

The Lectures
of
Irina Tweedie

The Empty Bell
Volume 1

German Lectures
from Hamburg, Germany,
August 1987
&
Hart, Germany
July 1989
Parts 1 – 3

Translated and Compiled
by Harvey L. Stahl



Make your heart
Like an empty bell,
And wait ...
For the bell ringer.

During the time that Mrs. Tweedie was with her teacher,
she was ordered by him to write a book based on the daily experiences of her training.
That book, "Daughter of Fire" and its abridgement "Chasm of Fire"
has since proved an invaluable help to many people
at all stages of the spiritual journey.
Since that time, Mrs. Tweedie has clearly and repeatedly refused to write anything more,
saying that her duty to write was fulfilled with this one book.

And yet, those of us who have had the privilege to spend time
with Mrs. Tweedie in her group in London,
know that over the years she has spoken on many themes that are not in her book.
It is to make some of this material available to others
that I have compiled dialogues based on her lectures.
I have focused on her German lectures
because these have been especially inaccessible to the English reader.

I wish to make it clear that although these pages are based on Mrs. Tweedie's lectures,
and that I have tried to convey this material in something of her own style,
that ultimately they are my own words,
and alas, are limited by my own understanding.

I would like to thank the many people who have given me
support and encouragement in this undertaking,
especially those German speakers who took the time and care
to meticulously review the translations for content and context
and to correct my limited German:

Suficamp of 1989:
Almuth Tebbenhoff for her work on parts 2 and 3
and Liselotte Treytl for her work on part 1,
and also for her work on the Hamburg lecture on breath.

And lastly and most of all,
I wish to express my deepest respect and gratitude
to my teacher.

Cover Photograph: Chinese Bell, Chou Dynast, 5th century BC. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

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Email contact: the.empty.bell@gmail.com

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Breath

From a Lecture given in
Hamburg on the 25th of August 1987

First, I would like to ask that you do not applaud after the lecture, because we will end with a meditation; and will the mother of the child please keep the child quiet, because a film is being made and that would not be fair. Usually, when we write our brochures, we ask that you do not bring children under 13 years of age, because one child can disturb 400 people. We love children, but there are times when it is difficult to unite these two things: a speech and a child. So, please, when the child cries out, I would ask the mother to leave with the child.

(A child begins to cry exactly at this moment, to everyone's amusement ... except the mother.)

Now we will wait ... we will wait ... *(Directly to the woman concerned.)* Please, can you please go out. Yes, a film will be made, and it is not fair to the other people.

Today I would like to try to do something that I have not done until now. I would like to try to explain something that one cannot explain. I will speak about the breath: how the breath and breathing manifest on the inner levels; that which happens, not in this world, but in the other world. And I hope that you will have many questions. I will stop from time to time to let you ask them.

Now, what is breath? According to natural science, breath is air; just simply air, which we draw in and push out. With the in-breath, we take oxygen in, and with the exhalation we give off carbon dioxide. If, however, we want to experience the secret of breath, we must enter into a totally different area. At times you may find it difficult to understand, so please, do ask questions when you do not understand. And if you do not understand something, that does not mean that you are, perhaps, stupid or ignorant. It is quite the opposite. It means that it is something new, or perhaps that I am not able to express myself very well because my German is not very good.

The experience of breath – what we feel in our nose with each in and out breath, is only the effect of breath, and not the actual breath itself. For Yogis, the breath is the magnetic current that draws the air in and pushes it out. It is a magnetic current, very similar to electricity. One can sense the air, but not the current. We do not feel the current. The current is not perceptible at all. This current is called 'Prana' in Sanscrit. Prana is the life force. Prana is an etheric magnetism, a fine materialized form of electricity. As I have already said, it is a current that goes in and out that causes the air to move.

Look. It is the current that causes the air to move, that animates the air, not the air that moves the current. And this current makes breathing possible. We don't think of it at all; we breathe; and we carry this mystery in us, this magnetism that makes our breathing possible. It is not only the body that takes the breath in and out.

Now here comes the interesting point. The breath is the Self, with a capital 'S'. It is the true self of humans. The breath is the Self; it is the same as the soul. In Sanscrit, the word for breath and for soul is the same: 'Atman'. It is also related to the German word for breathing: 'atmen'. That means that if we can, somewhere ... anywhere, find a sign of the soul, it is precisely in the breath. Perhaps this thought is new for you.

Naturally, the current of the breath, as the individual Self, is not only air, but rather a current which, according to Yoga Shastra, flows from the physical level to the innermost level, the level of the soul – I would say to the Absolute. It is a constant current of quickly flowing magnetism which flows through the body, the spirit, and the soul. It reaches to the very center of the being and returns. It is a constant circulation; a current that flows back and forth, without pause. The breath comes from the innermost level, and the innermost level is the level of the Absolute, the Totality ... the very seed of life, the creation itself. The breath comes from there; it is not from this world. The air is from this world, but not this current, not this magnetism that is called Prana. So this magnetism comes from the innermost level, and penetrates through every level up to the most manifest level of creation. Here we are in the deepest metaphysics. Does anyone have a question, please? ... Not yet. ... OK.

So, I have said, and I repeat: there is a steady current, a current which flows uninterruptedly back and forth. I want, quite intentionally, to repeat several sentences so that you can really understand them. What I am now saying may be new for you. It will be a completely new thought for some of you. And new thoughts need to be repeated. You see, our mind is like a computer. We must program our mind so that it somehow understands each thought, just as one does with a computer. Now, as you see, we already have a totally different explanation of breath. This helps us to understand that the breath is the most important part of our beings. It is that which touches the very center, the very core of our being, and which also brings something of that center to the surface of our existence as it touches the physical level.

Look, we can live without food for three weeks; I have done that, but I drank water. Without water we cannot live longer than one week. I have not tried that, but I was told it. But without air? Try it. I can live one minute without air; that is all that I have been able to manage. My teacher – as we are now a very large group I can say 'our' teacher – could hold his breath for a half of an hour. But that is already a very very powerful Yogi.

One day when I was sitting in his presence in India, I noticed that he was not breathing at all. He was in the deep state which is called 'Samadhi' in Sanscrit. I do not like this word; I find it is abused a great deal. Samadhi is an absorption, a yogic absorption. I noticed that he didn't breathe at all! That is described in my book. Naturally I waited patiently until he had opened his eyes. Then I said, "Bhai Sahib," – Bhai Sahib means elder brother – "please, it seems to me that you weren't breathing." And he said "Oh no, it disturbs me when I breathe; one doesn't have to breathe. Prana works on the inner levels. Of course the heart continues to beat, but it is not necessary to breathe." You see, he could do without breath. Try it yourself to see how long you can manage it. After training yourself for a long time you can hold your breath for a minute, perhaps a minute and a half; and that is already a long time. I would try it if I were you. It is very interesting.

Now, I repeat this sentence: the breath is that which touches the core of our being; that is, our soul, and that which brings something from the soul to the surface of our existence. Please. The breath brings a tiny piece of the soul to the surface; that is, into the physical body, when the breath touches the physical level on the in-breath. That is why one says that when one does a mantra or a Zikr – In Persian it is called Zikr, in Sanscrit it is called mantra – when you call the name of God with the in-breath, then something happens inwardly in your body. That is why the teacher will always say to do the mantra with the breath. Now, why is this so? It is because the breath has its source in another dimension. It is founded in another dimension about which science knows nothing. It is only now that a few scientists begin, very hesitantly, to explore this area.

This dimension is known to the Yogis as an inner dimension. Now, to give a philosophic explanation of this dimension, one could use the eyes as an example. Even though the size of the eye is only about an inch to an inch and a quarter across, it can take in a field of many miles in size. Where can this field be accommodated? In the inner world. One sees that the eye is so small, yet it can see mile after mile: two hundred miles of mountains, when one is far enough away. I've had that experience in the Himalayas. When it is far enough away, one sees the entire horizon; and in my case, it was almost 200 miles. Naturally, when one is nearer, one cannot do that; then it is less. But where is that? In what dimension does one comprehend all of that which the eyes see? You apprehend that in another

dimension, and the breath also belongs to this dimension. Are there any questions, please?

(Question: I am sorry but I do not understand.) You haven't understood? Shall I explain it once again? (Q: Yes, please.) The breath belongs to another dimension, not to this world. Exactly as with your eyes, when you see mile after mile after mile. You perceive something with the eyes, and you understand it. Where do you understand the image of the eyes? (Q: In the mind.) Yes, but that is already another dimension ... in the brain; and the brain, or the mind, can work on different levels, and I call these levels 'the inner levels'. And one calls this another dimension. OK? (Q: Yes.) Good. Please, is there another question? Yes?

(Question: *not audible*.) The breath flows in and out, not the magnetic current. I will explain the magnetic current in a minute. You are completely right; one could have understood that the soul runs back and forth. No, it is not that way. The breath does flow that way to keep the body alive. We need oxygen, that is clear. But the magnetic current is something different, and it works in another dimension; that is the secret. I have told you that what I will say today is very difficult to understand. But if you have a cassette, then you can listen to it, and I can guarantee that one day you will understand it.

Look. I always say that what I say is not so important; what you experience in the meditation is infinitely important. What I do is to point in a particular direction, to what you should think about, so that over time your horizons will widen. And you yourself will come to understand it. Our mind, our understanding, is made in that way. Our mind is something wonderful. It is a part of the spirit of God. And the mind of a Yogi can be all-powerful. I will speak more about that later.

So if one wants to give a philosophical explanation to this dimension, one can use the example of the eyes. Think of that, please. The eye is small, but we see so much with it; and somewhere, we understand what we see. You say, "In the brain," yes, but the brain is also small, so very small. How can the mind accomplish this? We can do this in another space, in another dimension, and that is within. The eye, perhaps, is the only example that one can give, for it is similar to the dimension of the soul. One can think deeply. We all know that we can make life conscious, and develop a yet more extended consciousness. When we learn something, we extend our consciousness. But we cannot make that visible. It is an abstract space. If there is an image that explains this idea of breath, it is the image of an inner space, an inner dimension, and of a current running through this inner space. Here I am repeating. It runs from the innermost level to the outermost level, the level of the body. And it is this contact of the breath with the physical level that keeps us alive.

Now, it is important to know that we do not move the breath in and out in a straight line. It doesn't follow a straight line, in and out. It moves much more in a circular path, which begins at the nostrils, and ends there after it has drawn a circle. Our breath comes out of the nostrils and goes to the level of unity, to the level of the Absolute, to our deepest inner being, which is related to absolute creation, and further, further than this creation. The soul is immortal. When you die, your soul does not die. Look how metaphysical this is!

Now, you might ask me, "When each of us breathes, and each breath describes a shining circle, wouldn't all the circles intersect?" But of course, they do not. This happens in another dimension. Do not forget that. They could only cross on this level, but they do not cross. All of creation is a circle. From the creation, it goes, let us say, to 'God'. Really this is deeper than God. God is the creator, and I am speaking of the Absolute; of the inner, innermost Unity. Everything returns to this level and returns to 'here' again. So in a way, what this man said (*referring to the question that was inaudible on the tape*.) that the soul comes and goes, is correct and not correct. Look, the mystical explanation cannot really be explained. That is why I said in the beginning that I would try to explain some things that cannot be explained at all. I hope you will be quite angry with me, and ask a lot of questions ... OK!

So, a wheel, a circle, begins at the nostrils. It makes a circle in the innermost level. I described it (*she indicates a circle with her hand*) this way, but it is really here, in the depths. One can describe it anywhere and it will be correct; because He or That with a capital 'T', is outside of you and inside of you, so it makes no difference where one describes this circle. So, it is not a straight line; it is a circle, and one can really not say that there is a beginning and an end to this circle, because we are eternal –

Eternal, my friends – connected by our very nature with God. We are not separated from Him. Never! And that is true. All mystics know that. Furthermore! – It goes further! – furthermore, the current of breath glows, like an electrical conductor. One can see it. And the light and warmth are not restricted by the flow of the breath. Rather they radiate in the area around oneself. Every human influences the area around him. Everyone. Look at how important that is: to be aware of what one does. What a responsibility that is: not to live like cattle that do not know what they do.

Each different movement of the breath causes different activities in the body: coughing, yawning, sighing; each is another activity of the breath. The effects of the cycle of breath penetrate the entire body; they touch every part of the body. The human body shines with light. The human body is full of light. Why does one say, “We are children of darkness. We are children of sin?” That is not true. That is, as they say in England, ‘rubbish’. It is not so. We are children of light, all of us; especially small children. Small children are really quite special. I am sorry that I had to send them out, but they really would have been disturbing. So! There is nothing to be done.

So the breath causes, with each movement of the breath, coughing, yawning, sighing; all the different actions of the breath itself. When you have a longing, especially for God, there is a special way of breathing. (*She demonstrates with an audible sigh while inhaling.*) Very little and newborn children do this. Why? Small and newly born children are still connected with heaven, where they came from. The soul of an infant comes from the inner level into this world. Infants have special sighs. Every mother knows them. (*She demonstrates with an in-breath sigh, but sharper, with a kind of urgency.*) And when our yearning for our home, our real home, is very strong, sometimes, quite unconsciously, we sigh just like that: the sigh of longing that expresses our wish to go home – to our real home. Not here. This is no home here.

Now the ability to eat and drink, to express oneself physically, to sing and to speak, is the result of the different movements of the breath within your body. When the breath, for example, avoids a particular area within your body, then the activity of that part of the body ceases, and then you are ill. Thus one can explain illness as the blockage and disharmony in the flow of Prana in the body. And so one can use Prana to heal. The Tibetan Yogis heal everything with Prana. You see, the breath goes in and out through the nostrils; it makes a circle and returns again. In and out, in and out. But Prana – this current – can be influenced, not so much from our thoughts, but from our will.

For example, my knee hurts. I go into meditation and concentrate on my knee, and I breathe in and breathe out. The air goes out of the nose. And I think the command that the Prana should flow out through my knee. After a few seconds those who are clairvoyant can see how, with each breath, the air goes out through the nose, and the Prana goes out through the knee. And when it goes out in this way, it takes the illness or injury away with it. That is a special exercise. One must be able to meditate well, and to concentrate well; otherwise it can be a bit dangerous because one can send too much Prana through an area and that can cause problems. For example, if you have some pain in the heart, and you send too much Prana through it, you can cause a heart attack, and so forth. This is a meditation that one should not do lightly. But one can do it, and it works. It is very effective.

As I have said, the breath is a current that comes from the essence of God. I will try to say it in another way. You see, to understand a thought, one must illuminate it from different sides, so to speak, as with a spotlight; one must try to use different words. So here I will say another sentence with the same meaning. Breath is a current that comes from the essence of God, and gives us life. Remember the part in Genesis where God blows the breath of God into the first human? Breath comes from God. And we are made in the image of God. And we have His breath in us, always. And, as I will now explain, with each breath, we come nearer to Him.

Now. What is the physical body? The physical body is only a covering, a sheath that surrounds this life-current. When this current of God is withdrawn from the body, the body becomes a corpse and we die. But there is also another covering besides the physical covering, and that covering is the spirit. The difference between spirit and heart is the same as the difference between surface and depth. Please, please pay attention to what I am saying; otherwise you will not be able to understand it. The surface of

the heart is the spirit, the thoughts, and the mind. And the depth of the spirit is the heart. The spirit, the mind, expresses itself in thoughts; and the heart expresses itself in feelings. They belong together. "To think with the heart," say the Sufis; and Plato said that one can never experience truth with the mind, but only with the feelings. And I think that Plato should know. He knew more than all of us put together.

So the heart and mind belong together. They build an inner garment that dresses the breath. So we are enveloped by two coverings: the body, and our heart and mind together. I will try to make it simpler. Here is the body, and here is the magnetic field, similar to an electric field. Can one put it that way? This field surrounds us, and it surrounds the breath. Please have ... yes? (*Inaudible question.*) Yes, yes that is correct, this current can also go through the skin. The breath penetrates this covering. The coverings do surround the breath, but the breath can also penetrate them. It also penetrates the level of the mind and the feelings. It penetrates everything, and returns. Yes? OK. That was an important contribution. Thank you.

When the breath is withdrawn from the garment of the physical body at death, there still remains the inner garment, the spirit. So the breath continues to exist as spirit. After the death of the physical body, this spirit is the body of Prana, or the "Prana-body." And the ghosts that one sees around cemeteries are the spirit bodies of the humans, which linger on the earth for a time. But they will also eventually disappear.

I see that someone looks ... R., is this impossible to understand? (*She asks again in English. R. replies that she can only understand a few words of the German.*) Oh, I'm sorry. I cannot translate it into English. I hope this will be translated into English one day. OK? It is difficult anyway, it is very difficult to explain. (*Translators note: This was the first tape I undertook to translate, and this interaction was, for me a gift in confirming that such a project was within the wishes of Mrs. Tweedie. Of course, that was later confirmed by Mrs. Tweedie herself.*)

So the Prana bodies, the spirit bodies, stay around the cemetery after death, and one can see them moving around. These are the people who have been dead for a few days or weeks. And when these spirit bodies die – for after a time these bodies also disappear – then the garment of the soul remains. Then only the soul remains. And this soul does not remain on earth. The soul goes to God. So you see, the breath envelops and penetrates all three: body, spirit, and soul. Questions please!

(Question: Where does the heart fit into this structure?)

The heart is included in the inner level, in the second garment, which is the spirit. The difference between the heart and the spirit is the difference between surface and depth. You see, the heart is the depth, the mind is the surface. The other coverings? The first is the body, then the heart / mind; the heart is the depth and the mind is the surface, but these two are aspects of one level. (*Question continues.*) The depth of the garment is the heart. The layer has a depth and a surface. Yes? Yes!

(*Question: Inaudible*)

Oh! God is in this world and everywhere! (*Question continues.*) My dear, everything interpenetrates everything else. This is a circle. Look, I have warned you. (*General laughter and confusion!*) What I am saying is very difficult to understand. There is no difference between this world and the world of the spirit. Everything is here; everything is NOW. God is here; you are never separated from Him, you were never separated from Him. (*Comment from another woman.*) She says it is quite obvious, there is no need to ask questions! (*Mrs. Tweedie is laughing*) Yes that is lovely, that is very beautiful, thank you. (*Still laughing, quoting the comment of the last woman:*) "Quite obvious!" (*Now seriously*) It is only that I must use so many words to explain it, so that you can understand it, so that the mind can understand it. Really it is terribly simple. And usually mystics experience this through an experience. Yes, you wanted to ask a question.

