

The Lectures
of
Irina Tweedie

The Empty Bell
Volume 6

German Lectures:
Schwarzsee, Switzerland
July 10 - 16, 1988
& Zurich, Switzerland
April 1990

Translated and Compiled
by Harvey L. Stahl



Make your heart
 Like an empty bell,
 And wait...
 In stillness.

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 Liselotte Treytl, from Vienna
 who took the time and care
 to meticulously review all of the translations in this volume
 for content and context
 and to correct my limited German,
 and who has been an enormous help and support,
 for the entire project
 and to Gillian Stokes for her final review and evaluation of the volume.

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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The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1988: Part 7

The Stage of Meaninglessness

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Schwarzsee, Switzerland
July 2 – 16, 1988

(‘R.’ begins the session with a beautiful Mevlevi song of longing...)

Over the next five days, we will occupy ourselves with meditation. You see, I returned to England from India in 1967, and since that time, our meditation group in London began, as have other meditation groups connected with this line of Yoga. And they have continued. And of course, the people in these groups have progressed and now understand much more than they did at the beginning; and many of them have had real mystical experiences. I have already spoken about this in Bern at Easter, but since then I was asked to speak still more about it. Of course there are many people here who were not in Bern, and many of you have already had experiences, and until Easter I had only spoken about these experiences privately with people, and never publicly. And that is what we will do this week, and I think that you may find it useful to take notes. So if any of you would like to bring paper and pencil with you starting tomorrow, you are welcome to do so.

Sometimes people ask me what it means if, for example, they see a blue light from the left or from the right; or if they suddenly cannot feel their legs while they are meditating, or when they can only feel their heart; or when they feel as if they have no hands or legs or head, or when the heart does not beat at all. All of these are mystical experiences. And if one does not have a bit of guidance, if one cannot find an explanation, then one can become very frightened. And there is nothing to be frightened about.

In these five days, you will work more than I will. Today, I will do the introduction, but from tomorrow on you will ask me about your experiences. And I may not be able to answer your questions. That is quite possible, because I can only answer about things that I, or people close to me have experienced; and of course, I cannot know everything. And when I do not know, then perhaps someone in the group here will know more than I do. Someone may have had very interesting experiences that will help to answer the question. So. This will now really be a workshop where we all work together. And today will be the introduction.

The Sufis say, “Live in such a way that He can be born in your heart in every moment.” And Meister Eckhart said, “The eternal job of God is to be born, now and forever, in the hearts of men.” You can see that these statements are both the same. But what is the significance of that similarity? After all, Meister Eckhart was not a Sufi. It means, quite simply, that mystics, and everyone who loves God, and everyone who lives for God and with God, all have the same experiences. The experiences are colored according to the temperament of the person, the culture, and the conditioning; but basically they are always the same. He, the Great Beloved, must be born in our hearts. We must live in such a way that we are always in His presence. We must live in such a way that we cannot live without Him for a single minute. Look. When you are in love, you always think of the one you love. And almost all of us have been in love at one time or another in our lives, or have loved someone very deeply – I am also including the love of a mother for her child. That is also like being in love. It has another form, but it is very similar. The mother will always think about the child, even when she is not in its presence. And the

lover will always think of the beloved, and the beloved will always think of the lover ... all of the time. And the time comes for everyone when we think of the Beloved the whole time.

You see, if you love someone, and you see something beautiful, and the one you love is not with you, then you think, "Oh. That would have been lovely if he too could have seen this, or if he too could have experienced that, ... this music or this landscape." It is quite natural. And that is what happens when you are with the Great Beloved. When you experience something special in your heart, then you will say to your beloved, "Look, that is so beautiful. Have you given that to me? And if not, then look at me, and see how happy I am. Look at how much I love you." And the greatest mystical experience is when you find God in your heart – and that usually happens when you are alone. It must not necessarily happen in the night. It can happen in nature. I can be among the trees, or in the mountains, or you might be swimming in a lake, and suddenly, quite suddenly, He ... or She – It can also be a She, because He also has a feminine side – He or She is suddenly, quietly, in your heart. Then there is a bliss that might last a second ... or a long, long time.

There, where this bliss is, is without time. Time only exists on the level of the mind, so you will not know how long it lasts; you cannot know. It might last the whole night, or perhaps hours ... or only a few seconds; the experience is the same, because for the Beloved it is always Now. There, where you reach Him, it is always Now; there is no time. It is not yesterday, and not tomorrow, it is Now. It is totally and completely Now, and it is Now forever.

"To be born in your heart forever." That is the only job that God has. He has no other job. Everything else is only illusion. God's only job is to be born in your heart, to be born in every heart – into each one of your hearts. And this birth is completely intimate. He is with you alone. One feels completely loved. One is so fulfilled. But you must earn that. And you earn it with your meditation. (*Now quite emphatically,*) The non-plus ultra of every spiritual life is meditation, meditation and meditation. The time comes when meditating is much easier for you than not meditating. The time comes when you fall into meditation automatically as soon as you are alone. Then you really begin to live a spiritual life.

So, as I said, I want to speak to you about the experiences – your experiences, not mine – that one has during or after meditation. We will speak about what these experiences mean, and where they lead. Sometimes one has experiences that are not real mystical experiences. Perhaps they are experiences that come from our darker side, and about which one has to be careful. And we will also speak about what we learn from these experiences. I have the feeling that it will be important for many of us, and that it will be helpful. But to really be able to understand these experiences, our inner awareness must first grow, and that takes time. It can take years. And then, suddenly you begin to understand; and then, after a while, everything becomes clear. This development can be accelerated if we get explanations, and sometimes such explanations can be very important. And it is for this reason that I am now speaking about meditation experiences.

Now. How does the mind react when one suddenly sees or hears something in meditation? You might hear voices for example. Of course, a doctor would say that if you hear voices, it is schizophrenia. What is the difference? And there is a very great difference; but how can you know which it is? It has often happened to me that someone has come to me and said, "I hear voices, but I am afraid to go to a doctor because I know that it is one of the important symptoms of schizophrenia." And yes, sometimes it is schizophrenia. And the one who helps you must know if it is schizophrenia, or if it is your own inner voice, a voice that always comes from the higher self. In mystical meditation, this voice is not 'someone' or a ghost that is speaking to you. No. It is always your own higher self. I have often been asked, "What does it mean when I hear the voice from my left? Or from the right?" If it is the higher self, it will always come from behind. It comes from the unconscious. And that also applies to dreams. If you dream that something comes from behind you, that too comes from your higher self. We will speak about dreams and experiences, and everything concerning spiritual life. And you too will do the talking, not only I. We will have 'two way traffic.'

What do we think when we experience something in meditation that we have never before seen or heard, or about similar experiences that we have had as children? Was it really something? Or was it

simply an illusion? You see, the mind is never lost in meditation. It goes inwards. But the mind does not know where it is when it goes inwards, and that is why we sometimes become frightened and afraid. You see, it appears that we get all of our impressions from outside of us, and it also seems that our thoughts come to us from somewhere outside of us. Our mind is made in such a way that we believe that, but it is not true of every thought and feeling. A Yogi knows exactly what comes from outside of him through his five outer senses, and what comes from his own inner sense – from that which, in English is called ‘mind.’

I always have a problem here, because in German there is no word for this concept of mind. In German there are words for the understanding and for the spirit; and this concept of ‘mind’ is much higher than the understanding, but not nearly as high as the spirit. The mental-body, the body of the mind, includes the understanding and the spirit; it includes the higher mind and the lower mind. It is rather complicated, and one cannot explain it in German. So sometimes I say ‘understanding’ and sometimes I say ‘spirit’, but really I mean something between them: the essence that lies between these two. Perhaps this is not quite clear, but as we go on in the next days, it will become clearer to you.¹

So the mind goes somewhere inside. It is quite capable of doing that; it must only be trained, and that training is done in meditation. When we meditate, then the outer mind – the one we are now working with: I am speaking and you are listening – withdraws itself into the innermost corner of our psyche, and is there united with the psyche². And usually that which happens at the innermost level of consciousness, at the level of the innermost mind, cannot immediately be expressed on the outer level of the mind. I had to think about this idea a great deal before I could put it into words, and it is very important.

What I am saying here is not to be found in books; at least, I have never read it. It comes from my own personal experiences and the experiences of the members of our group. People in the group sometimes tell about their experiences when we work together to interpret someone's experience or dream – when we try to untangle something, like one might untangle a ball of wool. And there are times when things are really difficult to untangle.

So I will repeat this idea slightly differently this time. The outer mind withdraws into the innermost corner of the psyche, where it is not only mind, but also something more. And there it unites with the psyche. Do not forget that the feelings are also in the psyche. And usually, the mind is not immediately able to express, at its outer level, what it experiences on the inner level of consciousness. You know that you have experienced something, but you do not quite understand it. Then, slowly, as these inner experiences begin to be integrated; there are changes on the outer levels of consciousness, changes in the ordinary consciousness. Somehow the values begin to change, even though we ourselves might hardly notice it.

Then one begins to grasp the sense of the changes – you begin to understand where the changes are coming from and what they mean, and this new understanding of reality gives you a new sense of freedom. One has the feeling of coming out of prison. And when that happens, one thinks, “Oh! So that is the way things really are! My horizon has expanded so much! Now I understand.” And sometimes it is so simple that it seems silly that we did not understand before. One sits there and laughs at oneself, “How dumb that I never understood it before.” That has happened to every one of us, only sometimes we were not aware of it; and it will continue to happen to us. It is this process that one speaks about when one speaks of liberation. You can find it described in the Upanishads, ‘You will be liberate’. It is a feeling of expansion and a feeling of freedom.

¹ Translators note: I have usually used ‘mind’, but sometimes, when Mrs. Tweedie uses ‘spirit’ in its larger sense, I have used that.

² In this lecture, Mrs. Tweedie uses this term ‘psyche’ in an unusual sense. If the mind is a part of the mind of God, and the soul is a ray of God, then both are pure and, as it were, empty. They are empty in the sense that they do not contain anything individual: no karmas, no memories, no identity. One can then understand this use of the word ‘psyche’ as being everything that individuates a particular incarnation, to include Karmas, and memories from other lives, in addition to what we generally understand as the psyche.

Now. We may also have visions. And these visions can be of unusual beauty or of great meaning. They can influence our daily lives, and they really do. After we have been meditating regularly for some time, we arrive at a stage of development where something within us suddenly awakens. Something in us wakes up that we do not know about. At our normal level of consciousness, we do not know about it at all. And we do not notice that this 'something' is awake in us; something that we are not accustomed to. And then a process begins: an attitude comes into existence, which is similar to the attitude of a witness. The inner consciousness becomes a witness. The inner consciousness looks at these new inner occurrences as a viewer, as one who only looks on, and remains completely uninvolved. This 'witness' feels neither pleasure nor discomfort, and does not even have any special wish or viewpoint. That is a very important statement. In this inner state, we take no pleasure in what we see, and we have no active desires about the outcome of events.

