of the Mantra be purified and refined? I find efforts to remember mySelf most spasmodic. It would be wonderful to have more continuity. How could this be?

H.H. Act of meditation through the means of mantra is to reach a state of total unity in which there is one single awareness and the division of meditator, meditation and mantra have merged into the pure consciousness that is the Self. The Mantra is a means, a vehicle, and no sooner than one reaches unity, the mantra as an entity does not prevail. So there is no question of making special effort to purify or refine its vibration. This would be extra meditational activity. The nature of our being and creation is such that every initiated act will slow down naturally which means that unless interfered with the mantra will merge into a single awareness. If due to Vikshepa the mantra is pushed out of awareness, then one needs to initiate it again and allow its natural course. The rest is unity and single awareness.

As far as remembering oneSelf is concerned, it is impossible to lose this entirely! The Self alone is the root of all knowledge. First is the awareness of oneSelf, and only then comes

knowledge of anything else. Aham is primary and Idam is secondary. Without the primary the secondary cannot exist. If the individual becomes preoccupied with the secondary because he gives it primary importance then one forgets and gets Idam for Aham. If one learns to give only secondary importance to all other things in the world, the Self becomes primary and one will find in all everyday affairs that the ever-present Self is not forgotten.

J.R His Holiness has instructed us to remember the Param-Atman at all times. This advice has been very difficult to follow and has met with little success. Recently a different approach has been tried, that of listening for the voice of Param-Atman. The act of listening automatically stills Manas and takes one to the stillness. Can. H.H. please say if listening for the voice of Param-Atman is the same as remembering Param-Atman and can he say more about the function of listening?

H.H. Remembering and listening are two very different activities. One remembers someone who has gone away as existing beyond the reach of sensory perception, but listening to voice of Param-Atman is possible if he is immanent and present close by. Remembering Param-Atman ensures not remembering worldly and unnecessary things, objects, persons or events, and it helps! In case of listening, first of all, Param-Atman has to be in close proximity. But the constitution of Antahkarana is such that Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahankara are also in very close proximity, so that they can easily be taken to be Atman or Param-Atman. This does present a problem as to whose voice one is listening to. Is it coming really from Him, or from Manas, Buddhi, Chitta or Ahankara? The mix up is very easy for superimpositions are commonplace. Therefore verification is necessary. The voice of Param-Atman, that is the Atman or Self, is very deep, pure, gentle, universal, blissful, and it contains the welfare of everyone. If these aspects are there, then one can be sure of His voice. Anything else is a superimposition by imposters like Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahankara trying to speak on behalf of the Param-Atman. They do usually raise their voices louder to make sure of being heard.

One must watch these factors if one really wants to listen to the voice of the Param-Atman but fortunately he happens to be present all the time for everyone in every place.

If one knows someone intimately, even if that person is speaking through a far-off telephone, just by hearing the sound one can recognise the voice. Same is possible in relation to the voice of Param-Atman but only if we know the Atman intimately. Everyone has this intimate facility but we must be careful of the imposters who often resort to a gentler and more persuasive approach hiding universality and bliss.

A Saint used to say that there is a special number to tune in to the voice of the Param-Atman.

[This was said with much merriment, perhaps referring to the notoriously erratic Indian telephone service!]

It only involves the removal of imposters like Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahankara, and all their ambitions. With pure heart alone it is possible.

K.B. His Holiness has said that physically we should regard ourselves as everybody's servant. I feel that as individuals and as a School we should be doing more to be of service to the world. Could H.H. say more about the part that service has to play in our development?