(*Question: Inaudible*) Aiee! (*Loud, general laughter that continues.*) Shouldn't we really skip that? I believe that you know the answer yourself. I will not speak about that because I have the feeling that you already know it. (*Questioner insists.*) Then think about it, my angel, I will not go into it. A word that

begins with a capital 'G': Gift! Yes, please.

(Question; Inaudible) The soul is the undying light in each of us, the light of God. It is more than individuality. It is the eternal. It is that which we contact in meditation, and that is more than individuality. The individuality is the spirit, which means the mind, the personality. And also the body.

(Question: If our individuality is in the spirit and the body, and they both die and we return to God, how are we able to get information about other lives?)

Now, I will give you two answers, and then I will leave them. I will not explain them. The Vedanta says, if I have an earthen pot in a room, I can lift that pot and the air in it. There is the air in the pot and the air in the room. If I break the pot, the air in the pot mixes with the air in the room, becomes the air in the room. If I take another pot to the same place where the first broke, how many of tiny air particles from the first pot would be in the second pot? And our teacher ... my teacher said, "If I take a glass of water out of the ocean, and then let it flow back into the ocean, and I take another glass of water out from that same place, how many of the same drops will be in this glass?" I give no answer. Look for an answer in sacred writings. And how, then, can one remember things from another life? I would say that it is by the grace of God.

I have experienced it. I do not know how it happens, but I know that it does happen. I am sometimes allowed to describe to people how they lived in previous lives, but I do not know how I know. It is only allowed to me when there are problems from that other life. A person has an illness, and the doctors do not know what it is; or there is a huge psychological problem. And when one can say to such a person, "Aha, so many hundreds of years ago, you were such and such," then the person understands, and the problem disappears. But only when one can help someone. I do not know how it works. I do not want to know, because if I did know I would create an obstacle. You see, if I were to have a wish, the wish itself would be an obstacle. It is given to me so that I may help people, but only those who guide our lives know the secret of this. I do not know it. And in this way it is permitted for me to say to people, "Look, your life was so and so and so."

I remember a man who had a terrible problem with his throat – this was 15 years ago – he had such a problem with his throat, and the doctors didn't know what was wrong. It was really terrible. And the man was still young, and he really suffered. He had been hanged in a previous life. The spine, of course, was broken, so in this life he somehow had this illness in the throat. Believe me, it was partly psychological, because he was not completely healed; but because he knew what had happened he was very much better, and he no longer had so much anxiety. And that helped him. I remember him quite clearly. This man has since died from heart disease.

(An intermission begins ... and ends.)

I have just spoken with a man who said that I have not used the word magnetism correctly, because magnetism is something quite physical. But I am speaking of another magnetism that exists on the inner level, quite different from the physical. Some scientists have begun, quite hesitantly, to look in this direction.

I understand that it is quite difficult, and I have warned all of you. So! I am innocent! *(Laughter.)*

Now. When the breath finally leaves the garment of the spirit after death, there remains only what we call the soul. So the breath envelops and penetrates all three coverings: the body, the spirit, and the soul. From this standpoint, we are never separated from God. We touch God with each breath. When we breathe in, the soul touches its own level. When we breathe out, the breath touches the level of creation, the created world. So we are never separated from God. And if that were not so, the soul could not endure to remain in the body. This body is, in any case, an imprisonment, and those of us who have reached a deep level of meditation know that. Somewhere we are completely free; somewhere something is so special. And here is this body. And here, when we want to go somewhere, we must travel by car or in a plane or by foot. There, somewhere, one needs only to think, and one is

there; that is the difference. That is one difference; there are many others.

So you see, we are never separated from God. That is why, when we say a mantra or a Zikr with the breath, the name of God is spoken with love as we breathe in. Then our soul touches the level of God. That is why all spiritual teachers, all Gurus, and also all religions say, that when one speaks the name of God, one should do it on the in-breath. This is important. We are connected to God through the breath. Look how wonderful that is. It is like a chain that goes in a circle on the inner level and returns to us. It is similar to drawing water from a well. The rope stays in one's hand, but the bucket goes into the water. I think that this is quite a good example. The rope stays in the hand, but the bucket goes into the water. When I breathe in, I touch the level of God. When I breathe out, I touch the earth. But that does not mean that the soul goes in and out. No! It only touches, just a little. It stays in the body, just as the rope stays in the hand. And the bucket goes into the water.

So our soul remains in connection with God. "He holds our souls in His hands," says our religion. Our soul is a part of the spirit of God, a part of His currents, a part of His rays, that functions in us as breath. If you would want to find the soul, the soul is not other than a ray of the spiritual sun. And a ray from God, who is the spiritual sun, behaves exactly like a ray of the physical sun. A sun is a sun, and a ray is a ray. The sun cannot do other than to radiate, and the soul, the ray, cannot exist without its sun. That is the connection, the relationship between our souls and God, and that is philosophically totally correct.

In his book, "The Hidden Path", Paul Brunton describes the following: "Between two thoughts and two breaths, there is always an unnoticed pause in which one stops for a fraction of a second. During this pause, which passes with unmeasurable speed, we return to our original Self, and rest, renewed, in our true source. If this were not so, we could not continue to live, for this source is the hidden spring of our lives, of which we know nothing." His power, God's power, feeds and supports us. We are spirit, we are immortal, we are rays from Him. This ever-repeated return, with every breath, makes it possible for us to find the power we need to live, to think, and to feel. We all experience this fraction of a second. But only few consciously perceive the importance of this moment. That is eternal, but you, your personal self, come from Him and exist for just a short while. Only when you breathe out do you leave Him! For a split second. And then you go back to Him. You could, naturally, breathe out and not breathe in, but you cannot do that for very long, for without Him you die. Without God, one cannot live; that is the truth. If we want to be filled, we must become empty. We breathe out so that we can again breathe in.

When the mind has emptied itself of all thoughts, then an empty space is created. Then it takes only a few seconds until a mysterious in-flowing of something Divine takes place within one. That is the out-flowing of the Holy Spirit, as one says in Christianity. You see, we see only the result of the breath in the physical body. We experience it as only an occurrence of the physical breath, and do not notice at all the way it touches the spirit, on another level, in another dimension. The breath also flows there; but we do not see this aspect of it, and we do not feel it. We do not only breathe with the body, but also with the spirit, and with the soul. We breathe with our entire being. And at each moment we breathe in, we touch God.

After the death of the physical body, the spirit can live on for many thousands of years if the breath remains in it. And when the breath leaves it, the soul still remains. The soul remains forever, for eternity.

One day, Bhai Sahib, my teacher, said to us, "No one really dies," but that the saints live much longer ... "Our spirit also dies, but only after many many years." The saints live far longer than other people. He said that his teacher told him – that is, my teacher's teacher told him – that he had spiritual contact with saints who had lived fifteen thousand years ago. The human spirit can live that long, but then it also dies. Then only the soul remains, and the soul never dies. The soul is eternal.

I have spoken of the soul. But there is also the spirit, which dies, and which belongs to the mind. By that I mean, the mind-spirit. But the real spirit is the soul. So here I make a distinction. When I mean the mind, I use the word spirit; and for soul I use soul. I had hoped that would be clear, but I see that it was not at all clear. That has to do with language, and I cannot help it. (*Translators note: In German,*

there are not words that very precisely convey the meanings she was trying to convey. English is somewhat better for this, but even in English the use of spirit is ambiguous.)

So this life is eternal, and remains after the death of the body. It continues after the death of the body, and the soul remains in another dimension. The spirit-body – that is, the mental-body – is quite skilled and is more real than the physical body; while our physical body is limited and subject to decay. The spirit-body, the mental-body, the thought-body, is etheric and can exist for a long time because it is not dependent on food or water. I have said that it can survive for fifteen thousand years – sometimes. It lives only from breath, from Prana.

When we consider that even our physical beings live, in fact, from the breath, and that food and water comprise not even a hundredth part of our needs, we see how much more meaning breath or Prana has in our lives. Further, when we have understood it, we will know that the only way to a harmonious and healthy life, and to an understanding of the harmony of soul and spirit, is through the development of the breath, and doing exercises with the breath. It really depends on the development of the breath through exercises. There are three ways to do this.

The first way is to control the way we breathe, and to concentrate on it. All Yogis do that. The second is to send the magnetic current of the breath where it is required, as the Tibetan Yogis do; to send the magnetic current, the physical magnetic current, where it is needed. Please do not forget that the physical magnetic current is also on other levels, in a finer state. The third way is to use the current of the breath as a medium, as a carrier, as that which carries us to our goal. One can do these three things to improve one's breath.

Now I want to say something quite important. Look. We Sufis believe that in the whole of the universe there is nothing but one being: THAT, or God; ... one can really not name it. As soon as I name it – if I say “God”, or “That” – I limit it. And one can not limit this; it is limitless. Everything is That! You and I. Every atom, as scientists know, has its light, and that light is the light of God. Now! According to the Sufis, who know it through meditation, all the power in the world, all of the energy in the world, is this energy. There is no other source of energy. One energy: the light and energy of God. Naturally, that includes electricity and magnetism and light. Everything is one. They are all different manifestations of one power.

Now, here is something interesting. When we humans concentrate on something, and do a particular job – that can be a factory job or as a scientist or a teacher, or the president of a large company, as you like; every sort of job – we automatically receive the energy that we require to do what we want to do. I have an example that is quite simple. I belonged to a woman's organization in London, and every four years we elected a president from one of the women members. These were ordinary housewives who had no idea how one speaks from a platform, or how one deals with people. They knew nothing of public relations. They had no idea of these things, and when they were elected they were usually very shy. They had no idea how to behave. But after four years they were perfect!

You will say, “That is practice.” Yes! Also practice. But also something else. When a person has a particular function, this function itself opens the way through which the particular power that this function needs can come to them. And it makes no difference if, let us say, you are a street sweeper; you will have the power to do it. Or if you are a manager of a factory, or a director, or a scientist; you get what you need. That is the law. Naturally, Karma plays a role in this, but I will not now explain what Karma is, it is much too complicated. That is something you can read about. Now, I want you to ask a few questions. Yes, we have only a half hour, and we will spend it on questions.

(Question: Why is there a connection between the breathing of air, and the subtle movement of Prana?) Why is the connection there? Why did God create the world? (*Everyone chuckles*) It is the same question. How can we know? Please?

(Comment and question.) YES! You should teach him (*the child of the questioner*) to breathe well, so that he will be healthy. (Question continues.) Yes, look, a healthy baby, a healthy small child is perfect. When they are born, they are completely perfect. They even have manicured nails. It is really

extraordinary. And they breathe quite differently from us. Sadly we forget how to breathe in this way. (Question continues: That means that one can do thorough breathing exercises with five-year-old children?) Oh yes! I believe that you can even do that with two-year-olds. And one should do that. I think that children are something very, very special. They come from a level, the soul comes from a level and looks for parents – for the right parents – so that they can have specific experiences in this world. Free will does play a part in it, but I will not speak of that today or we would continue till midnight! Sadly, I simply cannot do it. They will throw us out at 10. It is just not allowed. Unfortunately, one rents a hall for a specific time. That is the way it is, and one can do nothing about it. In this world, we are limited in every possible way. Yes, please.

(Question: Can conscious breathing influence the flow of Prana?)

Yes, through conscious breathing one can influence Prana. I have already said that one can send Prana to where there is pain. One can influence it very precisely. One breaths in air and Prana – this energy, this current – and when you have some pain in the knee or in the liver, or anywhere, when you breathe out, you allow the air to leave by the nose; but you can direct this current in a specific direction through one's will. You really can do this, and you should do it. Try it. The Tibetan Yogis have a very good exercise to make this process very effective. But the Sufis do not do this. We have another method. But that makes no difference. The Tibetan Yogic method is simpler. OK?

(Question continues.) You ask if the energy will increase with practice. Yes, that is correct. You can influence the energy with your will, most certainly. Our will is unbelievably strong. I believe that the wills of Yogis, when they are really trained, are all-powerful. Just as the prayer, the real prayer of humans, is all-powerful. You can influence that with your will. Thank you. Yes?

(*Question: Inaudible*) That can be dangerous when you do too much of it. For example, there are breathing exercises that one should only do under the guidance of an expert. If you have heart problems, you should avoid certain breathing exercises. That is then too much. But if you eat too much you will get ill. It is just normal. One must be sensible with everything. That can be too much, yes. For example, there are breathing exercises that I can no longer do. I can no longer hold my breath for a long time. I suffered from glaucoma and had operations on my eyes. I used to be able to hold my breath for a minute. Now my eye doctor has absolutely forbidden it because it increases the pressure on the eyes. So you see, such practices can be dangerous, and now I should not do them. But that was the doctor who said that. I had asked him because I noticed eye pain when I tried to do the exercise. I had not known that the exercises could cause problems, and had continued to do them. But the doctor said no, that it could be dangerous. One must be sensible with everything in life. We must eat, and food is lovely; but when we eat too much every day that is not very good. I have problems with the heart, so I cannot eat much. A few pounds more and I would be breathless. One must always be sensible.

(*Comment: Inaudible*) The gentleman says that when one is drowning one can live ten minutes without breathing. I do not know how Bhai Sahib held his breath for a half hour, and I can no longer ask him because he is dead. (Question.) He died of a heart attack in nineteen sixty-six. This is written in my book. How he was able to hold his breath for so long I do not know. But he was a very great Yogi. He had great power, and Yogis sometimes have powers that are beyond human powers. I do not know how they do it, and I have not tried it. It is not necessary. For spiritual life it is not necessary. Why did he do it? Perhaps his teacher told him to do it.

The student must, in a certain way, surrender to the teacher. Why? One must learn to obey. Our arrogant mind and our rebellious heart must be surrendered to God. And the teacher teaches us how we should do that. The student must, in a certain way, be obedient. That doesn't last forever; that is only for a time, only until it has been learned. But really, one does not obey the teacher. Really we obey the light of God that is within us, which the teacher strengthens so that it shines stronger. OK?

(Question: What is the task of the spirit between the death of the body and the death of the spirit?)

While the spirit still lives, it is always with the soul. And when the spirit-body dies, the soul is alone and it goes to God. That is what is said. But I have not been there yet, so I cannot say. Yes? (Question

continues: And why does it live longer?) Probably it is necessary. I do not know either. (*Laughter*) These are questions one certainly cannot answer. Yes?

(Question.) Yes, when the spirit dies, it returns to the energy of the universe. Our body is also energy; everything is energy. There is nothing in the world that is not energy. Scientists know that. Even material is energy: atoms, electrons, everything. We share the energy of creation.

(Question.) Where does our wish to return to life come from? One says, and here I quote the religious writings, "The last thought on the death-bed." If you think of the jewelry of your grandmother, you will return to this world, perhaps to inherit the jewelry. (*there is a wave of laughter*). That is why a teacher will give you a mantra. The mind can be trained, just like an animal can be trained. Look, the entire day we think useless thoughts; it is really automatic thinking. We have dialogues, we think we will say this or that, or we talk to ourselves. We are full of thoughts, chasing each other around like children. So the teacher will say, "Do something useful, and repeat the name of God." Psychologists say that you will become what you think. The names of God are always attributes of God. If one day we think of His power, we have a special power. If one day we think of His love, we become full of love. And our mind, our spirit-mind, becomes so accustomed to this practice that when we die, we will speak out this name and go directly to God.

There is a small Upanishad, the Isha Upanishad, which speaks of this very clearly. It says that it is the last thought that brings us again into life, but that when that last thought is of God, we do not need to return. But I must say that I do not know; I have not yet been there. But I'm already eighty-one, it shouldn't take too long. Yes?

(*Question: Inaudible*) Yes, you will no longer have much fear of death once you have been in deep meditation, because we Sufis die before we really die, before our physical death. And deep meditation does that, for when one reaches the superconscious state, one is already no longer in the physical body. And you also know that you have not died. Then you will not have any more fear. That is a fact, and everyone can experience that.

(Comment: I'm happy in my physical body.)

Good. God bless you. A canary that is born in a cage doesn't know that he is in a cage. He is perfectly happy. (*General laughter.*) I am also quite happy. Why not? But it is, anyway, still an imprisonment. I would recommend that you occupy yourself with deep meditation so that you will see, you will experience, that it is an imprisonment. But before you experience it, you don't know about it, and you are just happy with what you have. This is really quite simple.

So, it is now five minutes before ten. Could we meditate for ten minutes? They won't throw us out? (No.) OK. We will have our silent meditation. For ten minutes, please.

Sit as comfortably as possible, and think of someone that you love very much. That can be a father or mother, a boy friend or a girlfriend; it doesn't matter. And fill your heart with this love. And drown every other thought that comes into your head in this feeling of love.

This meditation is a help in stilling the mind. And one can only have mystical experiences when the mind is completely still. That is why every Yoga book says that one must learn to bring the mind to stillness. Experiences are not possible unless the mind is still. So we will try this. All together. And then we will all go home in peace.

(*End of cassette.*)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1989: Part 1

Reflection

From a Series of Lectures given in Hart, Germany
From July 15 to 29, 1989

“God is silence,” says the sacred writings, “and can only be experienced in silence.” In this school of Yoga, this Sufi school, we try to reach That, which can perhaps be called God, in silence. There is love in our heart, love for all people and all animals, and for God. And when other thoughts come into your head, please, drown them in the silence.

(There is a meditation.)

I would like, today, to start with something that is a bit difficult. I want to speak about reflection. This theme was also in the lecture that I gave in Bern about the relationship between the Sufi teacher and the Sufi student. It is very interesting, and I hope you will ask many questions. But this subject is not very easy to understand, and my German is not so very good – I do not know some expressions – So I hope I can make myself understood. And if not, please raise your hand or say something so that I will know, and I will try to explain it better.

So. I begin my lecture with an image: Have you ever tried to set two mirrors of equal size opposite to one another? And did you notice how mirror within mirror appears, to infinity, always producing yet another image? Smaller and smaller mirrors, without end; mirror within mirror, endlessly. You see, this is a very good example. This is the creation of the world.

To make this image understandable I have to reach quite far, to right from the beginning, when the world was created. And from this time, I personally know nothing. I have promised myself that I would never say anything about meditation that I do not know from my personal experience. And if I do not know about something of meditation, I must say that it is from books. And what I am now saying is to be found in old Sufi writings. It is Sufi metaphysics: pure Sufi metaphysics.

Now, the unending, perfect Absolute; the perfection that He or She was – of course it is not He or She, it is both. The creation is actually feminine and masculine; but it is in potential: an unending birth. That is creation.