We know that this inner part of us is there and that it is new for us. We do not know what it is, but now we are now able to witness it; and if one remains in this state of witnessing, without joy or sadness, one finds an inner calm, and then you will have had a real mystical experience. At first, one has the feeling that what you see happening within you is not a part of you. You observe, but you have no role in what happens.

Many people have told me that when you have an anesthetic for an operation, you can see that you are lying on the table, and that the doctors are standing around you; but that you are, as if disconnected and simply watch what is going on. In this state you have no feeling of danger. You simply watch, completely objectively. That condition is similar to the one I am describing. You see that this new something has happened within you; something is born: a new realization. And I am not happy about this new realization, and I am not sad about it. It is simply there. The only thing that happens to you is that you wonder what is happening. There will be a question mark ... many question marks in your mind. One watches, but one plays no part in what happens.

Now, all of this can and will happen during meditation. I mean, when we sit or lie and meditate. And this way of being, this state of witnessing, also manifests itself in our normal daily lives in a mysterious way: it appears as an independence from people, from things and from events. You find, in life, that you are alone in a crowd. You begin, even when you are with people, to be alone with yourself. And that too has happened to every one of us. For some of us that may only have lasted for a moment or a second. But now, because of your meditations, that experience will become deeper and deeper. And you can have problems because of this. A person might say, "I no longer participate in life," and so forth. Then the teacher must explain what has happened: that it is a stage that one must go through.

So. One is no longer bound by people, things or events. And one can have this same indifference towards family members as well. Such independence and dissolution of ties – and here we again enter the realm of psychology – is inevitably connected with a feeling of great loneliness. We are still caught in illusion that all of these things are what is important in life, and yet everything that until now has meant a great deal to us suddenly becomes unimportant. Our values have changed, and everything that happens around us has lost its value for us. One has nothing to hold onto. Meditation seems to have taken everything away from us, and it seems to offer us nothing new. And life becomes gradually more and more dull, and you begin to doubt. You ask yourself if life is worth enduring. Everything seems so senseless.

I won't even bother asking if this has happened to you. That has happened to every one of us. That is why the Sufis say that the first two years, and sometimes it is even three years – in my case it was even longer – are the most difficult. That is the time when one is tested. And our own psyche does that. No one else does it to us; not God, not the teacher, not a Guru. No one. We do it ourselves. What really happens is that, as Carl Jung put it, the opposites within us begin to unite. This is a very important process, and everyone must go through it himself – sometimes I say 'he' or 'him' where I could also say 'she' or 'her'. It is just more comfortable for me to say 'he'. So when I say 'he,' I mean 'he or she'. In this particular case, the experiences in meditation are exactly the same for men and women. Later, the experiences of men and the experiences of women can be very different.

So you begin to doubt the value of an inner life, and you ask yourselves if life is worth enduring. Everything seems so senseless. God is dead, and no one is there, and what is there to pray for. What is interesting is that even life is no longer beautiful for us. So what is left? But there is a secret: one cannot go back! You feel, somehow, that you cannot go back, that you must go forward. But to where? 'There', the inner life that you have touched, is not worth the difficulties, and nothing 'here' in the normal life is interesting any more. So, what does one do? My God! How often I have heard this question in these twenty-one years of working with people in the group. "What shall I do? Nothing has any meaning. I do not want to meditate any more. I do not want spiritual life any more." And I tell them, "Yes. Run. Run, my little one. But can you run away from yourself?" Of course, they don't understand what I mean.

Then something mysterious begins to wake up in the person, and usually it first happens in dreams. They see that they must go on. The dream shows them this or that situation, or gives them a message; or there will be a voice, or a deep desire ... and then the person sees that they must go on, and they begin to see how it might be possible. And for me it is always a miracle, like a glory, just as humans are glorious – how something within them, like a golden thread, leads them. And I do nothing. I just sit there. And when they need me, perhaps I can give them an explanation. But sometimes I cannot give them an explanation, and sometimes I am not allowed to give it. The human must be left alone, to cry and to scream. As Rumi says, "I will scream and cry until the milk of Your Grace boils over."

All of the Great Ones – including Rumi – have gone through this process. The law is the same for all of us. We are all going to our crucifixion, and that causes such pain! What is crucified in us? It is the small self, the small 'I'. "Two masters," said Gurujī, "cannot live in one heart. It must be either the small 'I', or That." He did not use the word 'God'. Once he said to me, "One should not use the word, 'God.'" I do it because it is somehow more effective. When I say God, everyone knows what I mean. When I say "That", perhaps there will be someone who does not know what I mean. Those of us who meditate a great deal will understand, but perhaps there are people in the audience who have never meditated. I often meet such people; almost every month someone comes to me at one of my lectures and says, "I have never meditated. Is it a kind of prayer?" We will speak about meditation here, but not today. That would lead us too far from our theme.

So I said that doubts would set in. And these doubts can be terrible. Sometimes one is in complete despair. But this is only a phase. You see, the spiritual process: meditation, spiritual life, a path – call it what you will – is something infinitely dynamic. Even life, just ordinary daily life, is dynamic; and spiritual life is even more dynamic. And that is because of Kundalini, the power that is in the human body; a power that is so incredibly powerful that it can kill a person ... if you are not with someone who can help you a little. Gurujī said, "People have died from that, or gone crazy; but never with me!" Then he smiled: nothing had ever happened to anyone who was with him! But you must be a real teacher to be able to help people in that way; you have to be what in Sanscrit is called a 'Sat-Guru', and not a Guru who is not a Guru at all. There are very clear signs by which you can tell a real teacher from a pseudo teacher. Unfortunately there are many people who say that they are teachers, but who only confuse people; and that is truly a pity.

So the stage of doubt and meaningless is only a phase. People complain about how lonely they are, and how terrible the spiritual path is. They say, "I am no longer interested in spiritual life, and even my regular life is dull and boring. I cannot pray anymore and God is dead. What is happening to me? I will go insane." The explanation is that the old doors are closed, and the new doors have not yet opened, or they have just opened a crack; and of course, that is not enough. It can be a very lonely time. But it is only a stage through which one passes. In reality, it is evidence of spiritual growth. It would not have happened if you had not grown, had not taken something of a step forwards. And so it is a good sign. You can thank God that it happened. But unfortunately, this stage can last quite some time. Sometimes it goes on like that for ... years. But it means that the power has begun to work in us.

Later – much later – we feel something like the presence of God, a quiet joy, or a feeling of freedom. I personally suddenly felt this feeling of freedom and the presence of God at the same time. I could not pray; I could not even imagine who I should pray to. I was completely naked, hanging over a

black abyss. And then this mysterious joy appeared: a presence of ... something ... that I could not explain. And then the human begins to ask himself, "Ah. What is that?" And one begins to meditate more and more diligently. You have found something new and interesting. Something has happened; things begin to happen. But it still takes a long time until what is happening becomes clearer to you.

I said that this phase of doubt lasts a long time. But it is as if, from time to time, you feel a fresh breeze from a distant peak. Perhaps that is the best description I can give you. You feel a little wind, from somewhere, that carries the smell of flowers with it. This experience, my friends, of our outer consciousness, our 'I', being confronted with the void – with the Nothing – and at the same time this feeling of, above all being uninvolved in life, that almost all of us must endure, is seen by the mystic as a valuable outer experience. As I have already said, this phase of doubt is very important, and every mystic must go through it.

If you have not had any experience of these things, then what I am saying will not mean very much to you. But almost all of you have experienced something of this, and that is why I think that all of you have understood me. And this phase is the transition to something greater, to something more meaningful. The old patterns of lower human feelings fall away from us, and a new, neutral space is created. You see, a new space must be created in which our higher nature can embody itself. And this happens on the physical plane.

I have a man in my group in London who is very intellectual. He has read all of the Sufi writings, and knows a thousand times more about Sufism than I do. But soon after he began to meditate, he came to me and said, "You know, Mrs. Tweedie, I cannot meditate. It is very strange, but I hear a completely unnatural humming in my head." And it got stronger and stronger. Well, I am not a doctor, but I knew that there can be a medical problem. It is called tinnitus. It is a sound in the head that comes from the middle ear, and usually happens to older people. But he was still young: he was only thirty-six. This man is still with us, but his happened a long time ago. So. I can reach my teacher in meditation, and I asked him, "What is happening to this man? This never happened to me and I have no explanation for it. But this man suffers from it, and his meditation also suffers." And the answer was that the spiritual power must create new pathways in the nerves of the human brain.

Every doctor knows that our brain is composed of millions of the finest nerve fibers, and that each of these nerves has a particular job, a particular role. Now, the normal body, one that has never meditated, has not begun to build these new pathways in the brain. And this man especially had never meditated, he had only studied. He had thought that if he studied, it would be quite enough. And really, he knew an incredible amount about Sufism. He knew all the Sufi quotations, he knew the Sufi stories, Sufi metaphysics; really everything. But then he tried to meditate, and look what happened! He told me, "I think I will stop meditating, I am afraid something will happen to me and I will go insane."

But this was nothing other than that spiritual power that had begun to work in him. It had to create new pathways in him: new nerves, or new channels; I do not know how to express it. He and I spoke about his problem for a long time. And really, after a few years this humming did get less and less. Then he had other phenomena that were connected with the same process, but now that is all past. Meditation is no longer a problem, and spiritually things go wonderfully for him. He is a very lovely man, and has a wife and four children. He has an important job that is rather dynamic, and he must unite this dynamic professional life with the dynamic states of meditation. As Gurujī said, "The greater the obstacles, the greater will be the perfection later."

And here I would like to add something. You see, meditation and spiritual life is impossible without the highest ethics. In this school of Yoga – I use this word 'Yoga' because Yoga means a path to the highest. Yoga, of course, is a Sanscrit word that means 'union' or 'unity', and every spiritual path leads to unity. So really, every spiritual path is a form of Yoga – and in this school of Yoga, one places great value on ethics. You must live as ethically as if you would want to reach the stars; you must have the highest level of honesty, and be respectable, loving, and not offend anyone – well, as little as possible. To not offend anyone is almost impossible in life. One always offends someone, consciously or unconsciously. One must never lie – and I do not mean not to lie to others, but to not lie to yourself; that

is important. One can lie to other people, and that is not good; but the most terrible thing is when you lie to yourself.

If you have no ethics, if you do not respect others more than yourself, then your spiritual life will not progress. My freedom ends where your freedom begins. I must not slam the door or play my radio too loud because it disturbs others. And if I know that my child has a contagious disease, I must be very aware to be careful, and to take responsibility that other children are not endangered. I have seen that it happens often enough that people do not take such care.

If we do not live in this ethical way, then we cannot progress. You see, we each have our own light. Our light might be a great light, or a very small one – hardly a light at all. A small gray light, a tiny dull lamp that is hardly to be seen. And we must try to make this light strong and bright, and really live a life of the highest ethics. And that is not easy. In our group, when I see that people do not live in that way, then I throw them out. Sometimes that helps, and usually they are allowed to return because they come to understand why they were thrown out and they improve themselves, and then everything is OK. But sometimes one has to give a person a shove like that. I do not enjoy it, nor do I do it for my own pleasure. I say something once, then twice; I tell them that they cannot continue that way, that it is not honest or not respectable, or that they disturb or hurt others that way. But if they still do not understand, then I say, “Then get out! This is not for you.”