H.H. Every individual naturally engages himself in some activity. It can be performed for individual benefit or universal benefit. Those who have some knowledge of the spiritual world take to activity for universal benefit so that the whole universe enjoys the fruit of their action. To serve the world as an individual or as an Organisation plays an important rôle in one's development or the development of the Organization. Ordinary men of the world work only to fulfill their needs, desires or fancies. They would not care if it hurts others. The wise are merciful and compassionate. They share the passions of the deprived; in their mercy they overlook other people's shortcomings and take to service in a manner which is never limited to individual, family, groups, or their nation alone but which serves the universe. Such deeds of service minimise attachments, minimise the ego and thus open the way of liberation. Service is very necessary for the welfare of the universe. In it there is no claim but bliss abounds. All bonds will be loosened. Every act of service, little or large, goes to the Absolute.

R.G. This leads to a question of my own: It seems to me from long experience of working with Art students, that the young have a strong and idealistic desire to serve humanity. But this is at a practical physical level and offering service or help on the spiritual level looks like an evasion of real issues. How can one bridge this gap? Is there a valid way of approaching the spiritual from the physical?

H.H. In Alchemical systems, chemicals are purified to increase their potential power. More purification increases the potential. This process results in transmutation and the chemical becomes useful for a higher level of cure. Youthful idealism is like a raw chemical which can be purified and transmuted from the physical to the spiritual level. Service is either physical or spiritual. One looks at social conditions and wishes to improve them by the physical means at hand but this can only help in a very limited way. If youth is given the knowledge of causes on a universal scale then the remedy will also be universal in its effect. This calls for educating them about the causes and also the ultimate cause. This can transform the situation and expand their vision from local to universal. One good universal deed is better than many limited deeds.

If they are not convinced then an analytical approach can be adopted. A question may be posed as to which aspect of creation needs to be served: the mechanical, (that aspect which forgets the Self) or the conscious? All mechanical expressions of service are only

cosmetic improvements. The mechanical is virtually a dead matter which has no life, no response and no appreciation of transformation. One can clothe a carcass, decorate it, put ornaments and garlands on it or offer medicine, but to what avail? Things will soon become stale. All merely physical services are like decorating dead bodies, but if the same service is provided by conscious beings the result could be different for it will last a lifetime. Thus, the transfer of knowledge, of laws, of reasoning and the view of universal causes can be most potently used to cure universal problems. This analytical concept can act as a bridge between the physical and the spiritual.

In the Vedic tradition, after having a bathe in the river, oblations are offered with water to the Sun. The young usually ask if this water will reach the Sun! Now, scientific knowledge discloses that it is the Sun which withdraws water from the earth for 8 months and holds it in space to release after purification to re-enliven the world again. The arrogant youth does not realise the importance of this Vedic offering which is made with the inner resolution that just as the Sun purifies the earthly water for regeneration of life on earth, the worshipper also promises to take care of the environment by not polluting the water so provided. This he does with reverence.

Woodworms eat away wood by making holes. Once, such a pattern of holes was seen to depict the sign of Rama and so became transformed into a piece of beauty and reverence. Thus, any physical act when associated with Universal consciousness expresses higher values. The concept of physical as limited and spiritual as unlimited needs to be emphasised. A bottle of water poured into the Ganges becomes as curative as Ganges water, but the same water, if kept long in the bottle will develop germs and become useless for consumption.

Youthful idealism simply needs a broadening of its vision. If such spiritual values are not implanted these idealists will soon lose their enthusiasm and join the indolent and selfish gang of so called mature individuals. Spiritual knowledge gives a complete panorama and fulfils life's work, but incomplete and limited physical knowledge will give limited results even if it does succeed. One needs to change their attitude from limited to universal and that should bridge the gap.

The man who built Benares Hindi University was Madan Mohan Malaviya. He was both philosophical and religious. Every day he used to worship for two hours. Some young students once went to see him and they had to wait for two hours. When they met him, they asked why he was wasting two hours of his valuable time every day in pursuit of an invisible deity and its fruitless worship? He told them that he really trusted his worship and its goodness on universal scale which was given him by his loving father and the eternal Vedic tradition. He went on, "You may not have trust in this but neither can you prove that it is totally futile. The situation is this: even if

you are right then my loss is of only two hours each day. But in case you are wrong and the tradition is right, your whole life will miss the importance of the universal and probably you will realise that you have been wasting all 24 hours of your days in pursuit of limited gains without much satisfaction at the end”.