So this perfect Absolute, His diffusion, His perception, and His perfection wants – and here comes the will – wants to become clearer. Look! Even God wants to become more perfect. That is what Teilhard de Chardin said. This is not new, and the Sufis also believe this. And He had, for His joy – I say He, because I am a woman, and for me it is easier to think that it is a He. For a man it is perhaps easier to think that it is a She. And both are correct – so, He, for His Joy, wanted to create something that would help Him to specialize in something clear.

Perhaps that doesn't sound very metaphysical, but that is philosophically quite correct. And of course, He could not make only one thing; there must be opposites. We know that this is black only

because other colors exist. Otherwise we could not know it. We know that it is night because the day also exists; that it is cold because there is also warmth. Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. The world is made of opposites, of multiplicity, in which each part possesses some varying degree of its opposite. And then the world came to be.

And because He is without end, and so great and so wonderful, he could not create two things alike. Every thing is different: every leaf of every tree is different; every cloud, every human, every animal, every hair on your head; each one is different. Look! He is all powerful! But he cannot make two things identical, because He is perfect. It is in no way perfect to imitate oneself. One must create something different, something beautiful; and He is the greatest artist, the greatest painter, the greatest wonder maker. The evening ritual: the beautiful sunsets – each one is different. But the greatest wonder is the way that children, and also animals, are born; and that plants multiply by themselves. The Sufis say that the creation continues the whole time. Maybe there was a ‘Big bang’, as science now say, but the Sufis say that in every moment something new arises. And we see that we humans discover something new in every moment. Perhaps it is not new; perhaps people had known that thousands of years ago, or had known about it, or simply used it or made it. For us, though, it is new. And so, for us it is a new creation, perhaps a new medicine.

A few years ago I went to a rose show. Do you know what gardeners do with roses!? It is completely unbelievable. There are blue roses. There are violet roses. And with so many petals; and some have two hearts and some three hearts. Some of them are as large as dishes; and others as tiny as the fingernail of my small finger, and perfect! They show the small ones through a magnifying glass, and you can see, through the glass, that the rose is perfect! And as small as my fingernail! People can do such things, for we are made in His image. And we too are unable to make two things identical. We cannot do it. When one looks at the things made on a production line with a microscope, one will always find a difference. And so was the world created.

Now. How did He create the world? This, of course, is not my knowledge, it comes from Sufi books. He created the world through reflection. It reflected Him, the perfection, and came into existence. Look, as we sit here, my mind and my spirit are reflected in you; and you are reflected in me. That it is why in every case where I or someone else gives a lecture, or has something to say, it depends entirely on the audience whether we have interesting things to say, or good things to say, or whether we are completely boring. It is the audience that brings these things out of us. It is a question of reflection. Look at how the meditation went today. There was such power – it was really quite unbelievable – and such silence. There are over 300 people here, and it was completely quiet. And the power was really very great.

Now, how does this reflection work? We live our lives, and we are influenced by our environment. If I spend my time with criminals, even though I have no inclination to be a criminal, I will become one. Now you say that that is naturally connected with reflection: that they provide a bad example. But it is not necessarily so simple. For example, what happens, when you look in a quite precise psychological way, when someone accuses you of having done something? One accuses you once, completely unjustly, naturally; and then twice, also unjustly; and then a third, a fourth, and a fifth time, until finally you will become like that; you become what they have accused you of. I have seen an example of this during my life. I’ve already spoken about it, but I will repeat it again.

I lived in a small town in Italy during the war. A German woman lived with the mayor in a small house there. She was a very attractive and respectable young woman. Then the man ran for parliament, but he was not elected because his enemies wrote on walls everywhere that he lived with a prostitute. And of course, his opponent won and he did not become a member of parliament. This woman was absolutely not a prostitute. She was a very reserved and lovely woman. But she became a prostitute. Everyone called her, well, a vulgar Italian word that was written everywhere on the walls, and she had seen it everywhere. Perhaps she thought, “Why not? They think that way of me anyway.” But this thought is only from me; I really do not know what she thought. But she became a prostitute.

Now here is a clear example of reflection. We may say that this is a bad example, but it is not a

bad example. Here a person was driven into a particular groove by public opinion. But one must look quite precisely to see how it works. We Sufis have exercises that we must do ourselves on this path to control our minds.

Look. This group is rather special because there is no structure. That has a positive aspect, but also a negative aspect. The positive aspect is that we are strong and go on alone, and no one knows what we do with our hearts; so there cannot be competition; there cannot be ambition or hierarchy; no one is greater than the next. We learn from one another. Look how wonderful that is. But there is another side, the negative side. People come to me and ask if I teach, and I say, "No." "What do you want us to do?" they ask. And I tell them, "Do what you want. You must meditate, that is quite important; but beyond that you can do as you please." "But couldn't we do aerobics after breakfast, or ... or a discipline, or something else?" No. And you know, I especially have problems with the Germans in this way. They must have some sort of discipline, then they are happy. Breakfast first, then meditation, then this, then that. Wonderful! Here people are left quite free, because Sufis believe in freedom, as God is free, as the angels are free.

And speaking of angels: we have several very beautiful angels here, angels who are with us. You see, with our aspiration, with our meditation, with our lives, we attract angels that are at the same level of consciousness. They come. They come because it is pleasant for them here, because it is comfortable. We do not disturb them.

Have you noticed that when you love nature, you do not disturb it? I know a man who is quite large, and has very large feet. But when he stands in the garden among the tiny seedlings, somehow he does not disturb any of them. I don't know how he does it; I disturb them, and I have smaller feet than he does. That comes from a special sensitivity. And the people of nature – I call them people: the trees and the flowers, and the cats and the spiders, and every other being – they know. I find it so interesting, and so funny.

We have a garden – it is not very large – and when I come out from the verandah, in that instant they all – and I mean all – know that I am there. They sense the consciousness. They know: all the birds know, all the leaves know, and all the flowers know that I am there. When children play there, they all know it. When children play ball, some plants are afraid, and for some it makes no difference.

Unfortunately we now have magpies in the garden. When you have magpies you have problems with the other birds, because magpies eat the young and the eggs of other birds. But that has nothing to do with us. I do not know how to get rid of the magpies. They are everywhere, and they are predators, and that is not so nice. We had had many titmice, and now there are only a few. And there are now very few blackbirds. I think that the magpies are responsible.

It was not very long ago that I heard a mother blackbird screaming, and the next day I saw that all the young were gone, so I am sure that the magpie ate them. I heard the mother crying, but I thought that she had seen a cat. She often cried out like that when she saw a cat. And I didn't go out. Well, there are many cats, and one cannot be going out every minute. And the cats could not reach the nest; it was in ivy, and the nest was very well hidden. But this time a branch had been broken. The father and mother didn't come back, which means that the young were gone; and they had had young because I had heard the chirping.

So if you work in nature in some way, and if you are sensitive, nature loves you. But usually nature fears people. For example, we have squirrels, and when you lie on the ground, they come quite near; but when you stand up, they run away. An upright human is a frightening thing. Everything fears him. Or when a large bird, perhaps an eagle, flies overhead, then everything is afraid, everything hides. And when one is on a ladder, one looks even more terrible than a standing person; then immediately every animal disappears. I remember that from when I painted my house. I was much younger then. Of course I could not do that any more. When I climbed up the ladder, all the animals and birds disappeared. I must have looked larger than an eagle, as if I were in the sky. They couldn't imagine what I could have been, and thought it best simply to hide. I remember how my cat, who knew me rather well, ran under a bush and hid her kittens. She was called Mrs. Hopkins. I spoke to her, "Mrs.

Hopkins, don't be so silly, it is me!" No! She hid all of her kittens! She is already dead; this is from many many years ago.

So, we return to our theme: it is reflection, exactly like a mirror that reflects from heart to heart, and from mind to mind. I have another example, a good example. Have you noticed that when something is discovered in the world, that suddenly, quite far away – perhaps thousands of miles away – almost the same thing, or even exactly the same thing is discovered? And the scientists fight, each saying that the other has stolen his idea, but the idea was in the air. That is reflection. You may have also experienced that you had an idea, and suddenly someone else expressed it. Or, as often happens, you have a question in a lecture, and the speaker answers it in the course of that lecture. That is reflection. Somewhere on the level of the unconscious one has reflected this thought into another brain, or somewhere.

But “brain” is not right. The real wisdom is not in the brain. The brain is only an instrument. The wisdom, the knowing, the being, is in the soul. And the soul is in the heart, not in the brain. That is why the Sufis say that you must hammer your head into your heart, and then to begin to think from the heart.

Now I want to ask you to ask any questions you might have; and if I can hear you clearly, I will repeat the questions so that everyone can hear them. Sometimes the questions are very interesting. Do you have any questions about reflection; is anything not quite clear ? (No questions.) Well, perhaps it is too esoteric. No one has a question. ... There is a question:

(Question: Is God perfect? Or have I understood that God wants to become more perfect through us?)

Yes, He must become more perfect. That is the idea of Teilhard de Chardin. (Question continues: Is He not already omniscient and omnipresent?) He is, and at the same time not yet. (*General nervous laughter.*) You see, there are mysteries that one can never comprehend with the mind. He is perfect, yet God realizes himself in humans. You see, He specialized in you. He made His consciousness smaller, but more focused, and you are the result. It is difficult to understand.

(Question continues: And who has created those trillions of suns in another, infinitely larger space? Did He also create that?)

Yes, He also created that. You see, this is the question that Einstein posed. It is the question of relativity. (Question continues: That I am a reflection of Him, but a small one?) But you, in your smallness, are perfect, somewhere. You are not perfect here; the fact that we have a physical body is already a limitation. We cannot do what we want. When we want to go to America, we have to fly in a plane or go by ship. But somewhere we only think to go to America, and we are there. One can do that in deep meditation. And here we try to come closer to this perfection through meditation.

Now, consider a microscope. ... Look. First there is a flower, and I can see the flower. But when I look at the flower through the microscope, I cannot see the whole flower, only a very small part of it; but I can see that part so clearly, with so much detail that I could not see before. If it is a powerful microscope, then perhaps I can even see the cells, which cannot be seen with just the eyes.

Here is the idea of reflection. The perfection of more and more wisdom, more and more understanding. Perhaps that will be clearer when I say to you that each one of us is different; and that each one of us will, one day when we are perfect, perhaps only after many many lives, bring our contribution to the ocean of all lives. Each of us will bring our unique contribution, because we are all absolutely unique. This is very metaphysical and difficult to understand. But I throw this thought out intentionally, because once again we encounter reflection.

Perhaps this is the first time you have heard this, and have not understood it. But you will think about it. And because you will think about it, you will eventually understand it. What do the scientists

and engineers do? They have a problem, and they think about it, and they sleep with it, and they calculate. It is a new idea, and they will live with this idea. In reality, they create a void, they create a vessel, and it is into this vessel that, one day, the intuition will come, like a bolt of lightning. An apple will fall from the tree. And then one says, "Ah, how simple." And there is the law of gravity, and so forth. But look, in meditation that happens to everyone. I like to sit and laugh at myself in such situations. I say, "You old idiot, you didn't see it, and it is so simple, and now you see it." Guruji told me so many things, and only now, only after twenty-seven years, I have begun to understand. Oh yes, he did say that, but I did not understand; and it was so clear! He gave me those things, and I didn't understand. We Sufis say, "Everything in its proper time." One needs the right time, the right people, and the right place. These three things must come together. When only one is missing, one does not understand the message, and sometimes it takes years to understand. There is absolute perfection, but that is not very focused. The sharp focus, the specialization, is missing. Perhaps that makes it clearer when I say it that way.

(Question: Is the Void perfect consciousness?)

Yes, and no. One can not precisely answer that. Look. It is the perfect consciousness, but it is not sharply focused; thus it is not quite perfect. It will be perfect eventually, when the world ends and we each bring our contribution to it. Is that a bit clearer?

So, so. Not quite clear. It is quite metaphysical, and one can really only understand it in deep meditation. Even to express it is difficult, because language isn't suited to it. Some people return from meditation and they know; but they have no language with which to express it. That level of consciousness cannot be shared at all; because there, somewhere – and I say 'somewhere' because I myself do not know where that is – there is a level where space and consciousness and time are all the same. For us that is completely impossible to imagine. Space is, "You are there and I am here." That is space. You have your consciousness, and I have my consciousness. And time: that passes with every instant while I am speaking to you. But these three are all the same thing. And how can one explain that? (*Then, quite excitedly, as she has seen someone's reaction.*) Yes!! Exactly!! Yes, that is it!. She had a glimpse of it! She had an idea of it and was speechless. One cannot say anything! What can one say?

And here is our punishment. For all of us who have touched something, and would so much like to share it, one finds that one cannot share it, and so it is like a punishment. One cannot do anything except to point, to indicate that when one goes in a certain direction one will arrive there. That is all that I can do. Even great beings, like Jesus, like Buddha, could not do more than that. They can only show the way; but we must do the walking. People say that Jesus Christ will soon come again. So he comes, fine; but what more will he bring? In any case, it is unlikely that the people will understand him. And if he wouldn't be crucified, since that is illegal in our civilization, he'd probably be shot, just as Gandhi or Martin Luther King was shot.

You know, in thousands of years humanity has not progressed much. When we read about the Roman civilization we find terrible things: how women were treated, and what they did to children. And I look at the scandals that occur just in England, even on this tiny part of the earth. I read the newspapers and think, "My God, this is exactly as it was in Roman times!" People murder, they rape, they sexually abuse children, and on and on. It is exactly like in the stories from Roman times. One only has to read these stories to see it. And yet, there is a sparkle, as if a sparkling on the horizon. It is not so totally dark; it is not quite so bad.

When you see how many organizations there are, how many societies there are, how many people strive to improve themselves, you must feel some hope. But we cannot improve the world! That is nonsense! We can only improve ourselves. We can clean our own houses; and if everyone would do that, the world would become better. To go somewhere and throw bombs, that is not what will help. But when I improve myself, I radiate, I reflect this improvement. One says that a Yogi alters his environment, but that he does not try to change it. He improves himself, and the environment improves. Reflection! It happens through reflection. And we can all do that, because we are made, created, in His image. Even we can do it, with our wills, and with our minds. People can do wonderful things.

Last week I heard Jessye Norman, a black American singer. My God! What a blessing to have such a voice. I thought that her voice is really Divine. She is a big woman; but when you see her on television, there is such dignity, and such humility, and such peace. She received a thundering applause, and she stood completely still ... completely still. And a peace came from her, and was reflected in the audience. And then she bowed very deeply to the people who had applauded. It was very beautiful, and very refined. So the entire world is created through reflection.

The relationship between teacher and student is also a reflection. You would be ordered to sit with the teacher in his house, or just to sit for hours in his garden. If you have read my book you know about this. But at the time, I didn't understand. He was not there at all, and I had to sit. He ordered me to sit there for ten hours a day. And one day he said, "I am inside, and you are outside in the garden; and you believe that I do nothing. I know exactly what you are doing, and what all the others do, and what the world does, and what I am supposed to do." That is reflection. I had no idea what he meant. Are there questions?

(Question: I didn't quite understand the example with the Italian woman. Sometimes, when people repeatedly say to me that I am such and such, it occurs to me that it may have something to do with me; that they are reflecting me. Have I misunderstood?)

You see, we are influenced. That does not mean that she would say, "I am that," consciously, but she would be influenced in such a way that this idea appears more and more often. Or perhaps she thinks, "Aha, well, anyway they think badly of me. Perhaps I can make a lot of money that way. Why not?" Or someone proposes to her that she can make money in this way. Look, go to where there are people who use a lot of drugs. They are a very powerful influence, and you will end up like them. I know that because I worked with young people in social work. One says that it is just a bad example; but I know that it is more than just a bad example. It is the reflection of wishes and desires. One becomes infected with desires. I have tried to express this in another way.

You see, what I am trying to do is to illuminate these thoughts from different sides so that this subject, which is really difficult to understand, is perhaps understandable.

(Question: Is it also reflection when one gets negative projections that have nothing to do with oneself? And what can one do in such cases?)

Yes, that is also a question of reflection. That is why one should not have negative thoughts. Our mind, our spirit, is very, very powerful. When one is depressed, that is a dangerous situation; then one cannot make progress in spiritual life. Depression spreads like a miasma to those around it. Depressive people are unpleasant to be with, and really they are quite dark, they do not have light within them.

One should always think positively. If I have a friend who is dying of cancer, it is better not to think of it. One should hold the inner image of the person as healthy. I know that she has cancer, but it is not necessary that she dies; there has been much progress in medical treatments, and in any case it is not my business to think so much about it. I think of her as healthy, and I will continue to love her just as I had loved her before. These are positive thoughts.

And especially children, they are so affected by reflection! When the parents fight with one another, even away from the children, the children know it. Children are unbelievably receptive, because they are so delicate. They are still near to heaven. Have you ever seen the eyes of newly born infants? There is still the consciousness of the heavens in them. They are not yet here. And when people who have just come out of meditation look into the eyes of these infants, it is as if they are looking into heaven. There is such a special luminosity.

There is a lovely saying about the Prophet Mohammed, that the Prophet loved perfume and beautiful women, and the shining eyes of people in prayer. Look how beautiful that is, and how human. He loved perfume, and beauty, and the eyes after meditation, after prayer. When people are in deep

meditation they are unbelievably beautiful. Sometimes in our group, I open my eyes during the meditation and simply look. Ah! My heart stops! The women are so beautiful; the men are so beautiful. They sit with closed eyes; but there is, well, a heavenly cloud around their faces. And they are as if newly born – completely fresh, completely ... completely ... innocent! That is reflection.

Reflection works on all levels. If you are able to trust this idea, it can really help you; both in meditation and in daily life. You can control the mind better, eventually! Not, of course, in the beginning.

It sometimes happens that suddenly you know something! You will see. In my case, it is after meditating; but we are all quit different, and some people say it occurs just before. From where do I know this thing? I have never read it, never heard it, or at least I do not remember knowing it. I heard a speech on the radio where the man said, quite confidently, “We have, of course, heard it. It happens to everyone; only one forgets that one heard it.” It is possible that it is that way some of the time. But for myself I know for certain that there are things that I absolutely have not read, and absolutely could not have known; and suddenly I know them. From where?

Llewellyn had a lovely example in America. He was in the South, in Georgia, and the people at his lecture were very religious; they were all Baptists, and most had never heard of Sufism. They had no idea what it could be. Yes, this is an interesting example. Someone spoke with him after his lecture as the others began to leave the hall to go into another room to have tea. And this man said something very esoteric in a very loud voice, but the others didn't hear it, because they were not allowed to hear it. Someone who guides our fate prevented it. It was esoteric and not for these people. And what did the man say? He said that it is written in the book that we meet in the night. Llewellyn said that, yes, that is correct, we do meet in the night, but that it is not written in the book. How did this man know about that? Perhaps he is together with us in the night, or perhaps he had received the reflection from Llewellyn's mind because Llewellyn had given an interesting lecture. Llewellyn didn't speak of reflection; but it was in him, and this man had reflected it. This was a man of about 60 years of age who had experienced great longing, and who had made a lot of effort; someone who had aspired deeply.