And you know, a Sufi group is something so very wonderful. When you belong to a Sufi group, then you really belong somewhere. Somehow it is like a mysterious secret brotherhood from the past. That does not mean that we are ‘chosen’ like the Jehovah’s Witnesses; that if you are not one of us you go to hell. That, of course, is nonsense. You join through an inner choosing that involves your higher self. When you belong to a Sufi group, and you are really a Sufi in your heart, then you can no longer leave. Most people come, look around a little, and then leave; that is the way it is in our group. My home where we meet is like Heathrow Airport, or Victoria Train Station. Hundreds of people pass through it every week. And for those who do not belong there, they look around and see nothing sensational. The woman doesn’t teach anything and they don’t experience anything. And they get more and more lonely, and soon feel that it is not for them. And finally they leave, hoping to find someone who does miracles – perhaps someone who can create perfume in their handkerchief – or at least something interesting.

I do not believe in this nonsense of miracles, and I do not believe in Avatars. That is a Hindu superstition. But I do believe that God selects people who are pure enough, and speaks through them; like the Prophet Mohammed, or Jesus. But if someone says, “I am an Avatar,” that is his problem, not ours. Sufis do not have this problem, and it is a problem, and this problem is connected with pride. When someone believes that he is an Avatar, especially if he says that he is an Avatar, then he is proud. And if someone has such pride, he cannot be spiritual. It is impossible. People come to me and tell me these stupidities, that this or that person is an Avatar, and I have to laugh. There have been Prophets, like Mohammed, God bless him – look at the things he did for humanity – or Jesus, or Buddha. Of course, in Buddhism one does not speak of Avatars. And Jesus never said that he was an Avatar, he knew better than to say such a thing.

So, on this path of Yoga, ethics are one of the most important things. You may be able to meditate wonderfully, you may have visions and wonderful experiences, but if your ethics are not one hundred percent, then you will not progress. You will stay stuck in one place – more than stuck, you will sink in a swamp and you certainly will not move forwards. These are hard words, but they are the truth.

So. I have said that this transitory phase of indifference and doubt is very important. I have also said that the old lower feelings fall away from us, and that an empty, neutral space is created in us, in which our higher nature can be embodied. Two masters cannot live in one heart: it must either be the higher nature or the lower nature; and only now can the higher nature develop. Then this state of indifference is replaced by a feeling of deep stillness and boundless peace. And under these conditions the consciousness of the higher self can freely unfold. And then there is something like an inner voice that speaks to us. Many of you have already had some experience of that.

Now. We can also arrive at a state in which all events appear to be superficial, and in which everything around us seems empty and without any relationship to the soul. That is also a good sign. That is a stage of withdrawal from a superficial state of consciousness into an inner state of consciousness. This appears to be somewhat different from what I have been speaking about, but it is essentially the same process. When we first become capable of diving into the inner consciousness, we experience it as a pure and peaceful state of being, without the slightest movement; always quiet, always still. This state seems to be separate from the outer state, but it is not. This state is never really separated from the outer being. And over time, it really does become one: something happens within us, and the worldly and the spiritual life unite and become one and the same.

In all of the scriptures one reads that there is a worldly life and a spiritual life. And in the beginning it is that way. But now it begins to change, until the worldly life and the spiritual life become one and the same. Look what a contradiction that is, a contradiction that we have to grow accustomed to. When That or He or She has already begun to speak in our heart, our normal daily life, and meditation and the inner life somehow become one and the same. That is a very mysterious process, and it happens completely by itself. You do not need to do anything about it; you only look at your life and wonder, "Why do people say that there is a worldly life and a spiritual life? Really they are quite the same!" And really, they are the same. And it is here, in this process that we have been discussing, that this unification begins. Later it develops more and more, and it can be very wonderful.

So we experience a state of purity and peace, where everything is silent and still and not separated from the outer state. In the beginning, our ability to maintain this new, non-separated state, is very limited, and we experience frequent transitions between this new state and our old way of experiencing separate inner and outer realities. And that can be very confusing. One is not yet established in the new state. That takes time. Later the inner being, the inner 'I', can watch this back and forth shifting without becoming frightened or uneasy; but not at first. In the end, after your outer life has completely changed, these arbitrary shifts of consciousness cease, and the opposites will have been united. Then the outer life and the inner life will become one. Then you are no longer afraid of spiritual life, and you begin to have fewer doubts. But doubts will still appear.

You see, the state of consciousness of the soul – I am speaking of the higher self – is our real level of being. But our lower nature covers this real state; one could say it veils it. During the process in which this deeper state of consciousness is gradually unveiled, it feels like a kind of background consciousness. I notice my outer consciousness, and then there is this background consciousness which carries, not book knowledge, but the real knowledge: the knowledge of the soul. And this background consciousness remains half hidden, peacefully resting and unattached to the game of the outer world. And gradually you begin to feel quite at home in this state of consciousness, and you think, not yet clearly but instinctively, "That is the truth. Not my mind. Not my thoughts. Not what I feel. But rather this background that rings like a bell, like a call from beyond. That is the truth."

You see, I must describe this to you today piece by piece, and I hope you can follow me, because otherwise you will not understand what comes next. But even if I explain all of it to you, you will still ask me about it again and again, because you can never understand all of this one hundred percent until you have had the experience of it. But it is a foundation. After you have heard my explanation, and later you have an experience, you will be better able to understand it a little, and also what comes after it. So please, do not go completely to sleep! Sometimes you can go to sleep if you want to, but not now.

Now, at this point in one's development, one usually needs to be alone. You will want to have a little more space for yourself; perhaps in your family, or with friends, or perhaps if you have to deal with people a great deal in your work. You want to be alone. And if you have the possibility, you will want to stop all or most outer activities. I always say, "Try to be alone as much as possible." Try it. If you cannot, then OK; but try. And you must give yourself time to be alone. And here comes something very interesting. Usually we do not love ourselves. We criticize ourselves, and we are never satisfied with ourselves.

Who is satisfied with himself? No one. Didn't Jesus say, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself?" And do we love ourselves? No. So how can we love our neighbors? We criticize and criticize and criticize ourselves. "I do not have lovely feet like so-and-so, or like Marlene Dietrich; and I have brown hair and would so like to have blond hair; and I do not understand this or that, and people can fly to the moon and I cannot; and I cannot sew," or "I cannot speak well ..." And none of that is important. Every one of us is capable of doing something well; something better than others can. Perhaps you can speak well, or perhaps you are such a good mother that your child will become a wonderful person. Or perhaps you can write or type well, or play music. Or perhaps you can simply love, and you are able to be happy with your husband or wife for your entire life, year after year after year. Not everyone can do that! Certainly, not everyone can do that.

So. We should try to be alone as much as possible. Try to withdraw into yourself, and to accept yourself as you are, without criticizing yourself. We can think, "I am like that, and even if I am not so happy with the way I am – look, You have created me in this way, help me." And here we see a new and important quality: surrender. One begins to surrender. You see, if one is surrendered, even just partially, then even dissatisfaction – which is a fault – can lead us towards final surrender. Look how subtle spiritual life is. "I cannot do it. You have created me in this way. Help me." And He will help. We have no idea how powerful prayer is. I have experienced it a thousand times.

But look. When someone comes to me and asks me to pray for this or that, I say, "Yes, of course I will pray for you, but I will not pray alone, that will not work. You must pray with me, we have to pray together, and then it will happen." And everyone in our group knows that if you pray for something, it happens. One cannot pray enough. And when you do that, there comes the time when you will live in the presence of God the whole time. You see, a prayer is conversational; it is a conversation with God, and of course, in a conversation, the other – the one you are speaking with – is also present.

So I have said that when you feel the Divine more and more in your heart, you should ask for help. Pray for light, pray for strength, pray that you lose your inherent tendency to sluggishness. And we are all lazy and sluggish. Then the difficulties will become a little smaller, and they will stay smaller. When we pray for help, we surrender more and more to our own inner light. And meditation is exactly that: to touch our own inner light, and in this way to develop. We must learn to live from our center, from the core of our being, from our essence. That is the first real step to self-mastery. One must persevere with meditation and with controlling one's thoughts, or else external events can again veil any progress we have made. And that can become a back and forth state which can go on, unfortunately, for years longer than when we are really diligent. Only when we have achieved an inner balance can the spirit become effective in our outer lives. And then everything in one's outer and inner life begins to happen, as if by itself, effortlessly. But, of course, it is not quite like that at all. We have done a lot of work to achieve that state.

Do not let your thoughts dwell on outer difficulties. If you occupy yourself too much with outer problems, then your spirit stays trapped in that outwardly oriented state. It is only when you live oriented to your inner being that you will feel the nearness to the Divine and feel included within the will of God. And only then will you live in God's hands.

Do not waste your energies on trivial abilities or mediocre goals. Aim your aspirations at the highest goal, my friends, at the highest goal, the farthest star. You can reach your goal, because you are made in His image. But only if you persevere, only if you stay with it. Desire it, aspire towards it, meditate, live according to your inner light, even if your light is very weak and small. It will become larger and brighter soon enough. And I guarantee to you that if you really do this, as an honest human being I can say to you that you will reach your goal. But you must strive for it, you must make efforts. Without these strivings and efforts, if you just sit there and do nothing, then nothing will happen.

So. What I have said until now, I had to say. And tomorrow we will begin to speak about experiences – about your experiences. I think that will be very interesting. And from tomorrow on, you should bring paper and pencil, because I think it will be useful for you to write these things down: what

it means when you do this or that, or if you see this or that in meditation. But now we do not have much time left, so if you have any questions, this would be a good time to ask them.

(Question: Is the striving for the inner light the same as the Sufi ethics?)

The longing for the light is the longing for the One. Sufi ethics belong to the realm of the ego; they belong to this life. We must be respectable humans, and live honestly, and not lie. We must live these highest ethics in our normal lives, and that belongs to the realm of the ego. The other, the striving for the One, belongs to the realm of the soul. So they are two different things, which, of course, run parallel to each other.

(Question: I had been undergoing therapy for the last two years, until the therapist broke off the therapy because she felt – and I think that it was not far from the truth – that I do not want to change. She said that I run away from a normal life. I do not start a career, and I do not have real relationships ... She said that I was misusing therapy to that end. In the end, the therapist gave me some advice; specifically, that for the present I should not have anything to do with therapy, with psychology, with anything esoteric, or with meditation, because I misuse all of that to avoid really entering into a normal practical life. She felt that I should find a solid contact with the ground before I begin to proceed with anything higher. And this woman is certainly not against meditation in any way. I had the feeling that I really should enter into real, normal life, and now I am not certain if I should continue with my meditation, which I so far do more irregularly than regularly, or if I should stop it for a time. I have the feeling that I should continue with it, and that is why I am asking you.)

You see, what I have spoken about is a transitional state. Perhaps your therapist confused this transitional state, or perhaps you have really misused the therapy as she said. That is possible. I personally would say to you, "Continue with your meditations." Because for many years I have experienced that this state of mind passes. But ... yes, you can use it to withdraw from life. There really is a danger there. Still, if I were you, I would go on. You are a man, and you can see it as an adventure. Go on and see what happens. And I believe that only good things can come from it. I do not agree with your therapist.