As the Audience was nearing its end, R.G. asked the following:

R.G. As His Holiness knows, our Society has been going through a difficult period recently and we lack unity. Is there further advice He would give us to help bring it about?

Could he confirm that we should continue to organise our work in the Society in such a way that people may approach unity in themselves through the knowledge already given to us by our teachers, His Holiness, Dr. Roles and Mr. Ouspensky, so that in His Holiness' own words, “people can see the variety and take whatever is suitable to them.”

H.H. The organization which gives priority to conscious work manages to work out a synthesis; for one can, with Advaita principles, work out a system to reach synthesis with any formulations of True Knowledge. If the emphasis from intellect is on a non-conscious way of working then to establish a synthesis becomes difficult and differences will arise. In order to accommodate philosophical concepts related to spiritual development in one's life and move from Vyashti to Samashti one has to work out inter-relations between them.

Here in India, Sri Dattatreya took twenty-four teachers and received guidance from them all—one of them was even a dog! The great sages have always said that the whole of Samashti is our teacher and one can receive teaching from any source provided one has learnt the art of assimilating philosophical concepts. In the absence of this art, that is the art of appreciating the good and valid qualities of other systems, then differences will arise even between two individuals. Therefore the teachings prior to Dr. Roles, from Dr. Roles and from this Source can be synthesised only if importance is directed to conscious work and only then can synthesis be established. Otherwise divisions will arise and instead of unity only disunity will prevail. Therefore, as long as one cannot establish synthesis one must remain faithful to one's basic inherited system and carry on the discipline held previously.

For the Society, my good wishes and blessings be with you all to help you meditate with enthusiasm and, after arising from meditation when entering into worldly activities, to feel the power of the Self and engage in action with enthusiasm. In doing so, the awareness of conscious action must be there and ego should not be allowed to arise otherwise divisions will manifest.

Usually it is seen that efficient and hardworking organizers tend to get such feelings as, ‘I have done this, I have done that’. At such moments their relationship with Samashti becomes loose and lacks the proper connection so the feeling of Ahankar keeps on growing. When one subdues ego and engages in true service then the relationship with Samashti

deepens and from one's Antahkarana good impulses with novel ideas and approaches to advance the work appear in one's Buddhi. Enthusiasm gets charged with energy from Samashti into Vyashti. Therefore, if one does not break the relationship and gives no rise to ego and keeps on accepting help from Samashti then meditation and disciplined work for development will speed up. Such is my goodwill for progress.

R.G. Finally may I say how profoundly grateful I am to His Holiness for granting me these audiences which have been so wonderful. I sincerely hope the opportunity will also come for further audiences—perhaps in the company of Lady Allan and Mr. Jacob. And may I end by reading a short message from one of our most senior members, Mrs. Fleming, which sums up my own feelings beautifully?

B.W-F. Since first being with Mr. Ouspensky and right up to now I have always had absolute belief and trust in the Fourth Way. Since receiving the mantra meditation it is wonderful to glimpse reality and be confident that the Self is always present. Being close to 85 years old, this present brief little life will pass. There are wonderful things to come if His Holiness will be with us all, out of time. With gratitude!

H.H. Convey my goodwishes and blessings to Mrs. Fleming that she may attain to the state of liberation; and all the experiences on the way of the discipline of the Fourth Way, she must cherish them as a beacon light for life ahead.

And my blessings for those who would not join these present discourses. All of you, with loving companionship, know that this whole garden of the Creation belongs to one and the same Self. By being aware of that Consciousness, engage in the work with love and affection and pass on the teaching and lead them all to development.

Again, for those who did not come, my goodwishes and blessings.

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