This aspiration is the feminine side of love. The masculine side of love is, “I love you,” smiling and strong and wonderful. And the feminine side is, “I wait for you, I long for you. My chalice is open, I wait for you.” So masculine love is the sound, and the feminine side is the echo. And He, the great one, also had to split himself into two aspects: the masculine and the feminine. The feminine side of God is wonder ... wonderful. So when one says that the Goddess exists, well, yes, in this sense the Goddess exists. But there is really only one God/Goddess, two sides of the same One. Questions? Yes?

(Question: Just before, you spoke of the magpies in your garden. Somehow, I was astonished. Firstly, I find that magpies are beautiful animals. And secondly, don't magpies have the same right and role as all of the other birds? It is true that they eat eggs, and even little birds; but titmice eat worms, and the worms also want to live.)

Of course, but it makes me sad, it hurts me personally. (*General laughter.*) I have spoken from my own point of view, because I prefer singing birds. But yes, naturally, that is all according to the law of nature. (*Now laughing.*) I have only spoken from my own standpoint. Exactly! They are very beautiful, but they are predators. And predators kill the other birds. Well, one hopes there are not too many such birds in a garden, that is all that I can say, because then all of the titmice disappear. At least a few should remain. (*Still chuckling.*) OK? Thank you, that was a very nice diversion.

Yes, are there any questions on the subject? If I do not see you, please excuse me; without the sunglasses I can see better, but since the operation, the eyes hurt without them. So I must have them, really so that I can see better; but then it is a bit dark and I do not see you so well. Yes?

(Question: When a prayer is answered, is that also connected with reflection?)

When the prayer is heard by God, that is not reflection; that is direct. When your own heart has heard the prayer, then God has heard the prayer. And what does it mean that the heart has heard it? That means it has felt it; it has to do with the feeling. When it only comes from the mind, God does not

hear it. Gurujī told me that I could never reach him with my mind, only with my heart, with my feelings. But if you meditate a great deal, if you pray a great deal, then the entire environment will be improved. Then you are like a geographic point in space and you radiate in all directions.

For example, I have now lived in the same house for about ten years, and over time more and more people have moved into the area who are interested in spiritual life. There are now other organizations, and churches and temples. And more and more and more come. I believe that we have influenced the entire neighborhood with our meditations because in our house there is always meditation going on, always. I meditate every day – especially in the night, but also in the day – and people come for almost the whole day, and almost every day. And the reflection of this meditation works on the environment. That is reflection. But it is quite different with God. When we speak with our hearts, that is a direct ‘Hot-line’ to the Almighty. (*General laughter.*)

(Question: How much is love connected with feeling? Is love somewhat higher, or does it come from the feelings?)

Love is the highest and most sacred feeling. In Christianity, one says that God is love. When you enter deep meditation, and reach That, which one can call God, one is so loved. ... Look. That is also interesting. We Sufis say that there is the lover and the Beloved. The soul is the lover, the soul loves; and God is the Beloved. But when, in the moment of ecstasy in deep meditation, one reaches That, one arrives at nothingness, the void; but this void loves you. This void gives you feedback. And no one has ever loved you so much. Never. And then you are never again alone.

(Question: The void is the love?)

(*Almost whispered:*) Yes. God, as the Buddhists say, is the void; and that is correct. And we mystics all have this experience. For me, the greatest shock – and it was indeed quite a shock – occurred many years ago. I was in deep meditation and fully conscious; and I was alone in omnipotence, in full light, one could say ‘super light’. I was in the realm of God, but there was no God. (Someone says, “You were in the middle of it.”) Aha! Look how that works. I was waiting for a good answer, and here it is! I was in the middle of it. Can you see your own eyes? No. You must have a mirror, a reflection. We can only experience God in our hearts through reflection after we have really refined our minds so that we can, somehow, bring this ‘something’ into our conscious minds. And that takes years.

You see, in the beginning, meditation is not conscious. And you have a problem with that because you think, “Aha, in every yoga book it says not to sleep during meditation, and I sleep.” But when you think about it logically: that you fall asleep almost every time you begin to meditate, you will see that it is unlikely. One might fall asleep sometimes, but so often? Yes, sometimes the ego gets in the way, and one cannot meditate. But especially when one has slept well in the night, do you sleep again? And after one has made some progress in meditation, one goes away in just a few minutes and has no awareness. No, that is impossible that you are asleep. One must be a bit logical. Sometimes one may sleep; yes, that can happen when one is tired; but when one is not at all tired, and has slept well, and you still always go away? Our minds are thrown into the universal mind.

This happens for a time when one first begins to meditate. But later, one begins to wake up. But I will not speak a lot about this. It would not be right, because we are all different. If I said that it would be like this and this, and someone happened to have the same state of consciousness and had the same experience, they might easily say, “Look, the old woman told me this, and I created an image of it.” So I will not say anything. I can only say one thing that happens in the beginning. The time arrives when one goes off somewhere, perhaps thinking that one is asleep; but there is a feeling of “I am.” That is already the first step towards consciousness, although It is not yet quite conscious. I have a lovely example of this.

There was a young woman in my group who had arrived at the state of Dhyana after four months. Dhyana is the Sanscrit name for this state of ‘going away’. And I had seen how she came closer and

closer to it. And one time when she had gone off, I waited twenty minutes. I didn't want to leave her there too long because, at first, one shouldn't stay there too long. Then I called her name a few times until she woke up. When she opened her brown eyes, she looked at me as if she saw me for the first time. And I said to her, "Congratulations, you have experienced immortality for the first time." She said, "What do you mean?" I said, "You were totally unconscious. I could have stuck a needle into you and you wouldn't have felt it." "Oh no!" she said. "I was not unconscious." "Aha," I said. "You were not unconscious, and it seemed as if you were asleep. Where have you been?" "Oh!" she said. Look at this! She was not yet conscious, but she had not slept; and she was not completely unconscious. Somewhere, she had some awareness. So here we are: gone, for the first time to the immortal. That was twenty years ago. Now, of course she is much further; she knows much, much more. There are people in the group who are already quite far.

But every one of you will experience, that sometimes you can meditate and sometimes not. Sometimes it becomes so difficult; God doesn't exist, or God has been dead for a thousand years, and everything is worthless; and everything is foolishness; and one stands before a brick wall. And you will fight and fight and fight. Do fight! Do persist! God is not dead! This state is quite natural, and Carl Jung also speaks of it. It happens to everyone, and it should be that way. This condition, where one cannot meditate, and where one is very dry is when one learns to unite the opposites: those opposites that are created by nature, and those created by oneself. When the opposites are united, then one is enlightened. Are there any questions?

(Question: As I child I learned to reflect my parents, but now I would like to stop it: the negative qualities of my mother, for example ...)

Yes! Oh, yes, yes! (*Everyone has a good laugh.*) That is a good example. Yes, yes. (Question continues: How can I manage to end this reflection?)

Consciously think about it, and say that you do not want to do it anymore. Our will is connected to the will of God. The human being is almighty when he uses his will. The word 'impossible' does not exist in the dictionary of the lover, according to the Sufi's. It simply doesn't exist.

Look, when you love, everything is possible. Will it, and it will happen. And if you are too weak to will it, then go to a psychoanalyst; but that is not always necessary. (*Uneasy laughter.*) Sometimes these patterns are so strong that the person is ruined, and one has no possibility to get free of them. It is as if the will is paralyzed. Then one needs help. But I find that with normal people – of course who knows who is normal – but they can do it themselves. You recognize that you reflect the other person exactly as they are; and then you say, "I will not do it anymore, it is enough; it was that way, but now I am an adult." You see, this reflection from the mother – especially from the mother – is very dangerous. It blocks the process of growing up, and you stay a child somewhere. You do not grow up.

I have now been with people for twenty eight-years, and we meditate. And I say quite consciously, because I know it, that if they really walk on the spiritual path they need no one and nothing, only their soul and God. I call it a spiritual path because it is a path, but one cannot really call it precisely a path, so it is also not a path. But if one desires it, if one strives for it, if one says, "I want only You," then everything will be given. As Brother Lawrence said, "You have created me in this way, help me." Have you read his little book, "The Practice of the Presence of God?" It is a Catholic book, but it is wonderful. He peeled potatoes with Jesus; he cooked with Jesus; he was always in the presence of God.

That is why the teachers and Gurus always give one a mantra, a holy word that is usually one of the names of God. Psychologists say that you become as you think; you develop according to the nature of your thoughts. When you spend the entire day repeating a name of God, with the breath, then you stay in God's presence for the whole day; and so you become That. That is why mantras are given, and they are very important. In the Bhagavata Purana it is said, "The mantra is a small boat that will bring you, quite safely, to the shores of the Absolute." You begin, and the wind of the spirit will take you there. But you must strive, you must make the effort. To say the mantra the whole day is difficult; one forgets. But there is a secret. When you forget, you become angry with yourself. And you should not do that, for when you get angry, that is the ego. That is ambition: "I shouldn't have forgotten!" Instead, be

humble; say, "I have forgotten, but it is not important. Help me the next time so that I do not forget." Then you turn the tables on God. You send that thought to Him, and then He must help you. Then you have created a karma that brings results.

(Question: Before, you said to the woman that love and light are one; yesterday you said that love is the airfield that we use to begin.) Look, I do not know what I say. (*Everyone laughs.*) I am already senile. But both are correct. (Question continues: I thought so too. (*Laughter.*) But nevertheless ...) Guruji said to me, when I was alone with him just before he sent me to London, "There comes the time when only Love remains," and he had not meant my love for him, but Love in general. (Comment: And he also said, "But that too must go.") Yes, exactly. That will also go, and nothing will remain. (Question continues: You mean, then, that that which must also go is the airfield from which we begin?) Yes, Yes. That must also go, and Nothing will remain. I was shocked as I have never been shocked. And this Nothing – I had not known it then – but this Nothing is Love itself. But he did not tell me that; I had to experience it.

(Question continues: Was that the moment when you felt almighty?) No. I felt that when I felt that I was loved; so loved, just as I am, with all of my faults. I do not know if it took hours or a second, because there, there is no time. As I've said: time and space are the same, along with consciousness. These three things are the same. There is no time. A few seconds can take years; it happens in dreams sometimes. I use an alarm clock because I must wake up in the night to take a special medicine. The alarm goes off, and I sometimes wait a few seconds, and hours go by in those few seconds. In dreams, there is also no time; but in meditation it is still deeper. Yes?

(Question: You said that when one is depressive one makes no spiritual progress.)

You see, depression is a completely normal situation in our spirit or mind. It is completely normal. Every doctor will agree with that. But anyone who has fought against depression knows that spiritual progress is not possible in such a state. One can come out of it with one's will; but unfortunately, when one is depressed, one has no will. That is the problem. If somehow, through some miracle, you force yourself to emerge, then you can do it; that is for sure. It can take a long time; months, even years. But one can do it.

There is also the question of the depth of the depression. "Everything is relative," said Einstein. In the years that I was with my teacher, I had such depressions. I thought I would kill myself. I was at my tether's end, at the end of my powers; I was in total despair. And that is an important state to reach. Sri Rama Krishna went into the forest, shouting for Mother Kali. He said, "I will kill myself if you do not appear." He was in such despair. And then she appeared. In the story "The Oratorio of Gerontius," Gerontius had to go to hell, and he shouted in despair; and only then did the angel appear to bring him to heaven.

You know, the most important thing in spiritual life is to so control the mind that it is powerless. Until you have done that, you will always be in despair, you will always ask; you will always be full of desire. That is the ego. The Sufis say that the ego is the only evil that is within us. Without ego there would be no wars, there would only be that which is good. Evil would not exist. Only ego is capable of doing evil.

(Question: Can't the ego have spiritual ambitions?) Even spiritual ambitions are not good. (*Everyone laughs.*) You see, according to the Zen Buddhists – and also the Sufis – one must pray without praying and desire without desiring. Our path is quite similar to Buddhism; I only saw that later, since I have been in London. Our teacher said, "The wild geese do not know that they are reflected in the water, and the water does not know that it receives their reflection." And also, "Grow the way the flowers grow, without knowing." He also said, "The mind is not at all at a high level, the real knowledge is in the soul." And one can only reach that knowledge when one is somehow able to paralyze the mind, or paralyze it for a time. We do not paralyze it forever! Actually, we need it to live. The mind is quite divine, and wonderful; but from the spiritual point of view it is not very helpful, because the real knowledge is somewhere else. Do you have something else to ask? You do not look quite satisfied, but

I cannot give a better answer.

(Question: How does reflection work after the teacher is no longer in a physical body?)

Look, the goal of every yoga school is to live a guided life. Guided from where? From one's higher self. When the schooling is over, the student must be capable of reaching the teacher inwardly. That is the answer. Then we will be led by the teacher. And in what way are we led? This is quite an interesting point. In the beginning there is a duality: one reaches him in meditation, but it is a duality, and where there is duality or plurality is not reality. Reality is unity, one. But this duality is very comfortable, for the teacher is like a big-daddy from whom you ask and receive; or perhaps you do not receive, but in any case it is someone you can always turn to. You can never ask for yourself, only for others, but it is a great comfort. Later, unnoticed, there is no teacher. One goes into meditation and one asks, and no one is there; so one must somehow do it alone. So one makes an effort, and manages with the difficulty that one time, and one sees, "Aha, I can do that." So the next time that this happens it is not so urgent. And the teacher is there less and less. But, more and more, there is an impression in the heart, and the mind knows quite well that this is not from you. I know quite clearly that this is not Tweedie. Tweedie has no idea about this thing. Then, how do I know it? It is like an impression, and that is reflection. Thank you. You see, this question brought me to another aspect of reflection: the reflection that occurs directly from heart to heart.

Here I have read my lecture as I planned it. Tomorrow, I will take a small piece of it and go into it more deeply.

(Question: If there are certain students who have not yet reached the level of being able to contact the master when the master dies, how can the training proceed?)

Through reflection into the unconscious. You will not know about it, but it happens. When you are connected with the teacher, which is anyway a matter of Karma, it is forever. It is not for tomorrow and the day after and yesterday. It is forever. There is something unconscious about reflection. There are dreams, which are very important, and there are visions.

A woman from our group had visions of our teacher. I have never had a vision of him. To me he said, "You can not reach me through the mind, only through the heart." And I can only reach him through the heart, in deep meditation; so as a person he has disappeared for me. But she saw him standing in her bedroom by moonlight, telling her Sufi stories. I had to be very careful, and to examine myself. "Am I jealous or am I not?" (*Everyone laughs.*) It was a very delicate issue. I have often wondered if I am jealous. I have such a grace in being able to reach him, and I can help so many people because of that. But I have never been allowed to reach him for my own needs. That is not allowed. But I can reach him to help others. And sometimes wonderful things have happened. But she saw him standing there. And when he died, he disappeared for me. And one misses the ... living presence of the person, what you see with these eyes. It is so final. It is forever. Nevermore. One is with him somewhere, yes; but one does not have the satisfaction of seeing him here; and she had this satisfaction. You can imagine, it was such a test for me. In the end I decided that I was not jealous (*General and vigorous laughter, for the longing is clear in her voice.*) but I am not 100% sure. (*More laughter.*) And that is totally candid, totally sincere.

(Question: Why do you often wear black?)

I wear black because I have been given permission. When I am in service in an official capacity as a Sufi, as a representative of my teacher, I wear black. Black is 'no color'. Black absorbs all colors. (Question: doesn't white do that?) Look, this pink flower absorbs all the colors except pink, it throws the pink away, it reflects the pink. It doesn't want the pink, so it appears pink to us. This is not esoteric; this is as one learns it in school. So the beauty of the flowers comes from that which they reject. Look, this is quite simple and from normal education. That is reflection. Please! Again reflection!

(Question: In reference to reflection. Can it be that it also functions on a less advanced level: that one asks for a sign and the heart knows, "Yes, that is the sign"?)

Yes, reflection can work that way. One waits for a sign. I have a young woman who is quite new in the group. She had dreamed of me in America for years, but had no idea who it was. She thought it was her grandmother, for she is of Russian descent, and she looks a little like me. But she didn't see the image very clearly in her dreams and had thought that it was her grandmother. Then she saw my book and asked who that was on the cover. She read the book and she began to meditate. Then her husband declared that she was crazy, and he divorced her and took her child away. Everything collapsed. And now she is with us in London. It happens quite often that when one touches one specific path, and one really has the Karma or the talent to make progress on that path, that everything falls away from one. I have seen it with hundreds of people in these twenty-eight years. And of course, it happened to me too. So, that is completely correct.

Now I go back to the black. Black swallows all colors. If one wears black one does not have the right to reject anything. If someone accuses me of something, I have no right to defend or justify myself. When we are with others, we take a little of the darkness away. The word 'sin' does not exist for me. Sin is only ignorance. I take a little of this darkness, this shadow, away, and I digest it somehow, at a higher level; and the person is a little lighter on the scale of fate, and can come a little further forward. That is the symbolism of why one wears black. And the Sufi men wear white.

(Question: Why do the men wear white?)

Ah, that is your problem! (*Loud laughter.*) That would take me too far away from this theme. Oh, I can say something. The man symbolizes the masculine side of God, and the woman the feminine side. The spirit is always represented as light, and the woman as darkness that receives the light. Here one can explain everything: sexuality, birth, essence and being. But this does not belong to today's theme.

(Question: You said that you can contact your master in your heart. Is that in some form or image similar to how he was when he was alive, or is it a sense of his presence?)

It comes as a command to do or not do something, or that something is or is not true, and without any image. In the beginning, when I first reached my teacher – it was on the fourteenth of October – I was in the Himalayas. It is in my book, and there is one sentence which the reader cannot understand because I really could not say it. It was a sort of blasphemy. It was so private, and one cannot speak of one's most intimate feelings. When you are with a man you love, you cannot speak about it. When I saw him, he didn't have a human form, he was only energy, power. That time I perceived him as power, and my entire being was ... it was terrible, but it was my teacher, and I could reach him and it was wonderful. Now it is only a command, in myself; but it does not appear as a command, it appears as my own wish. Only I know that it is not my own wish. You see, I can only speak in paradox, in contradictions. It is my wish but I know it is not my wish. Oh yes! In the beginning, my mind was very rebellious; but now, after so many years, I simply accept it. Yes, I must do that, or not that, and so forth.