But you see, each person has his own opinion. And I do not know you personally, I am only trying to respond to your question. Your therapist, of course, knows you much better. It is possible that what she says is true. To be able to really give you advice, I would have to know you very well, and that is not possible. In this case, you have to pray for guidance. Why not try prayer? Speak with Him who is at the same time your innermost being and also That, the light of God, who has made you in His image. Ask for His help. That is the moment I spoke about, that has expressed itself within you in a somewhat different way, where you must say, "Please, help me. I do not know what I should do." (Questioner: You mean to pray for clarity?) Yes. That was well expressed. (Q: What to do, and how to continue...) You ask that clarity be given to you. Perhaps your therapist was right, and perhaps not.

(Comment: Regarding this man's question, it has been my experience that the more I have meditated, the more I have been pushed into life. So meditation does not pull you out of life, but rather it pushes you directly into it.)

Thank you. Yes, that is true; so if you are moving away from life, then perhaps your therapist was right. But of course, you could change that. You still have free will. But really, as I have said, in the beginning it appears that the inner life and the outer life are two different things, but then you arrive at a level where you see that this life and spiritual life are one and the same. And then you are pushed more and more into life. But take it as an adventure and begin. Of course, one needs courage for that. I too had to do that.

I was alone and I did not know what was the right thing to do. And I played, one could say, with everything I had; I gambled everything. I was alone in a strange land, and did not know what was happening, and there was a man in whose hands I was. And I knew that he would do anything for the sake of the training; he could have even killed me. And I thought, "I will go through with it and see how

far it goes.” And, somehow I have come some distance – I do not know to where; I cannot say. My teacher told me that the time would come when I would not even have a place to stand. One is nowhere, one is in Nothing, and this Nothing is the greatest bliss. You see, until now I have spoken to you about the spiral, but I think that what I have said today is more important. Tomorrow you will see that it has something to do with all of you. And tomorrow you will speak more than I will.

So. Now we will begin our meditation. Last week people asked me if we could meditate for twenty minutes every day. So that is what we will do.

Please make yourself as comfortable as possible. You can lie down if you would like. In this meditation it is not necessary to sit straight as it is in Raja Yoga. It is not so important. I will once again explain our meditation, but it is also explained in my book.

You must completely fill your heart with the feeling of love. Think of someone that you love deeply, or, at its best, of God. But that is very abstract, and very difficult to do in the beginning. If you cannot create a feeling of love in your heart, then try to feel peace. You see, what happens on the inner level is that, when you love, your heart chakra – that is the psychic center of the heart – expands and becomes more dynamic. When it is more dynamic, you will feel more love, and when you feel more love it becomes still more dynamic. It is a linked process, a chain. But the next best feeling is peace, because that also influences the heart center. So you must think of love and you must love; and you must imagine that you grasp every other thought and drown it in this love. You should not have any thoughts in your head. This is one of the methods of stilling the thoughts. If thoughts are going the whole time, you will not have any spiritual or mystical experiences; that is impossible. So, as every Yoga book says, the first thing to do is to learn to still the mind. And now, that is what we will do.

(The meditation begins

... and ends;)

(and the days session ends.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1988: Part 8

A Summarized Meaning of Visions

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Schwarzsee, Switzerland
July 2 – 16, 1988

(‘R.’ sings a song from the Turkish Sufis)

Today we will continue with the themes I spoke about yesterday, and we will speak about and think about experiences that we have had in meditation. Please, we will not deal with experiences that we have had in dreams today. What happens in a dream may be an experience, and then it can be explained as an experience. And if it is a psychological dream, then it must be interpreted as a psychological dream. But today, we will only speak about visions or experiences that occur during meditation. Both of these can have important spiritual significance. Now. During meditation, you may sometimes see static pictures or sometimes entire scenes, like in a film; and we may perceive these images either with the inner or with the outer mind; that is, we can understand these images with our inner understanding, in our hearts, or with our ordinary thinking faculty. For example, if I say the word ‘house,’ you immediately create an image, out of the material of the mind, of a house. And each one of you will have an image of a house within you, each of you will see a house. This imaging is on the mental level, on the level of the mind, and it is quite real; but of course, each of you will have a different house. And you can understand this image of a house with either the outer mind or with the inner mind that is in your heart. So, for example with the house, you might sense it as a building, or as a home.

So. I will name many images. And I will tell you the meaning of each one of these images; that is, the meaning connected with meditation, the meaning in relation to spiritual development. That is why I have told you to bring paper and pencil with you today. And then we will discuss these images.

Now, when you see a tree in meditation, that is the power of life, the image of life, the tree of life; in a dream it means something quite different ...

(Mrs. Tweedie now goes through more than sixty images, giving the essential meaning when each one appears in meditation. Sometimes she makes comments on the meaning the image has when it appears in a dream, which is often quite different. I have organized her comments into a particular format, but I have not changed the sequence in which she presented them. She repeats again and again that these explanations, unless she specifically says otherwise, apply to experiences in meditation and not – absolutely NOT – to dreams.)

(Translators note: Her notes, originally in English, had been translated into German, and when she gave an explanation in English, she actually tried to translate the German back into English, and sometimes there were clear discrepancies. In such cases, I have usually relied on the carefully prepared German version. Which means that an English listener might find the tape confusing.)

Tree

The power of life; the picture of life; the tree of life. In a dream the meaning is different.

Bird

A symbol of the soul; the power of the soul. Every bird that you see is a power of your soul. In a dream this has a very different meaning.

Fruit

The results of your efforts in meditation.

Milk

The wisdom and power of Divine consciousness. It is considered to be that which flows from the consciousness of God.

Horse – especially a running horse.

Power; energy; passion. If you see a horse in your meditation, watch out!

White calf

Clear pure consciousness; innocence.

Donkey

An obstacle, especially if it is going backwards, like in the Mullah Nasruddin story.

Deer

Symbol of swiftness on the path: that you have made spiritual progress. It is a good sign.

Buffalo

Our dark life energies; dark forces within your unconscious.

Swan

Symbol of a soul that has been liberated; a realized soul. It could appear to someone for whom realization is quite near.

Cranes – sometimes a white crane.

A sign of coming happiness. This once happened to me.

Flute ... or an ear.

This is a very important symbol. It is a symbol of a call to understanding, from far away; perhaps announcing something. Or a victory over yourself. This is a very complicated symbol. You may see or hear the flute. In general, you may see or hear things in meditation.

Crown – like a king might wear.

Fulfillment, now or later; if you see a crown it could be a prophetic dream, especially if you see it on your own head.

Pyramid

Striving, aspiration, longing.

Cross

Again this is a very complicated symbol. It is a threefold symbol of being: transcendental, universal, and individual. It can also symbolize pain and sacrifice. It depends on the vision – on exactly how you see the cross.

Rotating circle or disk

Power in action – a very common symbol.

Bow – as in bow and arrow.

The power that is given to you, so that you may be able to reach the goal.

Journeys

It can be by train or car, etc. This symbolizes the movement or progress in your life. But journeys on a ship always signify progress either in Yoga or on a spiritual path. We have all dreamed about these things, but here I am speaking about meditation experiences.

Teeth falling out – seeing or feeling them fall out.

Your fixed conditioned ideas are gradually disappearing; habitual patterns of thinking are falling away. In a dream it could mean the loss of aggression.

Inner primal scream – crying out from deep within.

The cry of our life energy; because the inner energy does not have enough freedom.

I think that there is someone here who suffered from this inner cry. Wasn't that you?

(Person who had the experience: No. I experienced this cry one time. But it didn't happen in meditation. I was in London, and there were many people and we spoke together. And you read a poem – I do not remember exactly what it was about – but the theme was that the Guru sits at the feet of God, and that the disciple wants to sit at the feet of the Guru, and then a very loud cry came from behind me with the words, "Go, Go, Go.")

That is lovely. I remembered that you had had something of an experience, but not exactly what it was. That was already some years ago. But primal scream is very important. I think that I had someone in the group – I do not remember who – who repeatedly heard this primal scream in her womb, and it always disturbed her meditation. It was not a dream; it was always during her meditations. She came to me in total despair and said, "I cannot meditate. I hear myself screaming here, in my womb. What is it?" At that time I told her, "That is energy; that is how the energy is manifesting. It will pass." And in fact, after a time it did pass. But now she has moved away and lives in Scotland, and it is no longer possible for her to come at all, so I do not know how this story ended.

Scorpion

Damaging energy; or people who try to attack you with evil. Someone in the group once saw a terribly large scorpion that came after him. It is not a good sign.

An Arrow – The bow, above, has a slightly different meaning.

Power to strive for the goal, the power that longs to reach the target.

The color blue

It could be the higher mind, the spirit, but it depends on which blue it is. There are different blues. There is a light blue, a dark blue, a greenish blue, and so forth. So this is very difficult to interpret. One must know exactly which blue color it is. In general, I have found that colors are always difficult to interpret; there can be a very personal symbolism behind them. Colors can be interchangeable and do not necessarily have the same meaning for everyone.

Snake

This is a tremendous symbol. It can be a symbol for energy. It can be a symbol for the energy of Kundalini. 'A.' once saw an incredibly large snake in our garden. It was as large as the entire garden. Almost everyone has dreamed about snakes. It can also be a symbol of bad energy or danger lurking in the unconscious, especially if the snake is green. And in this case, it has the same meaning in a dream. Carl Jung said that if you dream of a green snake, watch out!

Green color

Life.

Neon blue light

The color of Prana. That is actually very easy to see. Everyone can see this color. If you have an ultraviolet lamp, then set up a black background opposite the lamp, and hold your hand against the dark background. You will see streamers of light that radiate from your fingers, and they cross each other. And these streamers are Prana. Everyone can see that with ultraviolet light. You do not have to be clairvoyant. You can try it.

So. Does anyone have a question?

(Question: In the last weeks, I have repeatedly felt a feeling similar to what one feels when one's foot is asleep, in the left half of my body, especially in the arm and near my heart. It is very uncomfortable and I want to stand up and shake it away, and to get rid of the energy. It feels like a blocked energy – it is also in the left foot. The right part of my body is quite calm, but the left part is as if crawling.) Like ants, or like sleep. (Q: As if it is asleep.)

It is an obstacle. Something in one of your chakras is not in order. Please stand up and completely relax. Nothing will happen to you. I will only look at you. It is in your throat chakra. So the next time that happens do not be frightened, but do the following exercise. Take a completely normal breath in – it is important that this breath is not faster or deeper than normal. You see, when you breathe in, you take in air, but also Prana. Prana is cosmic energy, or etheric energy – these are just different names for this energy. As I just described it, Prana has a neon-blue color. Now. You breathe in, and then when you breathe out, you direct the Prana with your thoughts, so that it comes out, not through your nose as the air does, but through the throat chakra.