(*End of cassette.*)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1989: Part 2

Reflection II and Other Topics

From a Series of Lectures given in Hart, Germany
From July 15 to 29, 1989

Yesterday we spoke of reflection. Today we will continue, and I have some other things to say. We had a very good example of reflection just now. I had a thought, and you (*to a woman who had just made a comment.*) caught that thought, and said something more precisely about my thought. Can you repeat the comment so that we can all hear it? (Comment: "You said you were so astonished that you didn't see God. When I have a ball in my hand, and I look at it, I see the ball. But when I am in the ball, I do not see the ball. Then I am the ball.) Yes, you are the ball. And you see, what is quite interesting is that I thought of the analogy of the eyes, and it is the same idea. I had said that we cannot see our own eyes, except in a mirror. Your image is the same, but expressed in a different way. She had somehow caught my thought, and I have been waiting for just that sort of experience. When one works with audiences, it is better to wait until someone else says some things, so that it does not all come from oneself, it also comes from the others. Yes, that was lovely. Thank you.

This morning a young man wanted to speak with me. I would like him to come up to the microphone now, and repeat what he told me. This is very interesting. Tell us what creation is. God is reflected in his creation.

(The man says: The word 'creation' comes from two words: 'cora' which means heart, and 'agere', which means 'to act'. That means to act, to create, a creation; out of the heart, from the heart, with the heart. This is similar to belief or prayer, which is from the Latin, 'credere', which means to give from the heart. 'Dare' means to give. So what Mrs. Tweedie has said is also hidden in the Latin roots of the words.)

So thousands of years ago people already knew about that. Many many thanks. I didn't know about that, so I have also learned something about the heart. The Sufis say, "Hammer your head into your heart and think from there."

Now, the relationship between the Sufi teacher, or 'Murshid', and the student, or 'mureed', occurs through reflection. They reflect each other. The heart and spirit of the teacher is reflected in the heart and spirit of the student, and vice versa, and in this way the teaching is transmitted. I think that it is done that way not only in this line of yoga, but in all schools. Thus, the teaching is not handed down in writings.

One must very be careful when one gives a mantra or an exercise. I always say, quite clearly, "Please, do not write it down." If they do not remember it, so be it. They should not write it down. So it is not handed down in written form. Sometimes it is given in spoken form, but mostly it is done through reflection. Yesterday we had a good example. And today, someone has said the same thing, with other words, and another example; but it was really quite the same. It was very lovely.

So, everything in creation is reflection. Can you hear me in the back? (*Yes. it is fine.*) The creator

reflects Himself in the creation, and the creation reflects His own image back to Him. Now, this is a very important sentence. The creator reflects Himself in the creation, and the creation reflects His own image back to Him.

There are many methods to bring the Sufi teaching nearer to us. I can, perhaps, say a few things from my own experiences. The Sufis tell funny stories, and Sufi gatherings are rather merry and gay and one laughs a great deal. We know that in London we laugh a lot, and visitors cannot understand why. Probably they think that we just tell jokes. And we also tell jokes, certainly! For the Sufis, someone without a sense of humor is considered to be spiritually impoverished, and completely unsuited for spiritual life.

The Sufis say that the essence of a thing, the depth, and its outer appearance are two very different things. And they say that one should not be misled by outer appearances. Some Sufis intentionally set up situations to show people how trapped they are in appearances. They try to make things appear in such a way that we are misled. That was quite clear in my book. In the beginning Guruji did things that gave me the appearance that he was lying and cheating. This was right at the beginning. It was not at all as I thought. He often said, "This path is effortless," but I knew that it cost me so much effort and so much pain. And one day I told him that, and he said, "I never lie, I never deceive. Why should I? This path is effortless. The effort is somewhere else: on the physical level. But at the spiritual level you receive a gift, and how can a gift take so much effort?!" You see, it is effortless, and full of effort, on different levels. One must understand the words of the teacher on different levels. In the beginning that is quite difficult; only later one learns how that is done.

Each one of us fulfills his own destiny. Everyone is tied to his own destiny, to his own Karma. But spiritually advanced people reach beyond their own destiny. Now look, that is another important sentence. Spiritually advanced people transcend their own destiny. That means that they take their fate into their own hands. Can that be Karma that they overcome? Yes! In a way, yes! Not only do they change their own karma, but the karma of their entire environment. That is why one says that a Yogi changes his environment. "I find that which you seek in solitude, in every road, in every town, in the days heat and hardships," said Malgrebe to an ascetic. Malgrebe lived, I believe, in the thirteenth century.

Ansârî said, "Try to see yourself as clearly as others see you." Here lies something very important. We see ourselves in our own way. For example, I hear my voice in my own head; and when I hear a recording of my voice, it seems that it is not me, that it is someone else. And of course, you cannot judge your own voice because there is a resonance in the bones of your own head. Also, I speak English with a very Russian accent; yet I am convinced that I speak without any accent. When I say, "I intend this or that," or "I know better than you," then I do not see myself at all. But if I try to see myself as you see me, it is not very easy; but it can be done. And if you would do that, you would be much more gentle; you wouldn't criticize so much. Then you could see your own faults much more clearly. We all have fantasies, but we are sure they are not fantasies.

We went for a walk two days ago, and we saw a young girl in a village down by the lake. She was very fat and wore white pants with flowers on them. From behind she really look like a barrel. We all wondered why she dresses like that. And M. said that she probably had the fantasy that she was slim! She cannot see herself. She had liked the pants and has no idea how terrible they looked from behind. If we could only see ourselves as others see us! You know, I believe that if we could, we could quickly improve ourselves. But we have such fantasies about ourselves that it presents a serious obstacle.

Regarding clothes – we women know this more than men, because men dress more uniformly – but a woman should dress according to her type. How many women do that? Some do. And some have no idea; they only have a fantasy about themselves.

Here is another example. I had a friend in Italy who was very rich – I say was, but probably I have just lost track of her, and she is still alive – but she dressed so badly; she wore lace embroideries with all sorts of things, pearls and who knows what. It was just too much. She spent so much money on the

most expensive clothes from Paris, but it was not for her type. I cannot wear lace collars, but I know someone in London who does wear them and they look fine on her. Imagine me wearing them here! (*Everyone is very amused.*) I cannot imagine it. There are people who can wear very expensive furs; there are people who can wear jeans; well, most wear jeans, but I cannot. (*Laughter. Mrs. Tweedie in jeans?*) Yes, I would look ridiculous.

We woman always try – all of us want to dress well, but we are caught by our fantasies. Not everyone can look like the models. So, “Try to see yourself as others see you,” says Ansârî. And Guruji, our teacher said, “To me true mysticism means to wander along the tracks and paths of life, and to suffer under the heat and burden of the day.” Not to hide in the forest, not in the desert or in a monastery, but to live where your higher self has placed you; to live your destiny. And if you have children, or must go to the office, then your life is there. And if you are married, or not married, then your life is there. Not in solitude. In solitude life is quite easy. I have tried it. There are no temptations. But to live here, surrounded by life with all of its temptations, with all the irritations that leave you sleepless: the room that is too noisy, the people who are unpleasant, a radio that is too loud. All of that belongs to life.

In London we have to meditate under the most difficult conditions. This group has existed for twenty-two years. When I lived in Exeter Road, students in the house next door were always having parties with music that goes bum baba bum baba bum, (*everyone laughs*) and we had to meditate! And we did meditate! There was nothing else to do. I remember that my landlady called the police when they had gone on dancing until three and four in the morning. It was rather difficult. One could not sleep. That is life in a big city, and somehow one must endure it. One can use earplugs; that is the only thing one can do.

And that is not the only difficulty! Our greatest problem is that we waste our time with trivial things. “Do not ask trivial questions,” said Guruji. “I will not answer them.” And then he would say, “This question was quite trivial.” Then he would turn around and speak with others. One must train oneself to ask short, precise questions.

Now, some people believe that information and wisdom are one and the same. That is because they do not really know what they want. It is not enough to want to know something. One must be capable of absorbing the teaching completely. The teaching must be appropriate for one, and one must be ripe for it. Guruji said, “It makes no sense to try to teach higher mathematics to a five-year-old child.” Its understanding is not yet mature enough; the child must first grow up. Look, information is quite different from wisdom. What you read in a book is information. Real wisdom, gnosis, spiritual wisdom, is in the soul, and the soul is in the heart. And we reach that in meditation. That is why Guruji told me that he would not teach me anything. He told me he would give me experiences, and that I could “do what I wanted with these experiences.”

You see, we forget what we have read in books, what we learned in this way. I was good in Latin and Greek in school; now I am 83 and I have forgotten most of it. It does still help me a little. When I read it I know what it means, but basically, I have forgotten it. What is learned from books is easily forgotten. And when one is as old as I am, how can I remember what I learned 60 years ago? We sometimes cannot even remember something from last week, so how can one remember what one has learned 60 or 70 years ago? But if one has had an experience! My God! Sometimes these mystical experiences shake one so deeply.

I remember one time in London, years ago. It was, I believe, at seven in the morning that a young man from the group rang the doorbell. He said he had gone crazy in the night, and wanted to speak with me. At that time he was a teacher, and he said that he could not go to work, that it was impossible because he had gone crazy. I invited him in, turned off my bath, offered him a cup of tea, and asked him what had happened. And what had happened is something quite normal. He had had a mystical experience, a colorful mystical experience, a great mystical experience: when the mind is completely still, and something happens. One cannot say what appears to happen, for that is very individual; but what actually happens is that one has a brief glimpse of Oneness, of the Absolute, and that can make one crazy, and that is unbelievably beautiful. But the mind cannot bear it. The mind gets completely

confused, just as this poor man was completely confused. And I explained it to him. That is why the Sufis say that one cannot be without a teacher, because one has experiences which one cannot understand alone.

You have 'other' experiences on another level. When you have been meditating for long enough, you may wake up on another level of understanding, on another level of the mind. Our minds can work on different levels. There is another level that is quite similar to this world. One sees people there: beings, perhaps angels, perhaps devils; everything is possible. Perhaps a spirit arrives that says that it is a great teacher, and that it wants to teach you something. Sometimes these spirits say very wise things, and sometimes they tell big lies and confuse people so badly that it makes living impossible, and one can end up in a hospital for the mentally disturbed. Here one needs someone who can say that what you saw was not a teacher, it was a ghost. And how can the teacher tell? He can tell by the eyes of the person. Then the teacher can explain how one can recognize this and that, and in this way he can help. That is why one needs a teacher. One can never know these things oneself.

You see, when you go into an unknown land, let's say where there are many forests or a desert, you would probably not feel confident to cross these areas alone. You would ask a guide to lead you through the forest or across the desert. And within you, there are such landscapes and such depths. Every analyst knows that one can find extraordinary things in the depths of people. And these things come up in meditation like dirty foam that one must look at to understand. So, in a way, deep meditation and spiritual life are similar to analysis. And this is clearly shown in my book. Spiritual training is analysis with yogic power, which naturally goes much deeper than ordinary analysis – ordinary in the sense that it is with a doctor. I do not believe that anything is ordinary in life; in life everything is special, different.

So, information and wisdom are not the same. Wisdom can only be experienced in meditation; then it is your own wisdom. The wisdom of each of you is not necessarily my wisdom, because we live here in this world of multiplicity. We are many, with many heads and many brains; and each of us sees in a different way and understands in a different way. And the Sufi teacher must know that, and lead each according to his need. That is why a good Sufi teacher never treats two people in the same way. Never! One could not do it if one wanted to. We are women and men, of different countries, with different conditioning, different inheritances, different family backgrounds, and with all sorts of other differences. When one thinks of all of this! That is why, say the Sufis, one needs a teacher: someone who can guide you through your own inner forests and deserts. One could get lost. Guruji once said, "One can become crazy from spiritual life, and one can die. But no one has died with me!" And he stroked his beard with a half-hidden smile of amusement. He had such extraordinary power! And a purity, and a love of children. ... Such people should not die, but he has other work to do ... somewhere else.

We should be content that he is with us, that his presence is so clear and near; not only in the group, but outside of it too. When each one of us prays, our prayers are received, even though sometimes he cannot do anything, because our Karma does not allow it. Healing too depends on the Karma of the person, and we do not have enough wisdom to know if it is allowed to help someone. Guruji, for example, was a great healer, but he never healed cancer. He said that cancer is a sickness that causes such pain and humiliation that all physical Karma goes at one time, in one life. That is why it happens so often that great beings, beings who are spiritually very advanced, die of cancer. Sri Ramana Maharshi was one, and there are also other great Yogis who died in this way.

One must know what one heals, how one heals, and why one heals. Sometimes one cannot heal a person. This is in my book, but perhaps not all of you have read it, so I will repeat it. I once asked Guruji why, when people came to him and asked for healing, he would sometimes say, "Go back home and your child will be healed." Or, "And you will be healed." – it was like what Jesus, what Christ had done – and sometimes he would say, "My child, I can only pray; and one cannot know, for the way of God is a mystery." And then the person would not be healed. That happened once, twice, three times, and many times, until finally, when I had a chance, I asked him about it. You see, I had seen many things.

Once I arrived and a man stood outside from the village; he was obviously a very poor man. And Guruji had made a yantra. A yantra is a prayer which is made with the grace of God and with magic. You see, Sufis are also sorcerers! Hmmm! (*There is some nervous laughter.*) It is infused with magic and the grace of God. So, he gave this to the man, and after the man left he said to me that he would teach me how to do it. But I must never take money for it; I should tell the people that they should give something to the poor, whatever they could afford, but only in odd numbers. So £5 or £7 or £9, and so forth. Why? I do not know; it is the tradition, and Guruji would never answer questions about the traditions. I had already learned that he didn't like such questions.

So, this man had an only child, a boy who was dying from cholera. And Guruji gave him this yantra and told him that he should give the child milk. And the man said, "My God, Guruji, he cannot hold water." You know that with cholera it is terrible, blood and diarrhea come from one end, and blood and vomit come from the other. One can die in a few hours. Now it is not so because they have found effective drugs so that even cholera can be cured; but in this time – that was in 1961 – this was not yet known. And milk! That was really quite impossible. Guruji said, "No, it will be OK. Tell your wife to give him a glass of milk, and that he will fall asleep immediately, and sleep for forty-eight hours. Do not wake him. The mother should not be worried, it will be OK." And that is what happened, and the child got better. He was a lovely child. I saw him, but only a year later when he was seven years old.

So. One needs a teacher when one is a Sufi, because we Sufis are mystics, and mystical experiences are so extraordinary and so difficult to understand. And mysticism itself is difficult to understand. Here I speak of the lover and the Beloved, these two. But when you experience the unity with That, you are one with nothing. There is absolutely no one else there, only you yourself. That is the union with the Self; union in the most intimate sense, with That within you, within each of you. You see what a contradiction this is. That is why the Sufis say that we need someone to help us. And what is important is that one doesn't need a 'Great Guru' with 'Great Power'. I was lucky; well, of course I do not believe in luck. That was my Karma that I met such a person, that I was able to be with him. But really one does not need that at all. One needs someone who is one step further, just a bit wiser than you are. For such a person will go on, and will pull you forward with him. One needs only that. And I know many people who have done that, and have had great success in their spiritual lives.

Now, I begin with something else. One must consider that everything that a spiritual teacher says or does is always and only for the good of the student. And one always forgets that. Because the teacher will constantly test you, and will behave so that you think he behaves badly, or lies, or hurts you unnecessarily, or speaks too much, or sings too much, or is ugly like Ramana Maharshi.

Ramana Maharshi was certainly not ugly, but I heard that people said that he had a terribly ugly face. If you really looked, you would think that he was the most beautiful man in the world. That comes from an inner power, from love. In India I saw a photo of Ramana Maharshi that I have never seen in his books or anywhere in the West. It was hanging on the wall in an ashram, and it was a face that I will never forget. I remember standing there, looking at this face and thinking that it was a very ugly face, but my God! What eyes! And so much love and grace! And my heart beat hard. It was very lovely.

So, whether one remembers it or not, everything that a spiritual teacher says or does is always and only for the good of the student. The teacher has no wish of his own. And the Sufi teaching is not bound by time. This is another point. The results will be seen when the time is right.

I remember one day during Bandhara. This Bandhara is a celebration to honor the day of the death of Guruji's teacher; and there was a celebration every year on that day.

We will also have a small celebration here on the twenty-first of July. You see, we are not always all together on this day. Perhaps a few of us are together. But here we have such an opportunity, there are so many of us together, so we'll have a small celebration: a Bandhara. Bandhara means the opening, the complete opening, of the doors of grace.

And I sat there and understood nothing of the conversation. Guruji explained something, and I

heard the words 'mantra' and 'Karma' and 'Atma.' You all know what they mean. I could not understand Hindi, only these few words, and I thought that he was explaining wonderful things, and I could not understand anything. I sat there like a cucumber, and understood nothing. Finally at eleven at night, I got up to leave. I was so tired and irritated. I saluted him as my leave-taking, and he said, "You are leaving?" and I said "Yes, I am tired." He said, "Yes, yes. You have not understood anything; but I guarantee you that everything that was said and discussed today is in your heart." The heart, the soul, had heard it.

And what is so incredible is that only now, after so many years, that I come to fully understand things that he said, or half-said, to us so many years ago. It stayed hidden somewhere inside of me, because at that time I was not yet grown up. It reminds me of the child trying to learn higher mathematics; it cannot do it. But the child can grow up, and then he can learn it. And for these things too, one must grow up.

These things happen only for the good of the student. And the student doesn't believe it. He thinks that the teacher tortures him, or does unbelievable things, or does terrible things, or does what the student does not expect. "I came to spiritual life, and look at what my teacher is doing! He seems so worldly. He speaks of the Chinese border and the price of butter." And I had come to hear wonderful things and great wisdom. I arrived with paper and pencil to write down his wonderful words, and there was nothing to write. He only scolded me the whole time. So the Sufi teaching, as I said, is not bound by time; its results are only to be seen when the time is ripe, as the example of the Bandhara shows.

The Sufi teaching is like a seed that is planted in the heart of the student, that sometimes sprouts and ripens only much later – perhaps months or years later, when one is far from the teacher, or when he is already dead. "The result will only be seen when the time is ripe," said Gurujī, and he did not say that only once, but repeated it again and again. He also said, "You will not be able to get anything out of the Sufi teaching if you do not pass it on." Look at that! That means, you get nothing that is for your personal end; rather what you receive is only for others. People say that those who want to go on a spiritual path are self-important and egotistic. But look at this! Can we really be egotists? You will get nothing for yourself, except when you pass it on to others. And why? Because when you pass the teachings on, you will become empty, and something can enter you. Gurujī said, "People come to me, especially from the west, with their cups full and covered! I must first empty these cups so that there is space to put something into them."