Prana follows the thoughts, and so you can influence the flow of Prana with your thoughts. If you have pain, let us say in a knee or an arm, you can heal yourself by directing the flow of Prana out through this area while you are breathing air out of your nose. But you must be completely concentrated on doing this. You must not think about anything else. And if you do that as I have told you, this condition will pass. It will take two or three weeks, but then it will pass. So again, you breathe in quite normally, and you breathe out normally; except that while the air goes out through your nose, you direct the Prana out through the throat chakra, like a ray of bluish light. I will not translate this into English, because in my group in London we have had such things so often that they all know about it.

(Questions: What do the other colors mean? Like white, yellow and red?)

It's all on the way! (*Everyone laughs happily.*) I cannot say everything at once!

(Question: You have spoken about snakes, and that when they are green they can mean that there is something dangerous. What can one do about it?)

Then you have been shown that there are energies that are dangerous. I, of course, cannot know what energies, but you will soon discover what they are. (*Mrs. Tweedie laughs ...*) But it is a warning. It says, "Look out. There is a danger within you. It could be in the unconscious or in the heart or in the mind. It cannot be in the soul, but it is very difficult to say anything more precisely. (Q: But at least I must pay attention to what is going on in me.) Yes, it is a warning. Pay attention. "Look out, something is happening." You must look to see if there are, perhaps people who are very hostile towards you, or this obstacle may be in you yourself. At any rate it is a warning.

(Question: I have seen a very large snake. It was yellow, and had a black line on its back.)

Yes, isn't that a cross adder? They are poisonous snakes. I think that is a warning. They are brownish yellow and have a black line down their backs. I have seen many of them in Scotland. It is a poisonous snake: the only poisonous snake in Europe. How large was it? (Q: It was very large.) Oh! What did you do to get such a snake? (Q: I don't know.) Do you have any idea that you might be in danger? Do you have a situation that can be dangerous for you? (Q: Not that I can think of. I was in meditation and there were very many small gray snakes. Normally I am afraid of snakes, but in this

meditation there was no fear.) Aha. She is normally very terrified of snakes, but this time she was not afraid. And there were many small gray snakes around. Small gray snakes are the energies of the unconscious. And they can be all possible sorts of energies, but as long as they are small they are not dangerous to people. Anyway, be careful. It just came into my head that it could possibly be connected with your work. Perhaps – Ah! Yellow! Are people often envious of you? (Q: Yes, I need to be aware of that.) You are a nurse? (Q: I work in a psychiatric hospital, and it often happens that what the patients describe makes me afraid because afterwards these images appear in my meditations.) Yes, that is possible; that could be the answer; it could be coming from these people. In this case, it could be a kind of projection. Anyway, be careful. That cannot do any harm.

(Question: What is fire?)

Yes, I will come to it, but usually it is some sort of catastrophe or big emotional event or a drama or family problem. And it has the same meaning when it occurs in a dream. Not every symbol has the same meaning in dreams, but fire is one that does.

(Question: What does a white snake mean? I saw one and it was very big.) What was it doing? (Q: There was a space and the snake moved through it.) Did it threaten you? (Q: No.) Does anyone have an idea? I do not.

(Comment: I also saw a white snake. It rose up, and opened its mouth very wide, and I got a real shock!)

(Comment: Isn't that the cosmic snake?) Aha!! Thank you. Yes. It is a cosmic snake. In one case it was not dangerous, and in the other it was dangerous.

(Comment: The white snake is the one that eats its own tail.) Ah, so it is the Auroborus, the snake that eats itself. It is the symbol of cosmic creation, and of life. It constantly eats itself and constantly renews itself. Thank you.

(Question: What does it mean if we see a face in meditation?)

Do you know whose face it was? (Q: Yes, it was very calm.) Do you know whose face it was? (Q: Yes. ... it was your face.) (*Mrs. Tweedie is somewhat surprised and there is a lot of laughter.*) Then I do not know. Well, that is not very inspiring, but never mind. Well, she said the face was calm, so at least I was not angry. Sometimes I get quite angry.

(Question: And if the face is unknown?)

Ah. Then they might be real faces. When I was at Guruji's, every time that the Koran was chanted, I would close my eyes and see bearded faces passing by. And Guruji told me that those are pious holy souls who are always attracted to the sound of the chanting of the Koran.

(Question: I am confused about something. When you talk about dreams you say that there are three possibilities; that it can be emotional, psychological or spiritual; but when you are speaking about visions, what level is that? What are we contacting?)

It is usually a spiritual experience. Of course, emotions do come into it; our emotional reaction is important. But it is usually only spiritual. It can also be a warning, but in a different way from a dream. You see, I cannot explain it very well. I know what I mean and how it works and how it manifests itself, but I have no words to explain it.

(Question: What is a black cube?)

Oho! Gambling? I think there is a cube in my list, but I do not remember. (Comment: It could be magic.) Could that be right? (Q: ...) Aha! He and his wife both had the same vision in meditation. (Comment: Perhaps it could be the black stone Ka'aba at Mecca.) Could that be? I really do not know.

(Turning to someone else.) If you dream of snakes it has no meaning! She has a huge snake at home! A real one! Ten feet long! *(Everyone is amused...)*

(Question: I would like to come back to the faces.) Hopefully not mine! (No. It was quite a long time ago, but it was a face, full of light and very beautiful, but I became very frightened and I ran away.)

Well, that was not very helpful if you ran away. (Q: And I did not meditate for ten years after that.) And it was a face full of light. What a pity. Something was shown to you, probably by your higher self. You should not have been frightened.

(Comment: Mrs. Tweedie, I had the experience where I saw the face of a friend of mine. When I first met him, I had the experience of seeing him in a vision dressed like a Tibetan monk. I saw him sitting in the headdress of a Tibetan monk. And I have not seen him in reality for three or four years. Then, last week, in meditation here, I saw him again as a Tibetan monk.)

And have you seen him in life since then? (Q: No.) Do you think that he could have died in the meantime? (Q: I do not know. He is quite young.) Young people die sometimes too. (Q: I had the feeling that I should try to get some word of him from his friends when I return to London. But I had the first experience of seeing him in this way when I first met him, and three weeks before that I had had a dream, which I later realized had been about him as well. And I felt, at the time, that I knew him, that we had an old link, but that we could not actually communicate about it in this lifetime. So my sense is that, perhaps my experience last week was telling me that now we could communicate.) That is quite possible. Use your own intuition. That is a very personal symbolism, so you yourself must find a way to understand it.

(Question: Often, just as I fall asleep, or as I awaken, or sometimes even when I lie comfortably, I have very strong images, and I do not know if I should count them as dreams, or as something connected with meditation. For me it feels more connected to meditation.)

These are what Carl Jung called hypnogogic visions. He said that, but my experience is that there is a gray zone – where witches and magicians work – where everything is gray. And sometimes before you fall asleep or just as you wake up, or when you are utterly peaceful and perhaps a little sleepy, you can tune into this state.

(Comment: I had an experience before Marie Louise, from our London group, died. About six months before she died, I began to have a lot of pain in my heart, and the day she died I even went to a doctor to find out if I had something wrong with my heart. Then when she died I felt particularly relieved, as if she had taken the pain with her. I felt ... just rejoicing and pure, and the pain has never returned. It was like a tight steel band around my chest, front and back. The pressure was very strong and got tighter and tighter.)

This tight band is a symptom of angina. Yes. That was an experience. Thank you.

(Question: I would like to ask something about this gray zone. Do the images one sees in that state have any meaning?)

Oh. Perhaps they have a meaning, but that will usually be very personal; one cannot make general statements about the meaning of what one sees in that state.

(Question: You said that these 'gray zone' images come from the unconscious. But once I woke up in the middle of the night and saw you, dressed in black, and full of light; and that faded slowly after I was fully awake. What could that have been?)

I think that was a vision and not the gray zone. For some reason you tuned into something. Probably we have been together in the night, somewhere, on a different plane.

(Question: This is again about the gray zone. I have had this only seldom, but two or three times, I have awakened and know that I am in my bed, but I absolutely cannot move my body.)

Yes. That occurs quite frequently. We have all had this experience. I wonder what that is. I do not know. Does anyone know?

(Comment from a woman who is a psychologist: It is purely physiological, because while she is dreaming, the body goes into a state that is like a paralysis, and if she awakens before that state has recovered itself, if she awakens too quickly, she is still in that state. They have actually experimented with cats and with humans to establish that.)

Thank you. That is quite possible.

(Comment: It could also be that our spiritual body is not yet in alignment with the physical body? Because I very often felt that my bodies were not yet together, and then I heard something like a 'click' in my head, and then everything was back to normal, I could again move.)

(Question: I have often had thoughts and images – sometimes a whole series of symbols – before I meditated, but I never paid much attention to them because I always thought that they came from the mind, and that these images were obstacles that I had to overcome before I could begin to meditate. Then after a time, there were no more images. And now, after hearing all of your descriptions, I am concerned that if I begin to meditate I will create these images myself. It seems as if there is a transition between my awakened state and a meditative state in which these images appear. How can I tell where these images come from?)

Yes, it is very possible that before you meditate, your mind produces images. Then when you are in the state of Dhyana your mind is no longer there, so you no longer have these images. And that is normal. You will continue to reach this state of Dhyana, of unconsciousness, for some years, and then you will wake up somewhere else. That happens to everyone who follows this path.

(Question: One Friday evening, some months ago, during the meditation at your house in London, I saw very many people arriving. But there was no place for them because all of the rooms were already full. All of us were already there. And, of all those people, only those who were deformed could enter – only cripples – and they did not look like the rest of us. They all wanted to come in but there was no place for them. Who were they?)

Oh! They were Jinns, and they wanted to meditate with us, but there was no room. They wanted to come in but there was no place.

(Questioner of the preceding question: I would like to pursue my question further, because I feel that it has not yet been answered. I have heard your explanations of all of these symbols and now I am afraid that I, my own mind, will produce its own images during the transition into meditation. How can I know where these images come from? Until now I knew that whatever I saw or heard in meditation was not important, and I ignored them completely. But now you are explaining these images, and I see that they do have a meaning. What shall I do? Are these things important or not?)

Yes, now I understand your question; and yes, that can be a real problem. To answer your question, No, these images are not important, and you can ignore them completely if you want to. We see these things, and when we are on a path, well, all sorts of things can happen. But really it is not important. It is not yet the truth. The Truth is One. And the truth will only come after the state of Dhyana. These images are not important, and you can ignore them completely if you want to; they are

simply things that we encounter as we go on. But if you are somehow astonished or shocked by these images, do not be frightened; they do have a meaning.

Now I want to continue, because people have been asking about things that I will, in any case, speak about.

White snake

Cosmic Snake.

Fire

Usually big emotions or dramas; family problems. Has the same meaning when in dreams.

The ringing of bells

Signifies progress on the path.

Humming – as from bees or large flies – but there is no bee or fly in the room.

Opening of the brow chakra, the third eye chakra.

The color lavender-blue

Intuitive mind.

The color diamond-blue

The higher mind.

The color diamond-white

The highest feminine principle; the great mother in her most intensive form.

Sunlight

The light of Truth. Very often one sees this light, like sunlight, with closed eyes, coming from the right or from the left or from above. It is a sign of the light of truth, which begins to shine within you, within your mind.

Golden light

The highest wisdom.

Red-gold light

The power needed for spiritual change. These powers are now on their own plane and thus are much freer than on the earthly plane.

Yes, you may see all of these things, but fundamentally, they are not really important. It is only important that you are not frightened by them. And that is why I am telling you these things. Not because they are important in themselves, but because they can frighten people and in that way they can become obstacles. They see a red light. And what is that? It is a red light and nothing else. It is not important at all.

Dark red light

This is the light that comes to the physical level in order to change the physical plane. It is the greatest power of change, the greatest dynamism.

Dark blood-red light

The love of God. It can happen that you find yourself completely surrounded with this dark red light, and then you are usually in bliss. I was once surrounded by this beautiful red light. And a feeling of bliss always comes with this experience.

Pink light

Surrender to the Divine.

White roses

Absolutely pure spiritual surrender.

The color violet

Compassion; or the grace of God.

But remember that I said that the meaning of colors is quite individual, so for each person the meaning of each color might be quite different. And that applies to the different colored lights too. Colors are very difficult to interpret. And as I have said, if it gives you pleasure to dwell on these things or to try to understand these things, OK, but they are certainly not very important. In any case, do not be frightened by these things. But sometimes you see this wonderful color and it gives you so much joy. You might be joyful the whole day, and that is OK. But you should be aware that it is not yet the Truth. There is still you and the vision: two. The Truth is when you do not see anything, rather, you are That, and you cannot say any more about it.

The color blood-red or crimson

Physical love, or sensuality.

The color green

This has many different meanings. Life energy; movement; the power to do things; the joy of living, realization; and peace.

The color ocean-blue

Spiritual consciousness.

Morning dawn

An opening; the beginning of something new, but which is not yet comprehensible to you.

A mountain

To climb a mountain symbolizes life's path; consciousness; the path to the highest; the path to the Divine.

River

The flowing of the river of life; movement in your consciousness.

Snow

The condition of purity; peace; stillness.

Flowers coming out of the snow.

You are at the beginning of new life, whatever that may mean.

Jungle or Forest

The unconscious.

Rain

The Grace of God descending on you.

Water

A state or a level of consciousness.

Rubies or red diamonds

The color of the earthly plane. Could also be the consciousness of the mother at the lowest physical level.

Moon

Feminine spirituality; visionary power; bliss. Yes, this is the symbol of visionary power. It has happened to two people in the group in London that after they dreamed about the moon, they began to develop this visionary power; their inner vision began to open itself. So in this case, this image may sometimes also have this meaning in a dream.

Star

If you see a star, it is always a promise of spiritual light to come.

A spark, or a spark of light.

Sudden intuition can appear to you as a spark.

A dragon

Worldly power; the ego; the lower self.

White light – before I spoke of diamond-white light.

This can also be the mother – in this case the physical mother – or the Divine consciousness within the physical mother – within your own mother; so it means great love for the mother.

The color purple

The power of life, vitality.

Different red colors together.

Consciousness on the physical level.

Buffalo that is storming about.

Enemy forces preparing to attack.

Light, delicate colors and very delicate flowers.

A sign that your spiritual practices are yielding results; that after a time, spiritual exercises set the subtle powers within us into action. These images often appear in meditation. And a concentrated mind is not necessary for visions of delicate colors or delicate flowers; they suddenly come to you. They signify the opening of your consciousness. This also applies to the smell of flowers.

The light that is all around us.

The influence of our general development, the sign of our progress. If the light comes from above, it shows that a great power is coming from somewhere – either God or your Guru. That is an important vision. We often see light between the eyebrows, or in front of us, or it may come from the left side and it seems that you can only see it from the corner of your eye. And then the color of this light has a meaning. For example, there is a very hostile red, a very poisonous and hostile green, or a poisonous yellow. It is the feeling quality of the light that is important. If you are afraid of it, then it is poisonous. If you are not afraid of it, well, then it could have another meaning. But if you are afraid of it, then it is dangerous. As you can see, this is rather difficult to explain. And I am telling you all of this, because I feel that it might help you. As I have said, it is not very important; but some people become frightened about very simple things. “I see this blood-red light around me! It is terrible!” Sometimes people get very frightened by such things. And perhaps it has this simple meaning, that is, after all not even important.

(The Monday meeting ends.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1988: Part 9

Dhyana and Beyond

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Schwarzsee, Switzerland
July 2 – 16, 1988

(The Tuesday meeting begins with 'R.' singing a gentle song of longing from the Turkish Sufis.)

Yesterday somebody asked me, "What does it mean if I see a golden chalice?" A golden chalice is the symbol of the Holy Grail and is a symbol for self-realization. Of course, that is a very good sign when you see such a thing in your meditation. And regarding light, I want to say that light always embodies one power or a variety of powers. Also, the center of inner sight lies between the eyebrows in both men and women. And the universal mind is something quite different from the individual mind. And ringing bells, perceiving light, and even sounds like the chirping of crickets or the humming of insects, are signs that your mind has reached a new level of consciousness. I mentioned that yesterday as part of an answer to a question.

Objects that one sees with closed eyes are formed on the mental or energy levels. The mind builds these images from the substance of the mind, and that substance has nothing to do with the physical brain. You see, the mind is a reality; it is made of a kind of mind-stuff or mind-matter, and our mind creates objects out of this mind-matter. And these objects that you create on the mental plane do not simply disappear, they remain on that plane; it is only that our state of consciousness changes, and then we no longer see them. And the objects that you have created on this plane ... somewhere, remain there as thought-forms, and another person may encounter them. You see, one needs quite a lot of experience to know which thought-forms are your own, and which thought-forms have come from somewhere else. I always use an example that is really very silly.

For a time, I lived in a large room, and my bed could only be in one particular place in this room because there were so many windows and doors, and very little open wall space. And I used to have very odd thoughts: of red haired young women, of women's legs, and of disco scenes. And I used to think, "How odd! Why do I keep thinking about these things? That I think of red haired women, or that I think of young women at all! It seemed so incredible." I found out that a young man lived directly above me, and worked somewhere or other. But I kept having these thoughts, and had no idea about why. Then, one day this young man came to me, very politely, and said, "I am expecting a gas repairman," – and these gas-men can come at any time of the day – "Please. Here is the key. Could you go in with him? Because I have to go to work." So I went into his flat with the gas man, and I saw that his bed was exactly above my own bed. So he had been dreaming about young women and discos and lovely legs, and I kept picking up his thoughts. It was a rather amusing situation.

So the objects that one creates with one's mind, these thought-forms, do not disappear; they remain in the atmosphere. They do not simply disappear, rather, our consciousness changes and we no longer see them. Such fine thought-forms are usually to be seen when one is between the states of sleep and an awakened state. And as I said yesterday, this state is called the gray zone, and Yogis and

witches are also aware of this plane. And we all have, at times in our lives, experiences on this level. We all know this gray zone. But, it is said that we can learn to reach this state in full consciousness. Also, through Raja and Hatha Yoga one can develop Yogic abilities that enable you to see the inner organs of the body from inside, through an inner sight. This power was given to me by my teacher for a time, when I needed it. I had never been able to see in that way before that, and since Guruji took that power away from me, I have never seen it since. I lost it completely after that.

The sun

As I said yesterday, if you see the sun or an exceptional light, it always signifies the inner reality: Divine knowledge.

Geometric figures

These can have different meanings. Often they are thought-forms. For example, a square is creation: Divine spirit imprisoned in matter, especially if this square has a color. A triangle is interpreted according to its position. It is the three angles that are significant, and they are usually interpreted according to their position. If the triangle is pointing downwards, then it points to the three lower planes. If it points upwards, then it signifies the three higher planes of the created universe.

These things that I am speaking about exist in an unlimited number of different realities. You see, yesterday I said that none of these things are very important. And they are not important, and at the same time they are important. Because these occurrences are already steps on the path, on the ladder of progress. There are an infinite number of realities, and you cannot imprison or limit these realities. They are not absolutely important, but they are there; they are realities. As I always say, they are like the small carrots one might give to a little donkey. You have made progress, and something has happened to you. It is not important, but still, something has already happened. Spiritual life is sometimes so difficult; it is sometimes so lonely that even the soul cries. It howls in desperation; and then, suddenly you see a beautiful blue light, or something else, and you recover your courage. So it is not important, because of course, it is not yet reality – and we are intended to reach reality – but it is also important in the sense that it is an encouragement.

Symbolic pictures – in visions, meditations, or dreams.

They symbolize the movement and activity of our inner forces. For example, there are exercises of power – these are more for men, and not women – exercises for this power that men have, this special masculine power. When this power is really controlled and mastered, it will – in a man – open pathways that reflect themselves on the physical plane, and which can also influence the sexual act between a man and a woman.

So. All of these symbols – all of the ones I have explained here – symbolize the inner happenings on the inner plane, and yet, with time, they all disappear – not the powers, but the visions. There was a gentleman yesterday who said that there were things that he saw that were just not important to him. And he asked me why I was speaking so much about these things. And what I am saying now is in answer to his question. He has been meditating for a long time, and in his case, all of these things have gone, and that is a good sign.

And finally, we reach the state where we must cross a boundary, and then there are no more visions. We do not see any more visions or symbols, and cross over into the domain of The Nothing. And that is where eternal bliss begins. Someone came to me yesterday, and said, “There is nothing there for me now, nothing at all.” And I said, “What a good sign.” But when everything disappears, the human despairs. You see, our mind is made in such a way that we are fascinated by events. And then, when all of these events suddenly stop, you ask yourself, “What has happened?” And I say to you that something good has happened. You have stepped beyond the realm of duality or plurality. And that means into the realm of the One. And that, of course, is very good. But usually the mind does not understand that. And that is why the Sufis say that we need a teacher, someone in a physical body who can explain these things to us. You see, we can sometimes become very puzzled and frightened. Really there is nothing to be afraid of, and once it is explained to you, it is no longer a problem. But without such guidance your mind will play with it and say, “Oh what a terrible thing.” Yesterday I spoke

of how a buffalo might disturb your meditation. You sit and meditate and suddenly there is this buffalo, and it is really quite dramatic. And it only means that somewhere there are forces that are hostile to you, so be a bit careful. It means no more than that.

Now, I have said that with time all of these visions disappear, and that you finally come to a stage where you must step beyond the boundary of duality. And this state is absolutely not sleep, my friends, and not a state of unconsciousness; and it is not a mediumistic state. In any case, awareness has always been there; it is always there, only you do not know it. Our consciousness leaves the physical level and seals itself from outer perceptions; it withdraws itself, with all of its impressions, into the very core of our being. And there, of course, it seems that we are unconscious. And that is the state of Dhyana. And that is the meditation of Dhyana.

We constantly live and deal with different levels of consciousness. Our mind works on this simple level here, in this world, but it is quite capable of working on other planes of consciousness, and we can meet other human beings on these other plane of consciousness. And we can think on these other levels, and we can feel all of those powers that create the events of this world. We meet people on other levels and we influence them there. And what we think and feel on the other levels, and the forces that we generate on these other levels, and the events that occur there, and the things that we prepare for, have an incredibly powerful influence on our outer life. That means, quite simply, that everything happens first on the inner planes, and then it manifests on the lower level; here, on the physical level, in the physical world.