And if you pass on the teachings, then you will learn. Believe me, I have never learned so much as I have from my group in London. I am always learning. I learned something yesterday with an example someone suggested. I have learned something this morning from the young man who explained the Latin roots of the word 'creation'. One is always learning. Always. And you must be humble enough and open enough to admit to yourself that you must learn. And I find that this is very beautiful. So when you have received something in your meditation, do not forget it. Pass it on. And that is difficult. Why? Because one has such intimate experiences in meditation. Suddenly, there is a sweetness in your heart, a sort of rapture; and it is so intimate, so personal, so holy, that one cannot imagine speaking about it. And you must tell another about it, you must even force yourself. I am not that way, because he taught me in such a way that I can speak of the most intimate things of my soul.

You see, to write such a book as I have is not very easy. That is why this book is unique, and another one like it will not appear for many years. And why? Because I had to push my ego aside and tell how things actually were: a small woman, small in her mentality, who always fought with a great being. One must stand naked. Metaphorically speaking, I undressed in this book. That is why this book is so precious, because when you read it, you can identify with the author; but here again is a danger, for everyone believes the same thing will happen to him. But that was my training, and can never be your teaching, never! People come to me and are terribly afraid. (*there is a ripple of nervous laughter.*) Yes, I have many lovely people coming to me and trembling. What do they fear from me? I am not so terrible. But they think, "My God, what will she do to me! Because her teacher did such terrible things to her!" It is not at all true. These people who come to me need, perhaps, nothing at all. I have a very good example from last month.

A young woman came to us for our big meditation on Thursday, when the house is full. My flat is not very large, and there are about 120 people who come. This woman asked a few questions, and I asked her what sort of meditation she did. She said that she did this meditation – a very very simple meditation – and she described it. And there was so much wisdom in her, and such a longing! Such aspiration! I said to her, “Do you know what? Go home, and continue to do this meditation; you need nothing else! Come back to me next year, and I will tell you the next step.”

I know a wonderful story. Many of you know it, but I will repeat it as some of the people here may not know it, and it is a good example.

Three holy men lived on an island. They lived quite simply, and only had one prayer. And that was, “I am I, and You are You; I love You, and I obey You.” And that was the entire prayer. A great Bishop heard of them, and asked about them – if they were Christian and so forth. Yes, he was told, they were Christian, and they had been baptized, but they are ascetics and live on this island, and they have this stupid prayer, “I am I, and You are You, and I love You, and I obey You.” And what sort of a prayer is that? So the Bishop thought that he would go there and teach them how to pray properly. So he set off in a great ship with all of his followers, and arrived at this island. And there, the three holy men were standing, trembling with joy that the Bishop has visited them. Then they sat down and began. The Bishop – he was a Roman Catholic Bishop – spent the whole day, and taught them “Our Father who art in heaven,” and the Credo, and other wonderful things. And then he left. It was already night as the ship set sail.

Then suddenly, after they had sailed for some time, the Bishop saw a great light in the distance. And the light came across the water, nearer, and nearer, and nearer. And when the light came near enough, he could see that it was the three holy men walking across the water. They came, completely out of breath, and said, “Your Holiness, we have forgotten the prayers. Can you tell us again?” (*Everyone is laughing.*) Then the Bishop crossed himself and said, “Go to your island, and pray as you always have.” What could he teach them, who could walk across water? (*More laughter.*) It was that way with this young woman. I don’t even know her name – she left soon after that, and it makes no difference – here is someone who has proceeded completely alone. She had no teacher. Someone had shown her a simple breathing exercise that needed a little concentration. Really, I do not at all remember what she did, except that it was very simple, something that any child could do.

So, the ways to God are as many as the breaths of man. And each of us goes in his own intimate way, completely alone, to the Alone. And no one can help you, my friends. You must do it alone. Yes, to a certain degree, the teacher can help you; but he can never do it all. What the teacher should do is to always point in the direction, “That is the right direction. Go that way.” I do not remember the quote exactly, but Saint Paul said, “I myself am not perfect, and I am not ‘There’; but as an honest man I can tell you, when you go in this way, you will arrive at your goal. You will arrive at the truth.”

So, you will not benefit from the Sufi teachings until you are empty, and you can only empty yourself by passing the teachings on. And they will never, never, never be given for our own benefit, so it is not selfish. We clean our own thresholds. And if everyone would do that, there would not be any wars. Then mankind would be good, for they would all try to improve themselves.

Now we have another theme: We must come to know our boundaries. That is very difficult, because the ego believes that we have no boundaries. You see, each of us sees the world through his own eyes. Each of us is the center, and all others move around us. But it is an illusion, it is not that way at all. And no one thinks of death. One thinks that death is for the other, not for oneself, or that it is a long way in the future. That is why I find it very precious to become old. The older I become, the more I live under the shadow of death. How long can I live? I am eighty-three. I see something, and the thought comes that it may be the last time. I go to Switzerland; perhaps it is my last time there, or in Germany, or in Belgium. I see some flowers; perhaps I will never see them again. I love this or that person so much; and even I love them more, because perhaps I cannot love them for very long. One doesn’t think of that when one is young. I said today that one is impatient when one is young, but one has so much time. When one is old, one has already learned to be patient, but one doesn’t have much

more time. That is a fact of life.

Now, the ego thinks that it is completely without boundaries. The ego strives for self-preservation. It has absolutely no intention of overcoming the narrow boundaries of self-preservation. So, my body is everything. I will massage my ego, I will be careful with my body, I will become more and more beautiful, I will dress more beautifully, and naturally I know better than anyone, etcetera, etcetera. That is all ego. Most people regard the small self as their personality. I must develop my personality; I must be an individual, etcetera. We accustom ourselves to being happy with unimportant things, and we give them great and meaningful names. Self-Image, Personal Freedom, and such similar titles; and it is all nonsense. Personal freedom does not exist. There are the police and the government, my stepmother, my husband, my wife, my children. And children are the greatest tyrants. Children leave you absolutely no space. Every mother and every father knows that with children there are a few years in which you have no space. Even though they are small, they fill your space completely. Later of course, it is better ... or not!

We do not notice that we behave like small children who are used to eating candy. "How much longer will you desire nuts and raisins?" sings Rumi. People nibble at spiritual life. They don't take it seriously. They deceive themselves, and that is the truth. I have only very few people in my group who really make an effort. I think I can count them on my fingers. And these people are special. I give these people special attention. The others? They nibble. It is lovely to meet, we are all friends who know each other, and we belong to a group. It is important to belong to a group; one grows more quickly, one matures more quickly spiritually. That is a fact. But Rumi says, "How long will you desire nuts and raisins?" because we nibble. That is why mystics and Sufis shake people from their sleep. Sufis work with shock tactics. In this point, their method is similar to the Zen tradition. People are often thrown out; and sometimes – not always, but sometimes – that is the best thing that can happen to a person.

Imagine: You are in the group and protected. You have been in the group for five, six, seven, eight years; you know that you are on a path; you pray and do your meditation. You see, after a time in the group you get practices. It is all very lovely, you feel that you come nearer and nearer to something very precious inside of yourself. And suddenly you are thrown out, because you have done something wrong, or stupid, something that is unacceptable. Recently, someone was thrown out. I will tell you this example; it was something very stupid. How can one do such a thing?

There is a young woman from America, and I had quite often said to her, "Do not bring people to me. My flat is small, and there is not enough room for our people. Why do you bring people who come only out of curiosity?" They come and say, "Ah it was lovely to meet you, Mrs. Tweedie; Hello, it is wonderful; I wanted to meet you because you are famous." Ach! Famous! How dumb! I said it one time, ten times, twenty times. And she always brought people who had absolutely no intention other than to meet me. Yogis do not do that. And one day she came, and someone told me that she had spoken with a man in the underground – something one shouldn't do anyway, especially in London where it is very dangerous. She told him that she is clairvoyant and belongs to a very important group where I – she spoke of me – am also clairvoyant. I don't know how she knows that; she knows more than I do. Then she brings this man to my door and says, "I am going inside, but you cannot come in."

So this man stayed outside, terribly curious. And by chance, one of our young woman, A., came out with her baby daughter in this moment, and this man, who is a journalist, is A.'s neighbor. And he recognized her and asked her, "Aha! What is going on here?" And she said that it was a relaxation group, and he said, "No, I met an American woman in the underground who told me it was a group of clairvoyants and I want to write an article." Exactly what we don't need: an article about clairvoyance and such stupidities. You see, of course such a person must be thrown out if they are so stupid that they still do not understand after so many months. She had led the journalist on. Naturally, since he was the neighbor of A., he visited her the next day and the next, and again until she threw him out. Because he wanted to know what was going on, and he tried to find out. How could one be so stupid as to talk of this clairvoyance? I was really angry!! And she did not listen to me when I told her not to bring people to me. The man wanted to write an article about clairvoyants! Just what we don't need! Thank God he hasn't come to us yet, but he probably will come at some point. I can guarantee that he will not

get a nice reception.

So, you see, naturally one must throw such people out. She still didn't understand after so many months. But I didn't throw her out completely. I told her she could not come until after New Year, six months later. Why? Some people are completely thrown out, but not her, because she is quite helpless. And she really cries out in her heart for the Beloved. I have no right to block her path. I can punish her, because what she did was really terrible. She could really have created a serious difficulty for us. But the grace of Guruji is such that we cannot be hurt. This man did not come again. I think he will come, but probably not. (*General laughter.*) And if he does come, I know what I will do, so that is OK.

But one should not block the way for people. Not only that, but when people believe in something, it doesn't matter in what, please, do not destroy that belief! Because even if you know it is false, perhaps for this person it is not false, and in any case, they will learn from this belief. One is not permitted to destroy such beliefs. When someone believes in stupid or incredible things, such as ghosts, you can say that you do not believe that. Of course, they will try to convert you, but you can stay rather indifferent; simply do not disturb their belief. With time, they themselves will see that it is not right. Also, when someone has a great failing, one should not be too critical about it. If I did that, I would chase people away, and they would close their heart to me, and I would not be able to help them. When you throw someone out, their heart does not close. Because when you throw someone out, and this is rather mysterious, one sends an angel with them. That is a fact. They are thrown out, and they believe that they are finished with the group, but an angel goes with them. Someone! A being from the other level protects them. You see, Yogis have great power and can do many things of which the world has no idea. But normally one does not speak of these things. And when one does, people don't believe you anyway, so it is OK.

So. I have said that we work with shock tactics, and that it is very similar to the methods of the Zen tradition. And another thought. It is rather pointless to hope for progress as long as you have even a trace of pride and arrogance. First one must improve one's character; then one will progress. But when you are full of arrogance, and full of ego, you will never progress; it is quite hopeless. On this path, the improvement of the ethics of the character is i n c r e d i b l y important. To improve oneself is really the most important thing. You are ready "only when your pride is as hard to find as the leg of a black ant on a black rock in the dark of night." That is a quote from Idries Shah about the Sufi teaching. But you know, we are all full of arrogance: my family, my relationships, my academic standing, my certificates, my personality, my personal experiences, etcetera, etcetera. Then you would say, "It sounds so hopeless, what should I do? How do I get off of this endless wheel, away from this ego that sits on me as large and heavy as a mountain of the Himalayas?" And not only that!

The problem is that we are not even conscious of this problem; we do not see it at all. It is us, naturally, it is 'I'. I am Doctor so and so, and have learned such and such; or I am a very good cabinet-maker, or an excellent driver; and I have a beautiful car, etc. Maybe it is a Jaguar. It is all very important. And here is where the Sufi teacher begins his work. He begins to deal with these issues, and he slips unnoticed into the heart of the student. My book is full of examples of how one can deal with these problems. You see, it can be a terrible torture. That is the crucifixion.

Some people say that Jesus didn't exist at all; that it is a myth, a legend. Some people say that; but I say that it doesn't matter. It is not important whether Jesus existed or not. The power of this belief, after two thousand years, has given this legend life. And all of the great religions – including Christianity – help people. And to the people who do not believe in the story of Jesus, one can say that it is the drama of every soul: the crucifixion of the ego; only it has been told as if it actually happened, as an event. It is really a crucifixion; that it is a true story or a parable is not important. It causes pain to become free of the ego. And you will not become free of the ego. I can not help you; I will always speak in contradictions. "You cannot become other than what you are," said Carl Jung. You cannot be different, you are this way; you were created in this way. But! You can grow up out of your faults, your conceptions, and your narrowness, just as children grow up. So, we have these problems with our egos. Naturally, I also have an ego, but I know exactly how far I should go. And the ego is very useful. It is your personality, and you can make use of it. You will never be free of it anyway.

Do not be afraid. There will only be a change: the values become different. That is all. You change so much. For example, a salesman said to me, "Yes, suddenly, everything is so unimportant to me. It is so small." And nevertheless, when he is in life, and must work in business to support his family – then, of course he must do it. Then he must unify his feelings. "It seems unimportant to me, but I must do it, so I will do it. Duty comes first!" But when it is not necessary to work, well, just don't. Why should you make so much effort? Live a spiritual life. It is easier not to be in the world; I mean, one can be in the world but not of the world. And one cannot judge others, for each person is different. There are character types that absolutely must work, and character types that absolutely must meditate, and there are character types that do not need to do anything, and go, quite simply, to God – like Mother Teresa. She, of course, meditates and prays; but she doesn't really have to do anything because she does Karma Yoga, and when you do Karma Yoga, you do not have to do anything else. You go to God quite automatically.

Now I want to begin something I may not be able to finish today. I want to read a few quite important paragraphs:

A Sufi Teacher will never, and I repeat NEVER, behave in a way that the student expects. And if he behaves according to the expectations of the student, then he is not a real teacher. What do we expect from a great guru? Wise comments, beautiful robes, perhaps orange or white; and he should be from India or some other distant land, like Mexico or Sudan. He can have another skin color, it makes no difference which. And he should never be angry, Oh no! He must be a saint! ... Yes, that is what we expect. But really he is a completely normal human being, like you and me. Ordinary in the sense that he is like the next person in the street. As I have already said, I do not believe in the 'ordinary,' only what is ... usual. And he will do things, and be angry, exactly as you and I. But the substance is different. There is a Latin saying, I knew it many years ago, but I still know the meaning of it, that outwardly, there is no difference between the idiot and the wise man, but something is different inwardly.

So, he will behave in such a way that you will not at all expect that he is a saint. He may speak in contradictions, or behave in such a way that everyone speaks against him, and thus cause people to leave him. Teachers have no image, and need no image. People can think what they want to about them. If my conscience is clear, then why should I worry about what others think. He may have a strange appearance, or behave strangely, so that we take him for a crazy person or a fool. He will have no fixed patterns or habits. He can be crude or angry. Zen masters are well known for their very coarse and angry behavior. We all have preconceived ideas about how the teacher should be. Forget it; simply forget it. There is a Chinese saying, "Before you start to meditate, you must forget everything you think you know about meditation." Just sit down and meditate, and it will be quite different from what you had thought. And it is that way in life, too.

When we think of something in the future, we think things will be like this or like that; we already have ideas, and as we all know, it is almost always quite different. It is never the way we imagine it will be. Someone says, "Oh, you must meet my friend – such and such a doctor from this place or that," and we immediately imagine this doctor. And when the doctor comes, it is perhaps a woman! Or we imagined a fat man and it is a thin one, always something different. It is the same with the teacher. And the laws of this world are the same. The imagination works in the same way on all levels.

Yes, I think that is enough for today. There is not time to finish another theme. So! We will now meditate.

(End of cassette.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1989: Part 3

The Relationship with the Teacher

From a Series of Lectures given in Hart, Germany
From July 15 to 29, 1989

Today's lecture will be about the relationship of the disciple to the teacher.

Yesterday I said that the teacher has no desires. Guruji used to say to us, "Ah, we Sufis, we Yogis, we have desires, we are human, but for us it makes no difference if the desire is not fulfilled." Sometimes we might want a car, and do not get one; or we want a beautiful dress, and we go to buy it two days later but it has been sold, and we can be in despair. Of course, the Yogi will also have desires. It is quite natural; we too must dress and eat; we must keep ourselves clean. Really, these are all necessities, and necessities are also desires. But, of course, when you have too many necessities, then that is greed. And greed is one of the cardinal sins; just as when we have too much clothing, or when we eat too much.

We must eat several times a day, and some of us must eat more than others. For some, the body needs more: the young, for example, because they burn up more; their metabolism is faster. But when you are greedy and eat too much, that is a cardinal sin. So you see, it is a very fine line, a hair's breadth between necessity and greed; and it is not easy. The whole of spiritual life is really not very easy. I always say that it is simple, but one should never say that it is easy.

The last thought from yesterday was that the teacher never behaves in the way that the disciple expects of him; that he can be coarse and angry. Zen masters, for example, are famous for that. We all have expectations and opinions about how the teacher should be. Please forget them; just simply forget them.

The teacher will always give the answer that the student needs, so it can happen that two different people get seemingly contradictory answers. I have done that hundreds of times. I tell one person what they need to hear. And then another person asks a similar question – not exactly the same, but similar – and I give almost the same answer again. But, because this person needs to hear it in a different way, this sometimes sounds as if it were a quite contradictory answer. It is not really different, but it may appear that way.

Now, if the disciple needs a stricter approach in order to progress, as it was in my case, the teacher will be strict with him; or he may treat him lovingly; or act scholarly – always according to the needs of the student. And the decision of how the training will be done lies totally in the hands of the teacher. The student has nothing to say about it. He cannot say, "I want to go the way of Tiaga where I must let go of everything: my money, my family, and myself; in total surrender." Only the teacher decides. It is useless to say that I want to do Hatha Yoga, or to say that I want to be such and such, and please help me to do this or that. That is pointless. Only the teacher knows what the human needs. And how does the teacher know? Through reflection. One goes into meditation, and gets something from ... somewhere.

For example, when someone wants me to sign a book, I say that they should leave it with me overnight if it is possible. Why? Because I do not only want to say, “Dear Heinz”, or “Marlis” and sign, “With love, from Irina Tweedie.” I want to write something special: a quote, or something that comes into my head, or something that Guruji whispers to me. But when I say whisper, I do not really mean that, because that means two: one whispering to the other. I mean a command that appears in the heart which one needs a very fine ear to hear. Then I write something personal for this person in the book. And look! These comments are always correct.