I say lower, or downwards, because really it is attracted by the forces of the earth; so perhaps there is a sort of gravity, even at the level of the spirit. I do not know, but it seems that way to me. And that is why I say lower. You see, what I am now saying is really of the utmost importance; because these ideas come from personal experiences. I do not think that you will find them in books. Our normal state of consciousness is usually completely unaware of what goes on on the inner levels, because not everything of what we experience there penetrates into our waking consciousness; not everything comes down to this level. Often we are unable to bring these experiences through from the inner planes to the normal state of consciousness. Or if we do, the experiences are distorted, as in a circus mirror; or they can take on other forms that we cannot understand: forms that are completely foreign to our ordinary consciousness. And yet, if we progress in our meditation, then gradually we reach a state where sometimes there can be a real exchange between the inner planes and our outer consciousness. Everyone who meditates regularly has already had this experience.

So our physical, outer life, our 'I' is really prepared on a completely different plane. One could say, 'Behind a veil'. And that is also very important. This is another way of saying that first this happens on the higher planes, and then it descends to this reality. And that happens with everything we do. First it happens 'there', somewhere, and then it happens here. It happens very often in meditation – and not only to me – that suddenly you know something ... in meditation or in the night. You see something or have some experience. And then, the next day you hear about it on the radio. Yes, that happens quite often. And please! This does not only happen to me; I am no exception. For example, you might see a shipwreck or an earthquake. Somehow you see that; but later you think that you merely dreamt it – until you hear about it on the radio; perhaps that morning or the next day. And if the ego is still there, you will be very proud that you knew about it in advance. But if there is not much ego, then you know that it was a very simple occurrence; that you happened to tune into something on the inner planes that was really there.

(Question: Mrs. Tweedie, isn't it the same with dreams?)

Yes, of course; but then it is probably not a dream at all. Then it is a kind of experience. Not every dream is a dream. Do not forget that we meet in the night. That is why I am not able to hide from my group. For example, we Sufis must sometimes disappear; that means that we must travel so that no one knows where we are. If too many people cling to me, if there are too many projections on me, if they see me as a mother or brother or sister or Guru, then I must disappear to allow them to learn, alone, to stand alone. But now, many of the people in the group suddenly begin to dream that I am

going to be away for a while, or that I will not be home. It becomes quite silly. (*Everyone has a good chuckle*) In the night we are together, so the soul knows it already. And that awareness is also often strong between a mother and a child; it is a very common and natural occurrence, and that is because the child's aura is still a part of the mother's aura.

Please excuse me if I am sometimes not clear. You see, what I am telling you comes from my own experiences, and I have to somehow try, with great effort, to make these things understandable to you. And then I try to say them in both German and in English, and sometimes that does not work very well. (*For part of this week, Mrs. Tweedie tried to translate herself into English.*)

Now, it is very important for a Yogi – please, many of those here are already Yogis – to develop a conscious awareness of these different planes; to be aware of everything that happens behind this veil of the mind; and to learn what forces and powers shape our destiny here in this world. These are extremely important statements, and I have not seen them anywhere. Others have probably experienced them, but it may not be written. Or maybe it is written in a different way. But I am speaking from my own experience. That is why it is so difficult for me to express it.

(Question: Mrs. Tweedie, what is a Yogi?)

A Yogi is one who meditates. In Sanscrit “Yog” is unity. So a Yogi is one who has reached a conscious awareness of oneness, of unity. And there are several people who I know who have already reached that state, if not permanently, at least from time to time. I know that. I can see it. I do not see it with my eyes; one sees that in another way.

So. Once we have broken through this barrier of consciousness, we see, with great astonishment that everything is possible for us; that we can reach anything; that we can do anything, even if it does not seem that way to the outer mind. We suddenly discover powers in ourselves. Everything, my friends, everything has been within us from the beginning – was already placed there for us. It was there from the very beginning of time, before we were born. It was already ready for us, ready for our use. We only have to grasp it and use it. But for that, meditation is absolutely necessary.

Look at how much dignity a human being has; at how magnificent he is. Look at the worth, at the value of a human being that this implies, at how magnificent this is. And we say that we are small and have no might, and that we have all of these problems. My God, we are almighty! And this almightiness grows within us when we meditate. And there comes a time when we begin to understand that. For some of you, this has already become a little clear, and for others, not yet.

Now. This development, this transformation, begins on the inner planes, and then it occurs on the surface, on the outer, physical level. This is also important. In the beginning this transformation happens in your innermost being, but then it reflects itself into the outer plane, into the outer mind, into normal consciousness. That which we have found in our innermost being comes to the surface of consciousness. This process is not a simple process, and it needs time; in fact, it takes years until you can train your mind to understand and feel secure about this process. Realization can only proceed when the inner being, the inner consciousness, is completely awakened; when the power of vision is attained, and when one can perceive the unseen. I use the term ‘the inner mind’ – please notice that I am sometimes speaking of the inner and sometimes of the outer mind. I have never seen that in books. One reads of the higher and lower mind, but never of the inner and outer mind. Perhaps they are the same, but I would not express it that way. I experience it differently. The outer mind must become accustomed, must be trained – quite simply trained! – so that it can see things correctly, and interpret things as they are.

Now, the outer mind will do anything to split and dissect perception; it will pigeon-hole things and reorganize them ‘so that you will understand them better’. It will do anything and everything to destroy this inner vision of the inner mind. It is not simple to train the outer and inner minds to work together. It takes years. It took me years. And it can be a very confusing time.

The experience of stillness of the empty mind, of the Nothing, of that which is not disturbed by the movements of the unconscious – this is a new idea – is called, in Sanscrit, ‘Dhyana’. This morning we had a very interesting talk in English by Llewellyn about the unconscious; well, actually, he led us into the unconscious, so that we could experience the dynamic forces of the unconscious, and could see how they function. Now, the state of Dhyana, this state that we reach in our meditations, is not influenced, is not touched by the forces of the unconscious. That is very interesting, and it is very important. This state of Dhyana has absolutely nothing to do with the unconscious. It is a Yogic state, because it is already leading towards union. In this state, our conscious mind goes inwards into the deepest silent stillness, and it has no way of expressing itself. There is no more conscious activity, the thought process stops, and so, since there is no outer mind, the senses no longer perceive anything.

And this state of Dhyana is not sleep. In the beginning, of course, you think that you are asleep, but later you know very well that you are not sleep. It is something quite different, quite dynamic. Experiences and perceptions no longer come through the senses, but one has inner experiences: one perceives visions of a till-then unseen reality. If you perceive something in this state, it is never an experience of the mind. In the beginning such visions are usually not even remembered, but later one is able to have these experiences in a kind of waking consciousness, or at least one gets fleeting impressions from them. But before that happens your mind must be trained to perceive things of this reality. And I emphasize that this is not a state of sleep! Of course, everyone in the group in London already knows that, because all of them have already been meditating for many years.

So, this state of Dhyana is not a state of sleep. Everything seems to turn inwards, and absolutely nothing remains ‘outside’, in our normal state of awakened consciousness. One is completely awake on the level of the inner consciousness. Of course, the mind that is only accustomed to receiving outer impressions through the senses knows nothing, or at most very little, of what goes on within. It is a very interesting process. And in the beginning, it can be very confusing.

So. The mind will say, “I am asleep,” but only in the beginning. Sometimes brief glimpses of this level of consciousness are possible for the outer mind. One could, perhaps, call it ‘half-Samadhi’. But the mind will constantly look for interpretations, and in this way the impressions will be destroyed, because the outer mind is accustomed to working with concepts, and there, there are no concepts. There, everything happens in quite another way from here, but it is quite impossible to describe it; one must experience it. In this I am quite helpless, I cannot say any more about it. I know that you would like to know more about it, and that I cannot help you. You have to find out about it yourself. And you will, if you meditate.

Now. The experiences that you have in this inner directed state are certainly not dreams. They are spiritual experiences or visions on another plane of consciousness. One could say that it is in another dimension of the spirit, in another spiritual space – I think that is a good way to express it, and I think that it is now quite clear. These experiences cannot be dreams because you are not in a state of sleep. How can you dream if you are not asleep? It is only much later, after you have become accustomed to this state of consciousness, that you notice, to your great surprise, that your normal, daily life becomes easier, and that you have no explanation for it.

Now I feel that I should stop. It is enough. You have already heard enough new ideas, and you will not be able to absorb much more. You had better digest these ideas first. So. Please. Do you have any questions?

(Question: In your book you wrote that your master said that one cannot put oneself into Dhyana. Is that true?)

Yes, it is very rare that a person can put himself into Dhyana. (Question continues: Then I would like to ask what the conditions are, and what the master actually does to bring this state about.) So that you can do it yourself, afterwards? (Q: No, simply, how does one get put into the state of Dhyana.)

Yes. that is an important question. You see, it says in my book that a human cannot place himself into the state of Dhyana. It can happen, but it is very rare. And this woman wants to know what the conditions are that allow one to be put into Dhyana. And the answer is simply the power of the teacher, and that is all. (Q: But what conditions must the disciple fulfill?) He must meditate. You meditate when you are alone, and you strive and aspire and make effort. And the effort is very important, it is terribly important. And when the teacher sees that you make an effort, then you will get this special energy that will help you to go into Dhyana. And then, strictly speaking, you actually do enter Dhyana by yourself. Once again we have a contradiction. When the teacher sees that you strive and make effort; that you want to progress, that you are diligent and meditate, then the teacher will send you a special power, a mysterious power that works on the inner level to help you to enter Dhyana. So, really, you do it yourself; but with a little help. You get a small shove, and that is all that you need.

(Question: I would like to tell a dream, and I also have a question. You have spoken so much of the will, and I am unclear how surrender fits in with this. And then I had a dream. A woman is supposed to teach me a love song. And everything was there: music and lyrics, and she first sang it for me. And I absolutely wanted to learn it, and I am musical, but I simply could not learn it. I tried and tried. And then suddenly, I sang it, but it was not me who sang. The song sang through me.) It sang you! (Q: Yes, and full of passion. And the other woman sang this song at the same time, but I noticed that I sang completely different words and a completely different melody; and still it fit wonderfully with the other song that the woman sang. And we both finished at the same time.) *(There is a joyful laugh from the group.)*

Isn't that lovely? That is really great. Thank you very much. That was a wonderful contribution.

(Question: I have a question about Dhyana. You say that the impressions of the inner mind do not register with the outer mind. I hear an inner voice, from the inner mind; but sometimes I can hear it very well, and sometimes not at all. Why?)

I think that what you describe is quite OK, and quite normal. (Q: But is it because I am not allowed to hear it?) No, I think that your ego creates an obstacle. It is not that you are not allowed to hear these things. If you strive and diligently make efforts— and I know that you, in fact, do — and if you meditate, then you have the right to know what happens in these inner states. And if you don't hear or remember what goes on there, then the ego is the obstacle. The ego creates a veil, and you cannot hear. And that is a normal process. One time you can hear, then the next time you cannot. That is perfectly normal. It is part of the yo-yo syndrome.