Yes, sometimes two people get the same words, but very seldom. Usually each one is quite different. I pray, and I wait, and then I know; and I write in the book. And that is not so easy, because I must come out of meditation to write in the book; and in the night that is a little difficult. But one must do it. This is, once again, reflection. Where does it come from? Something gets reflected into the heart ... from somewhere, from something of which we know nothing.

The teacher can also be very loving, or he can behave in a very scholarly way; each according to the needs of the disciple. And the decision is exclusively, and I am emphasizing this, in the hands of the teacher. I have heard people say, “Oh, I respond only to love; I am only able to progress with love.” It is senseless to say such things. Perhaps this person responds to love, but on this path one cannot always be loving. Sometimes one must be strict in order to still the mind of the disciple.

You see, our minds are accustomed to go on in their usual way. When you look at how you live, you will see that you do exactly those things that you are accustomed to doing, from morning to evening. For example – a very simple example – in my flat there is very little furniture, mostly pillows for the people who come. I have just a small corner; but really, the flat is set up that way for the people who come, not for me. Now, there are certain people who want a particular pillow and a particular blanket, and want to sit in the same place each time they are there. Good. They feel good there. But try to change the place, to use another blanket, and see how it feels. Will you be insecure? Why did you want this other corner? Because it is comfortable? Or because you are hidden there, and you can see everyone else but nobody can see you? You see, it can feel dangerous when you are not hidden.

You see, we mystics teach simple things, simple things that help you to live. Because spiritual life and this life are so united, so intertwined, that you can really not separate them. In the beginning, “This is worldly, and this is spiritual,” and it must be that way. One finds some things worldly and some things spiritual. This morning I spoke to a woman who has serious Kundalini problems, sometimes unbearable heat, sometimes unbelievable energy. This woman has already been with me for twelve years. And someone, from above, decided that this woman did not make enough effort, and had, one could say, tightened the screws a bit. And so now she has problems.

She came to me in the hope that I would help her. But I said, “No. You must pray more, you must strive more; and you must think less about worldly things.” This woman is a yoga teacher, so she should know better. But somehow due to her character or temperament, or because she has a busy life, perhaps she forgets. But someone, somewhere, thought that she should do better. And the screw will get tighter and tighter until she understands that when she is on the path, she has to take it seriously.

It is exactly the same when we have to pass a test. When I have to prepare for an examination, it makes no sense to go to the cinema, or to go out with friends or to go dancing. I would not pass the exam. In this moment, I need to concentrate and to learn so that I can pass the test. It is exactly the same. The same law applies. One cannot spoon-feed spiritual life to anyone. And what do people expect? This morning a woman came to me and said, “I want so much to progress. Help me!” She wanted to speak with me. Yes, I can talk to her, but what I will say is quite clear: Do it! If you want it, do it, live it. How can I help you? I can say something to you, I can give you a prayer, and I can give a little help; but if you do not do anything yourself, nothing will change.

So the teacher will always give the answer that the disciple needs; and the teacher will always do

to the disciple what the disciple needs. Sometimes they are strange things, sometimes they are worldly things, or something that is completely unexpected by the disciple. I found a wonderful quotation that I will try to translate from English. I have never heard it translated, and I am very bad at translating. It is, "When you hear that a Sufi is doing worldly things and is behaving strangely, know that that is the teaching of the time, and in this time it is necessary that he act in that way."

Sometimes the teacher will behave with one disciple in a way that he has never behaved with other students. Jelaluddin Rumi behaved very strangely with his teacher, Shams Tabriz. They locked themselves in a room, and Rumi left all of his disciples, all of his mureeds, alone. And he didn't do that for just one or two days; he did it, I believe, for a few years! The mureeds were outraged, and finally they murdered Rumi's teacher. In a book by Anna Marie Schimmel, she says that there is evidence that even the son of Rumi took part in that murder. Because his father was criticized so severely, he must have thought that the murder was justified. So Shams was murdered: he disappeared and no one knew what had happened to him. Then Rumi wrote this wonderful ode or poem, "The Divani Shams Tabriz." That was his teacher.

Shams Tabriz was a very unusual man. He appeared suddenly in Rumi's life - from where is not known. He was always dressed in black felt clothes that he never washed. In the desert, when one wears black felt clothes that one never washes! Well, one cannot imagine! (*There is a wave of laughter.*) But probably it didn't bother Rumi at all. And it was so many centuries ago, probably people didn't wash so often anyway; they didn't know what we now know about hygiene. But he was murdered.

You see, Rumi, with all his greatness, with all his wisdom, had completely neglected the others, and stayed alone with his teacher in his locked room, with both of them singing love songs! Naturally, one could very easily misunderstand. And the people would say, "Aha! What are they doing in there?" They were two saints. They did nothing wrong. They only prayed and sang to God. But the students were quite understandably angry. So sometimes even someone as great as Rumi does things which, from the worldly standpoint, are not good. But who can judge that? Guruji once said to us that the really great beings are above criticism. We cannot understand what they do, so it is better simply not to criticize them.

So. I have heard people say, "I respond only to love, and it is completely pointless to be strict with me." But the teacher knows much better, and he – or she, because there were also great women gurus and teachers, such as Anandamayi-Ma – and he or she alone will decide. Now you may ask, "How can the teacher decide that?" But the teacher will, of course, know, because the teacher knows the destiny of the disciple, which is reflected into him from 'somewhere'; or he sees the character. You see, to see the finest essence of the character is really the same as seeing the destiny. And the teacher sees much more; he really sees what is going on in people.

Everyone has a light, his own special, unique light. This energy, the energy of God, works in a special way for each person, and manifests in a special way. It can be seen very clearly on the spine. I must say that I do not see it; but when it is necessary I will suddenly know how the energy flows. I will know it quite precisely, and I also know that I make no mistakes, because it is not me that does this. This knowledge comes from somewhere and reflects itself in me, into my human mind. And then I know, "Aha! This person has come to me, and this is the energy, and it must be treated in this particular way."

And also, one knows exactly when one must do a particular work with a particular person. Some people need many exercises; some people need no exercises at all, like the example I gave yesterday of this young woman who came to me. I sent her away, and told her to continue doing what she had been doing, and that was enough, because I saw that she had progressed with these simple exercises. I believe that she had a teacher who gave her these exercises, and that they were good for her. So, of course I would not change them. That would certainly not have been good to change them.

So, one sees quite clearly that the Sufi teacher must be somewhat different for each disciple. Sometimes he will speak, sometimes he will be silent. I have people in the group with whom I almost

never speak. That is not out of unfriendliness; they do not need it. Deep in their unconscious, they want to be left alone, even if sometimes they complain that I neglect them and do not speak with them. On the level of the mind, the ego says, "Aha, she gives her attention to others, and not to me." But deep inside, the soul needs that space to develop. And you see, that is a very fine difference. And the teacher will know about that.

With some people I speak a great deal, and with some not at all, or very seldom. But that doesn't mean that I do not notice them. (*Now humorously.*) I know exactly when they get too angry and too upset that I do not speak to them; then, of course, I speak. One should not make people too angry; but I know that they do not need it. Still, one must give them something, like one gives a donkey a carrot. (*Laughter.*) That is a good example. Sometimes the little donkey gets quite angry, and will not move at all; then one must show him something like a nice carrot. But really, it is not necessary. People must have their own space, for it is in this space that they can develop.

You see, when you receive a command to work with the souls of people, it is a terrible responsibility. And that is why Gururji said to me, to us, "Unfortunately, people begin to teach while they are still full of ego." Then, of course there is ambition, and then one tries to please people, and do what they expect of you. A Sufi teacher never does that, if he is a real Sufi teacher. He does what is necessary! The personality of the mureed, of the disciple, is unaware of it; but the teacher knows it is necessary. In my group, which has existed for twenty-two years, the people know this already, at least I would hope so; but certainly the ones who have been with the group a long time know it. Sometimes I do not speak with people at all, for months, perhaps even for years. And then suddenly, I must speak with them again, because a time comes when the energy must change, or different exercises must be given, or the person must be given a shove he needs to progress. But this is progress without aiming for 'progress'; one cannot have ambition. We meditate because that is our duty. There is the Beloved and I, and I do this for the Beloved. I want nothing, I have no ambition, because when I want something, the ego is there; and the Sufi is totally surrendered to Him.

This 'Him' is outside of us, all around us, and within us. One cannot escape from Him, one cannot run away from Him. As it is written in the Bible, (*She is almost singing as she quotes this,*)

"And if I take the wings of the morning,
And fly to the outermost end of the sea,
Even there, You will find me;
And if I go to hell and make my bed in hell,
Even there Thy hand will lead me."

One cannot run away from God. It is even in this quotation from the Bible.

In this lovely poem, "The Hound of Heaven," there are hunting dogs, hounds that chase you through the heavens: they do not leave you in peace. And He comes and knocks on your heart until you open. You see, in the moment, and I must emphasize, in that moment when you have had only a glimpse of spiritual life, someone has already noticed you. And this someone will take you in hand, and you will not be able to run away anymore. Why can't you run away? Because longing appears, this mysterious, wonderful longing for ... something. It makes you restless. It makes you ill. It poisons your life! And one can have this longing from childhood, one can even be born with it. Or it may come later.

Gururji's father was a poet, and also a saint. He was always singing a particular song,

"Increase my longing!
Take away all the joys of love from me,
All of the delights,
All the happiness and bliss.
Leave me only the longing,
The pain of love,
For it is this pain that brings me to You."

You see, all, ALL of us go through this longing. I know that already. All of the people who come to me, without exception, have this longing. "I have such longing, Mrs. Tweedie, and I don't know what to do about it." Do not worry, it is just right. "Yes, but it hurts so much, what shall I do?" Hold this longing; do not run away from this longing. As I explained yesterday, it is the feminine side of love. The masculine side of love is, "I love you," joyful, and wonderful, and free; and, "I come to you." But longing? (*Now very softly.*) "I wait for you; my cup is empty. Please! Come. My light is in the window so that you can find me in the night. Come to me; I have such a longing."

And as I speak of that, look how special the atmosphere in this room has become! Because a Yogi can create atmospheres. And we are all Yogis. We all strive. Each of us, tall or short, young or old; we all strive, we all try, we all desire – but please, without desiring! But how can one desire without desiring? When one surrenders. "I want it, because You want it. I want only that Your will is done, for ever and ever and ever," and that means: for eternity.

So the teacher will sometimes speak and sometimes be silent. Sometimes he is home, sometimes he goes away. He is not available for days at a time; or he disappears and is absent for months. This is also important. Sometimes one has to go away, to disappear. That reminds me of something funny that happened. One day, while we were having a discussion in the group, after we had spoken about other things, a young woman mentioned that I sometimes disappear. Then an American woman who was visiting us said, quite excitedly, "Disappears? How does she do that?" (*Happy laughter.*) She had thought that I really disappear! And I immediately said that no, I do not disappear; I go away, just in the normal sense. And no one knows where I go, or how long I stay; and it does not have to be in England. The world is large. Sometimes I have gone to India. When I wrote my book, I went to Scotland.

From somewhere, someone had shown me a landscape of how it would be, of where I should go. I thought, "Where can this landscape be?" It was clear that it was a northern landscape. And by chance, or synchronicity, some friends said that they were driving to Scotland. There were already four people in the car, and I could be the fifth; it was a large car. I asked if I could share the expenses and come with them, and they said, "Of course." The landscape that I had been shown had a fir-tree forest, and the sea, which formed a sort of tongue towards a mountain that had three peaks. The landscape had appeared to me in quite a precise and clear way. It appeared to me in three meditations.

So we drove to Scotland. The husband of this woman had a month of vacation, and we spent that time driving around. And we came to a wonderfully beautiful place, which is called Achilta Buie. There are thousands of islands toward the west, where the sun sets into the sea. Scotland is really a fairy-tale land. If you can, you should go there. Only the weather is, unfortunately, always bad. (*Amused laughter.*) But when there is an exception and the weather is fine, the water is so clear, and the hills are violet with heather, and the distances are so blue. It is really a land of fairy tales, a land of fairies. Only there is a lot of rain, and it can be quite cold, even in the summer.

I was there for nine months, right at the northern edge of Great Britain. Between me and the North Pole was only water. And the seals sang; and there were eider ducks, which are wonderful birds. They have an unusual voice which the human voice can imitate. It is quite unusual; we might, perhaps, imitate a song bird by whistling, but this imitation must be done with the voice.

The eider ducks always swim together. The male is black and white and very beautiful; and the female is completely gray, and quite inconspicuous. When the tide goes out, the male has usually already eaten his fill. He puts his head under his wing, and he sleeps and swims out. But the female dives again and again; she is always hungry. Well, she has to lay her eggs, so she must eat well. But it is so funny. He sleeps and she goes on busily, diving and diving, all around him. They are very gregarious, always together, fifty or a hundred birds swimming in a group. And they talk to one another. And the sound is (*She makes a sound, something like the urgent whimpering of a dog that is trying to signal that it needs to go out!*) And it is all surrounded by mountains, in such silence, with the roar of the sea. It is so poetic! I really loved them, the eider ducks.

These are memories from Scotland, where I was completely alone, and where I wrote my book;

and where I cried so much. Because I remembered the hot days in India. ... And the waves in the North Sea were sometimes fifty feet high! And the storms there! I didn't even experience such storms in the Himalayas. The North Sea is terrible; I can't imagine how they are able to get oil out of it. That must be a terribly dangerous job. Many serious accidents happen there.

So someone had shown me this landscape, and we drove around, and found this beautiful place with the view of the islands. My friend, who knew of my vision, suggested that I should stay there. I said, "No, there is no fir forest, and the landscape is completely different." So we traveled further and further, until finally my friends had to return to London, and left me alone in Scotland. Then I traveled north by bus. I didn't have a car, and I cannot drive anyway. Really, I didn't expect anything; I was disappointed; we had driven all over and I had not found this landscape. I didn't know what to do.

And suddenly, quite suddenly; after a long journey – it had been five hours, and I was tired – I suddenly glanced to my right and saw a small pond or lake with lotus flowers. And I thought, (*Her voice takes on a dream like quality, and she speaks as if from far away.*) "Aha. That was in the dream," and then I saw mountains that had also been in the dream, and the tongue of the sea, and the mountain with three peaks; but I couldn't see the fir forest. And the bus continued into the hills, up a series of hairpin bends and to the village. Then the post-bus stopped and the driver said, "Madam, this is as far as the bus goes." I said, "Good. Can I find a bed and breakfast here?" "Oh yes, go up to Mrs. Ross," he said, and he pointed to where I might find her. I had to cross a field of grass and ferns, and I arrived with wet feet. It was on a Sunday, and Mrs. Ross is never home on Sunday. But I arrived just in time, just as she came out of the door to leave. I asked for a room, and she had one, and so I stayed there. But there was no forest.

I was there for three days, and walked around, but had still not seen a forest. And I thought, "I don't know. Probably this vision was not right. Something was not quite right about it." Then I asked Mrs. Ross if there was a fir forest in the area, and she said, "Oh yes, there is one about two miles up the mountain." Now this was just after I had had a serious heart attack, and I could not climb hills very well. It was very difficult. But I began to walk, for in this tiny village there was no taxi. Naturally, there were horses, but one cannot ride a horse after a heart attack. So I walked and walked and walked. Sometimes I sat down and rested, but still there was no sign of a fir forest. And I went on, and the street curved to the right where one went to Doun Raey, the large atomic power station – at that time I didn't know about it – but then, I saw a beautiful fir forest. And I said "Ah!" Then I continued on and on, but there was nothing more, not a single house. I sat down again. I remember the despair and the loneliness, feeling that I had made such a mistake that it was terrible.

Then I suddenly saw a sign on a tree that said, "Weavers cottage, 200 yards." Of course I went there. A small boy was outside, and I asked if I could speak with his father. He said that his father was weaving. I asked that he call him. He came and I asked him if he had a room to rent, that Mrs. Ross had said that he had a small flat to rent. "Oh yes," he said, "it is a lovely flat. It is all electric, and there is even a shower, but three biologists will be there until next week." I asked if I could see it. He said no, it wasn't possible; he didn't have the key, and all of the windows were closed because the men didn't make their beds and they didn't want anyone to see how it looked. I said that I would take it. And he said, "But you haven't seen it." I said, "Mr. Souderland, I know absolutely that it is for me." I gave him a deposit so that he would hold it for me, and a week later I moved in. And it was wonderful there. I was there nine months, and wrote my book in that time. I used my diary as a basis. That is the story of this vision. That is reflection into the heart.

I also had another experience of reflection that also fits with this theme, so I can tell it to you. My book was already written; the publisher already had it, but it had not yet been released. I had a vision that I must go to Morocco. I must fly to a certain point, and from there I must first go by bus to the right, and then south. And there I would find a village or a city with white houses with red tile roofs. Usually, as in most Arabic countries, Moroccan roofs are flat; but these were very steep tile roofs. They were like what one finds in Switzerland or in Tirol in Austria, or in Germany; usually only in places where it snows. I thought, "That is unusual." But! That was the vision.

I must go to this village, and there is a Sufi, and I must see him. You see, these visions come from quite far away and the mind does not work there, but I am so surrendered, and am so accustomed to these things, that I do not ask, I simply do it. So I went to a travel agent and asked how one travels to Morocco. They told me that I had to fly to Tangiers. And I said that then I had to travel to the right, to some city to the right, but that I had forgotten the name of it. (*Laughter.*) And that then I had to travel south in a normal bus. In a normal bus it is not so easy; everyone travels with their goats and chickens and all sorts of things. It is not so simple for a European woman. There are goats and chickens and women and children and more.

And I had a wonderful experience on the bus. We traveled from Feh to Marakesh. The bus began and we drove through an area of high mountains, really very high mountains. And we drove and drove, and suddenly the bus stopped. We were out of petrol! We all got out of the bus. The air was wonderful. The Arabs stood around, and the women took their chickens out, and they all began to eat. I had nothing with me to eat. A woman offered me something that didn't look very clean, but I said that I had eaten, thank you. (*Laughter; the atmosphere is quite jolly.*) And I asked an Arab standing next to me. "When do we leave?" And he said, "Allah knows." (*Everyone is laughing.*) "There is just no petrol!" But he said that there was a container on the roof. So a man climbed onto the roof and carried the petrol down. Then something happened. A man who had had a seat in the front had been asked to go to the back. He had protested because there was no place to sit in the back, except on the floor. Then they put the petrol container on the front seat of the bus. They put a rubber hose into it, and someone sucked the petrol through, and the petrol began to flow to where it should go. It stank terribly, and everyone was smoking. Yes! The whole busload was smoking. And I thought, "My God!" Then someone sat down in the front, and off we went. And we drove along, and all of the Arab men were singing! Everything was OK again! Then someone asked, "How much is left?" and another replied, "This much". I cannot understand Arabic, but this I understood; and again the question, and again, "This much". We arrived in Marakesh with "This much". (*Everyone has a good laugh.*)

But that was already after I had met this saint. So, I arrived in Tangiers, and I took a bus to the right, and then I had to sleep one night in a hotel. Then I took another bus and went south in the direction of Feh. I bought a ticket all the way to Feh, but en route I suddenly look out of the window and see a village where everything is painted white, and where all of the roofs are the steep red-tile roofs. I take my small suitcase and want to get out; but the bus driver objects, saying, "No! No! It is not yet Feh! That is an hour and a half further." And I said that I had made a mistake, that I want to get off here. And everyone was saying there is nothing here, it is not for tourists, and no one can get out. Then I made a bit of a scene, until they finally threw me out of the bus, and the bus continued its journey. (*Long and loud laughter.*)

Finding a hotel was quite easy. It was an Arabic hotel, and very clean. So I took a room, and then asked for a tourist guide because I wanted to look at the town. They brought me a young man; and we immediately went off, and he showed me everything in the town. Here is the museum, and here is this, and that, and that. Then I said to him, "You have a saint here." And he said, "No, we do not have any saints here; only the bazaar and the hotel and the petrol station and so forth, but no saints." And I said, "Look, you have a great saint here. I know that he lives here because I had a vision, and he lives here in this village." The young man looked at me with big eyes, and then he went off to the bazaar. After about an hour he returned, and said, "Yes, there is a saint. He lives about ten miles away from here; but unfortunately, one can only go there by taxi." I asked how much a taxi would cost, and he said it would cost the equivalent of about five pounds, certainly not much. So I said, "Yes, let's go right away." I think we went to find this saint with the taxi on the next day. I did not know why I was going to see him.

We went to a wonderful, fairytale place, with huge monoliths of rock scattered around like pebbles thrown by a giant, and with trees that had grown between the rocks. There was an Islamic cemetery and a monastery. And when I walked into the monastery, all the young men stood around, looking at us. All the cells of the monks opened into a huge court as is usual, and all of the monks had seen this woman and wondered what she wanted, because I had come with this young man and a policeman. I do not know why the policeman had come; probably they wanted to know what I was doing there. Maybe they thought I was dangerous. (*There is laughter, but everyone is so engrossed in the story ...*)

One doesn't know. But the saint was asleep. It was hot and just after lunch. So I had something to eat. I do not remember what. Really I could not eat, as I was too excited.

Then a small boy came and said, "The Saint can see you now." In Morocco, they do not allow Europeans into the mosques because we are unclean; even when we take off our shoes, we are still unclean. So I had to stay outside. He was sitting inside the mosque on a platform, surrounded by his disciples, and he was teaching them the Koran. They sang from the Koran. It was very lovely.

The teacher was fat, and he was laughing, and he was dressed in white; he was most certainly a Sufi! He was very merry. (*And so is the audience.*) He spoke French, but he spoke Arabic with the young tour guide. The young man told him that I had had a vision in England, and I have come because I wanted to see him. Then the Sufi made a gesture and looked into my eyes, perhaps for a minute. And I felt that my heart would jump out of my brain. I have never in my life had my heart beat like that. And then he said in French, "VA!!" – Go! So I left.

Only afterwards did I understand what had happened. Some things must be done on the etheric level. My teacher was dead, he was not here in this world. Naturally he is on a very high level, and the etheric level is the level of animal magnetism that is in our bodies. The chakras are in the etheric body, and they are almost physical. They are so dense that one can see them quite clearly. So this work had to be done at a much lower level than the level of my teacher.

But my teacher had to activate my heart chakra; it was necessary at that moment in my development; so I received an order to go to a living Sufi who could do that. And the Sufi, with his psychic power, had known what was necessary and had done it. And then he said "VA!": go. It was a sharp command. He had done what he was supposed to do.

After that, there was a big difference in my heart chakra, and, naturally, I understood why it had been needed. But here again is an example of reflection. Someone had reflected that into me - the landscape, and so forth - without explanation. Naturally, one must already be well on the path before one can understand. Otherwise one would dismiss it; one would not have the faith to overcome the difficulties. Just as in Scotland, where it was quite difficult and there were so many obstacles, I could have said, "Oh, it was just my imagination, or some mistake." But I persisted, and so the things happened as they did. So, when sometimes an intuition comes to you, or something that you think is very unusual, follow it, even when it is completely illogical. Sufis say that the first thought comes from God. So, even when your mind says that you cannot do it, or that you should not do that, do it! Then it becomes an adventure. And spiritual life, believe me, is a very, very great adventure. The greatest adventure is to go inside of oneself, and to discover everything that is there, and to see what comes up in meditation: all of your conflicts, all of your faults. And we must improve the character.

Now, how does one improve the character? I am the way that I am. I do not know what is inside of me. I know I have this or that fault; but the ego says that it is not so terrible. I can improve myself, well, tomorrow or the next day; it is such a little thing, really. But suddenly these 'little things' come up in meditation. One says, "Ah, that is not so bad; it is exaggerated. I am not that way." But it comes again, and it comes again, and again; until finally, one has enough. One says, "Too much! It is better if I reform myself." And then one begins really to improve, to change. It is very simple; it keeps coming into your mind, and you cannot cope with it; you have to work on yourself. So, with this meditation that we do, you do not normally need analysis. A human needs analysis if he has too many conflicts, or is so damaged that I know that it would take, let's say, twenty years to resolve his particular difficulty. Then I always tell him to go to a good analyst, and that it will be a big help. One can send them to an analyst, and that speeds things up; usually a year or two is enough. But if you are a person without too many conflicts – of course, we always have some – then you do not need it. Things will improve by themselves.

And that it clears of itself shows the truth of Gurujii's saying, "It is an effortless path." I knew how much effort it was, and had not believed him at all. The effort is here, in this life. But then you get something, a big gift; and a gift cannot cost any effort from your side. You simply get it.

So, the last sentence was: the teacher may ignore people, or be especially friendly with some, in which case everyone else will be jealous. I have given the example of Rumi. Sometimes he is serious; sometimes he is inclined to constant laughter. Maybe he also sings or dances. In short, he is capable of anything. He will appear and disappear, and do wonders; and he will do everything in a completely natural way, as if it was the most normal and usual thing in the world. One thing is certain: he will always have a great sense of humor. In Sufi meetings, as I have mentioned earlier, there is much laughter. As Guruji was in the habit of saying, "If you cannot laugh about life, and especially about yourself, you are not suited to spiritual life." He said that many times.

So a Sufi teacher cannot be shoved into a particular category. He is not the way we imagine a saint to be, and he doesn't understand himself to be one. We say, "He must act like a saint, he is not allowed to be angry." Why is he not allowed? What does "Like a saint" mean? What kind of idea is that? Why shouldn't he be angry? Sometimes anger is necessary, because there are people who can only be made to understand the teaching through anger, and who are only able to understand the value of anger through such an experience. Anger can be very helpful, for example when one sees that someone is about to do something very wrong.

I have the feeling that I should stop here, because there will be some questions about what I have been saying. Do you have any questions? I will repeat the questions, because I have heard that the people in the back could not hear yesterday.

(Could we have some air?) Ah, the first comment. Yes, it has stopped raining now. Yes, open the windows, at least a few. Thank you. Yes. Any questions?

(Question: I have a question about synchronicity. There are times when one has many synchronistic experiences. Is it possible that these experiences have something to do with the wish to live according to the will of God? Can it be that when there are always more of them, and they begin to come one on top of the other, that it means that one is living according to His will?)

Aha! She says that there come times when there are many coincidences that have a special meaning, which is called synchronicity. Can it be that this is an expression, an indication, that one is living according to the will of God, and that the inner and outer life must eventually meet, and unite? I believe that is correct. I am not a hundred percent sure. It is a new question, and I must think about it. But it seems logical to me. It is probably so.

Does anyone have another opinion? Or another contribution? (Comment) Yes, then what she said is right; that the inner and outer life conform. Yes, the idea is from Carl Jung. And you know, I have personal examples. When I was in the Himalayas, I went through a very psychological transformation. And nature reflected that all around me. Thunderstorms, gales, snow, and lightning; everything fit with my own inner state.

(Question.) The woman said, "Isn't that also a question of attention?"; because she cannot imagine that anything happens that has no meaning, or that is not appropriate to the moment."

Yes, but I believe that it is more than attention. I think it is the power of one's psyche that does that. You can call that attention. ... Yes, I see what you mean. You could express it that way. There is no chance in life; I do not believe in chance.

(Question.) The woman said that she had spoken with someone about Christian Science, and in the conversation someone had used the word 'reflection', and she had forgotten this word until she suddenly saw a flash from some eyeglasses, and then she had remembered, "Aha, that is reflection!" And then I began, and spoke about reflection. Yes, that is synchronicity.

Jung gave an example. He had a woman in analysis, and she was speaking about a dream she had about scarabs, a kind of Egyptian beetle; and in that moment, a large May beetle flew into the room; and these large brown beetles look exactly like scarabs. And Jung said, "That is synchronicity."

I personally believe that the human is almighty. Our psyche and our thoughts are almighty. I have known people who, when they think something, it happens. This has also happened to me in small ways. I think something, and suddenly it happens. I believe that everyone has that experience in one way or another. So if we are Yogis, if our spirit is aimed at God, like an arrow aimed at its target, then we can be almighty. I am quite certain, for we are made in His image. God is almighty, so humans must also be almighty ... if the human is completely developed. I saw what Guruji did, and he did incredible things.

And I want to say to you that these incredible things occur now, too! What we experience in our group is sometimes very unusual. No one would believe it. But we all know that in these many years, unbelievable things have happened. Someone for whom it was impossible to pass an exam would pass it because we have prayed. Or someone who is very ill with a deadly disease is suddenly healed. And very small things happen too, in the hearts of people: like a wonder, like a flower. It seems as if a bud is just opening, and suddenly the flower is there. It happens again and again. We have been together a long time. There are people who have been with me for twenty years! And naturally, there are also those who have only just arrived. It is that way in every group. So! I really believe that we are almighty.

(Question: If one has a vision of a message and one overlooks it or misunderstands it, does it come again?)

I do not know exactly. Sometimes that has happened to me and it has come again, and sometimes it does not come again. I really do not know. It is a very delicate question, and I do not think that one can answer it. I believe that it is individual. And I believe that it is not only individual, but that it depends a lot on the message. If it is very important it will probably come again, perhaps in another way, the way a dream repeats.

We interpret dreams, and I find that dreams are very, very important. Dreams are signs along the way. Sometimes it is difficult or impossible to interpret a dream, and sometimes one may interpret a dream quite incorrectly; then the dreamer gets another dream, perhaps with completely different symbols, but with the same meaning. That happens very frequently.

We normally interpret dreams in the group. That is not really possible here because we don't know each other, and because we are too many. But in a group of, say, one hundred people, we can do that; and in our group in London, dreams recur quite frequently when they are not understood the first time. The dream comes in another way, more understandable. And sometimes when I have made a mistake and badly interpret a dream, the person actually dreams something that tells me that what I said was wrong. As simple as that. So then we have to start again from the beginning.

So, I am sorry, but I cannot give a clear answer to this question. But perhaps I can give you some advice. Do not take visions or messages lightly. Perhaps they do not mean a great deal, or perhaps they are not important. That is possible, because the ego gets mixed up with them. But it is better to take them seriously, because in every message, even when it is only from the level of the mind, there is a ... there is something for you, in this moment. Perhaps it is unclear or dark, as Saint Paul said, "To see in a mirror darkly." One learns to interpret quite well over time. After a few years, one can interpret dreams oneself.

Many people have come to me for many years, and when I ask if they have had a dream, they say, "Yes, I have had a dream, but I know exactly what it means." And sometimes they will say, "Yes, I had a dream and I know what it means; but I would like to tell it anyway, because it is an interesting dream that may mean something to others." That also happens. So we work a great deal with dreams.

Llewellyn has just written a book about dreams, but it has not yet been published. It is very interesting. These are dreams from the group. And when he had realized that he still needed a few dreams, suddenly people had interesting dreams! And that is really quite funny! We sat there and laughed. He had needed a few meaningful dreams on a certain theme, and these dreams appeared!

Once I went to Berkeley, California, to lecture. I had a great friend, a psychologist named Dr. Susskind, who has sadly died of cancer. That was a great loss for me. He was truly a lovely man, and really quite a special person. And once he criticized me quite sharply. I came and gave a lecture, and we interpreted dreams. He said, "Mrs. Tweedie, you should not interpret dreams so glibly. It is irresponsible when one interprets dreams for someone that one has never seen before. One must sit them down first, as one does in analysis, and get to know the person; and ask them many questions; otherwise it is quite irresponsible." And I remember that I laughed. I said, "But Dr. Susskind, the people had no idea that I would interpret dreams, and look what sort of dreams we got!" Every dream had a special meaning and was important for the dreamer. There were five or six such dreams. He couldn't find an explanation for that. Later, when I spoke at Berkeley University, he was also there and watched quite attentively; and again the same thing happened. It was as if these people, or something in them, had waited for me so they could tell me these dreams.

Jung also had an explanation. He said, "When the unconscious notices that we are ready to work with it, the person will have a series of significant dreams." A dream that comes when one has been to an esoteric group for the first time is especially important. That is always an important dream! Someone dreamed that she stood next to me on a huge map of the world, and that I pointed with a pointer and said, "Look, that is the way that you should travel." And the way went north.

In spiritual terms, the north is very important. Buddha wanted to die with his head pointing to the north. His last words to his student Ananda were very important; he said, "Therefore Ananda, take thyself for a light. Take thyself for a refuge. Do not look to anyone for refuge except yourself. Work for your own salvation with diligence." They were his last words. Just before that, he had told Ananda that he should hang his hammock between two Sal trees. Sal trees are lovely trees. They are not very large, but they are very straight and have very large leaves, and are perfect for hanging a hammock. These two particular Sal trees placed him so that his head faced north, and he wanted to die in that position. That was his last order to Ananda.

Do not look for a lamp in others; see your own lamp, and follow that. Someone wrote a book with the title, "When You Meet Buddha On The Way, Kill Him." It would be an illusion, it wouldn't be Buddha. Buddha is in you.

(Question: Does "When you meet the Buddha, kill him," mean that you should not make an image of him, but that you should have your own image?)

Yes, exactly; that is it. Do not follow an image, it is an illusion. Yes you have expressed it differently, but it is correct. "Your own light, your own image." Yes.

(Question: It seems a contradiction, on the one hand to be one's own light, and on the other, to completely surrender to the teacher. To really give up and accept that only the teacher knows where the path goes.)

Ah! Mystics can only speak in contradictions. They are both true, and they are the same. (*Now, very softly:*) Because the light in the teacher and the light in the disciple reflect back and forth in each other to infinity, further and further, heart in heart, further and further, in eternity. So, basically, it is one and the same. But while we live in the world of multiplicity, we must speak in this way; that there is the teacher, and there is the disciple with his own light. But the good teacher will always point to the inner light. The real teacher is in you. No one, outside of yourself, can teach you something new. The teacher only helps you to undress, that you can make yourself naked of all the things that cover you: your upbringing, your inheritance, your conditioning, your small self, your qualifications; everything that you are as a person. And that especially applies to beautiful women. Yes! Beautiful women are always spoiled.

(Question.) Yes, the Sufi teacher sees us as a totality, and gives us exactly what is missing. Thank you. The woman said that, I just repeated it. Quite correct! It was expressed much better than I had said it.

(Question.) If each of us has his own light, how is it possible that there are people that are not suited for spiritual life? I would say that we are not yet ready, not yet mature; that it must wait for another life. We develop, we have Karma. There are people who will not become enlightened in this life, and it is not necessary; they will become enlightened in another life. They must still learn some things. They are like five-year-old children that cannot learn higher mathematics. They are not yet capable of it; they are still a bit dense, and they must first become finer. But everyone will get there. All of humanity will, one day, be ... not just spiritual, but Godly, Divine. Except some of us want to go on a bit faster, and make a bit more effort. That is all. No one is greater than the other. Yes?

(Question: I was fascinated that you followed your vision and traveled into unknown territory and really found your vision. I have been struggling with a sentence from Karl Bach, "Obedience is grace." I did not understand it, because I thought that obedience had to do with the will. I decide to obey or I decide not to obey. But it became obvious from the story of Mrs. Tweedie about her vision to go to Morocco that in obeying her teacher, she was obeying her own inner, reflected vision; and that it can be a grace to follow such a vision. So now I understand what Karl Bach meant: that it is a grace to follow a command.)

Yes! That was an important contribution. Thank you. Yes, we have enough time for one more question, then we will meditate. Yes?

(Question.) I have said that anger can sometimes be very useful. And the woman had the experience that every time she acted out of anger, that it was not all useful, and that it caused harm. ... Now, when your child does something, you say something once, twice, three times; and then you get angry. That is completely correct. There is a correct anger, and that is different from the anger that comes mostly from the ego. The real anger, this correct anger, is spiritual anger. Spiritual anger comes from the highest principles. It is ethically perfect and not tainted by ego. But it is also anger! She is quite angry, but she knows why, she knows where the anger comes from, and why she should act in an angry way. Gururji said, "If you see evil and act against it, you will not create Karma if you are not the doer. You must react from your highest principles." It is of course also very important that she know when to stop, so that she does not harm or even destroy the child. You see, Yogis have so much power that they can give such a shock that the other person can be really destroyed.

Sometimes anger is very useful. And then, for this purpose, one uses one's ego. Look! When I say that I am free from my ego – we cannot, according to Jung, be other than what we are; and the ego is also there. But we grow out of things. When we are grown up we know exactly what we are doing, and that includes knowing why we feel anger and knowing when to express it. The most difficult thing is the first time that one tries to find the source of the anger. Look! You are angry with me because you reflect my own anger. There is something in you, some anger or tendency towards anger. That can reflect it. I always give the example that when you tell a child a dirty joke, it means nothing to the child. It will not resonate in him because he is still innocent; but we understand it, for it resonates in us, it resonates with the murky part within ourselves.

So, when one is very angry, the most difficult is the first or second or third time one tries to find where the anger comes from. Try, in this moment, to find out why one is angry and from where the anger comes. Physically, it usually comes from the area of the belly. But emotionally it touches something inside of oneself that has exactly the same quality. It finds a resonance with some anger inside of you. If it were not the same, there would be no echo, no response. Is this too difficult to understand? (*It is difficult*) I do not know how I can say it better.

(End of cassette.)