(Questions: Mrs. Tweedie, I seldom reach a state in which I am no longer aware of anything, but I notice that my hearing stops. And I am very aware that I cannot hear, and the consciousness that 'I am' remains.)

The consciousness that 'you are,' is already the first step towards becoming conscious after Dhyana, and is a very good sign. That means that you have already been in the state of Dhyana, but were never conscious of it. The first state after the unconscious state of Dhyana is 'I am'. (Q: But there was no transition through a phase of unconsciousness.) But I think that there is, in fact, such a phase, only you are not aware of it. That can happen. You see, because it is unconscious, the mind does not register it. But it is quite clear to you that you do not hear anything, and that is a sign.

You see, I do not explain the stages of Dhyana because then you would say, "Oh yes, the old woman described it all to me, and now my mind is just creating these illusions according to what she said." You would think that you are imagining it, so in the end, it is not fair to you. But there is one thing that I can say. The first state is the state of being. 'I am,' and that is all — nothing else. Just 'I am.' I am not sleeping, I am not dead, I simply am. But before that, you have no awareness of anything.

(Question: I would like to ask you about an experience that I had on Monday during our meditation, because it is also connected with this state of 'I am'. As the meditation began, I began to cry very hard. I had the feeling that God was born again for me, and I could suddenly pray again. I felt like I floated

upwards with my chair, and I had a very expanded bodily feeling; I became very large. And in the distance I sensed this reality, or whatever one could call it, and in the face of this reality, this feeling of 'I am' became quite small. And both of these feelings were there at the same time. (*The woman telling this is very upset, barely controlling her tears or her voice*). I was very deeply moved. Then my mind came in and wanted to explain it to me, and then the feeling left, but it came back again and again. And I had the feeling that words like 'God' suddenly took on another meaning for me.)

The value of things has changed for you. And you will never be the same. (Q: [*Still very upset. The interchange is altogether very moving.*] I always had the feeling that I had to give my word, to promise something; and I was afraid of this promise because it felt very ... absolute. And I was afraid to go on alone, and to leave my family behind.) You do not leave anything behind. You only go deeper. And have you now made that promise? (Q: Yes, I ...) You do not need to tell us if it is very private, if it is very intimate for you. (Q: I cried a lot that night, and I had a high fever, and I felt that everything within me has burned.) That was probably right. And it was the fire of Kundalini that burned in you. That is this terrible fire that I had to fight with so much. And it is this fire that will lead you to God. You have had a very interesting and extremely deep mystical experience. And it began on Monday? (Q: Yes, my difficulties began then. After I had this experience, I was afraid to fall back into the ego again, and into sin; and sin has a new meaning for me. I have seen all of my lower nature: pride and envy and all of that. Everything has fallen back into darkness. I fell down again, and so deep. ...) (*The woman is very upset. Mrs. Tweedie interrupts her...*)

Do not be afraid of any of that. You have had a glimpse of something. Your higher self took you over. It is not important that you are again in darkness; that is the ego. Over time, it will slowly pass. Someone showed you something very suddenly. That was a huge carrot that you got! (*Everyone laughs...*) Like what one gives to a little donkey. That was very beautiful. (*Mrs. Tweedie explains and interprets what has been said for the English speaking audience.*) This woman had a special experience at our meeting a few days ago, where she had an expansion of consciousness, and even felt bigger physically. And it seemed to her that she found God. And after that experience, her idea of sin, of being and of ego were completely different, as if all of her values had changed. She had a very high fever and a lot of heat in her physical body; that was Kundalini. And now everything is gone, and she is terribly afraid of sin. And I told her not to be afraid anymore. Something of reality was shown to her. It is only for the moment that it is veiled. Now the higher self has shown its face, and it takes over. Yes. That is very interesting. (*Now to the woman:*) It is very important for you to meditate. And if meditation is sometimes difficult, then pray. Pray for help. Prayer is almighty.

Yes, darling, (*To someone else...*) you wanted to say something, and I neglected you.

(Question: You spoke about the different levels, that things have to occur in the inner reality before they appear in outer reality. Is that what one experiences when one has a dream or an experience in the night, and then you are shocked in the morning because it felt like you experienced something that was beyond your current state. Is it similar to that?) Yes, it is similar to that. (Q: I think, "How could I have done that? I am not yet nearly so advanced.") Yes. Then it was an experience.

So. Would you like to ask anything? (*To a particular person in the audience...*)

(Reply: No, but I would like to thank you from my heart, in the name of my mother. Her health is much improved.) Good. Her mother had heart attack, and everyone prayed for her.

My dear S., don't you have anything to say? No dreams? (Reply: I am always dreaming.) Have you got an interesting one? (Reply: Yes, but it is too long.) Yes, so we will deal with it in London. Here we cannot deal with long dreams. There are so many people, and everyone has something to ask. But if it is a short dream, then that is OK.

(Question: How can one distinguish when one has a normal dream and when one has a real experience.)

It is very difficult. Usually, only the teacher can say. One learns it over time, but I can give you a few hints. An inner experience leaves a feeling of deep meaning behind. But even here I have to be careful, because a dream, too, can do that. I could be what Carl Jung called, 'A big dream'. The surest sign is that an experience goes straight to the point. There is always something that you have to learn. It is usually very clear, with or without symbols. And usually experiences are quite short. It is a statement. Then it might easily be an experience. But dreams can also be like that. It is just not easy to say. Sometimes people come to me and tell me a dream, and even I have to think about it for some time to know if it is a dream or an experience, and then I usually use my intuition, and that helps – not always – but sometimes. One has the feeling, "Yes, that must be an experience."

(Question: Mrs. Tweedie, when we meet in the night, am I more respectable or less respectable than I am in the day?) (*Everyone laughs!*)

What a question! None of us are respectable. We all stand naked. OK? I do not mean that in a negative or funny way. We are naked in the sense that we are clear and honest. You see, on the other level we are dressed as we think we are dressed; that is, according to our thoughts, so we do not appear to be disreputable. Our inner psyche does not exist there; there is only the soul, and the soul is never disreputable; it is always pure. And in the night, we meet on the level of the soul. These meetings are on a very high level, and that is why we cannot remember anything of them when we are again here, in this world. It happens at the level of the soul, where all knowledge is, where all intelligence is. And there we are, of course, together with our teacher, Guruji.

People say that I am also there at these meetings in the night, but that I usually scold the other people. So I must be a terrible person even on the level of the soul. (*Everyone, including Mrs. Tweedie, chuckles.*) They tell me that I came to them, dressed in black and told them this and this and that, and that they were so shocked. And I ask them, "But isn't it true?" And they say, "Yes, it is true." And then I say, "Well! If it is true, then try to find a better way. You cannot live a lie on the level of the soul." Where we meet in the night is on the level of Truth. And so one cannot say a great deal about it because it is so very different there. One cannot even compare the two realities.

Yes, I find this idea of 'respectable' or 'decent' quite funny in this context. If you are not respectable, that can only apply to the psyche, or to the body – for example, if one is dressed indecently. But there, on the other plane, these things do not exist. There is the soul and it appears as a dynamic point in space, a spark in space. Now, here, this will mean nothing to you, but there, you would know who I am, and I would know who you are, but I will be you and you will be me. Try to work that out! (*There is hesitant laughter.*) It is impossible to understand this at the level of the mind. There, we are dynamic points; we do not have a human body. You see, the Sufis say that the soul is a ray – a ray of the spiritual sun. And the soul behaves just like a ray. A ray cannot exist without the sun, and the sun cannot avoid sending out its rays. And a ray is something so light, so indefinite. It can be visible or invisible; it can be here or there. That is our real 'I' – something so very light. It is a very complicated thing.

(Question: I have a question from yesterday. What does an eye mean in a vision? For the last few weeks, every time I meditate I see a very large blue eye in front of my left eye.)

I do not know, does anyone have an idea? It is now an open question. ... Is Llewellyn here? (*Yes, but he does not understand German, so Mrs. Tweedie translates for him.*) He says it is the eye of the soul that looks at you. Could you accept that? (Q: Yes, but I was quite frightened by it.) But, of course, the soul can be very terrible. (*Llewellyn says, "It is real."*) Yes, it is real, and that is why it appears frightening. The ego is not real; it is an illusion, and the ego is terribly afraid when it confronts the real, when it sees the truth. You see, for example, that no one is pleased to hear the truth about themselves. And if you see the eye of the soul, your ego does not like it.

(Related question: Could one say that the eye is the witness?)

(Mrs. Tweedie waits for Llewellyn to answer. He says, "It is that within one that witnesses.") Yes, you are right. It is something inside of you that is witnessing. It is the witness within you. In the Upanishads it is said that the Atman is a witness. It does not participate, but only observes.

(Question: May I tell a short dream?) Yes, please. (Q: I was ill for two days, and then I had this dream, and I dream very seldom, at least I am not conscious of my dreams. I was pregnant, and the father of this child was my stepfather, but he looked like my father. And in reality, I do not have a stepfather. And in the dream it was clear that I wanted to have this baby, and then I went with my stepfather – or father – into an institution and I wanted to find out something about having the child. And I stood in line, but they sent me away. And my stepfather –or father – was clear that we had to keep my pregnancy secret in front of the family and so forth. And in the dream I was the one who was very strong and who arranged everything and who decided to have the baby. And I wanted to ask if anyone has an idea about it.)

Does anyone have an idea about this? I do not. (Comment: It is a psychological dream.) Yes, it is certainly a psychological dream. You know what I think? I think that there is a personal symbolism there – yes, Llewellyn agrees and he is an expert in dreams – and then it is very difficult to interpret without knowing you. If you were in analysis...are you in analysis? (Q: No) You see, if you were, the analyst would be able to explain that to you.

(Comment: I think that a dream like that happens to people who have a special relationship to their father, where the father is not individuated, but has a hidden quality that is very special; the child psychologically picks that up and has a relationship with that part of her father.) Aha! (And the adult may still long for that relationship, and the child in this dream symbolizes the desire to have that part birth through her.)

So! This man is a therapist, and he said that perhaps your father – your real father – had a special quality that you, in this dream, transferred to the stepfather, and this quality is very precious to you, and that you too want to have this quality, and that if you develop that quality, it would be as if a birth from within you. That is one explanation from a therapist. Yes, I think you accept that completely. Yes, that was very good.

(The day's session ends)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1988: Part 10

The States of Dhyana

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Schwarzsee, Switzerland
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Today I can only speak for one hour because we are having a children's party afterwards. And since I have mentioned children, I want to tell you that this morning we had a lovely Sufi ceremony, an incredibly old Sufi ceremony, whose source is lost in antiquity. It is quite a simple blessing ceremony that one does with infants up to about one and a half years old. Of course, one can also bless older children too. One can do that with the brothers and sisters of the infant. And that is what we did this morning.

We had four babies, and seven older children. It is not a baptism, but it is a blessing. Guruji told us that every human is born with a light, and that one must, as if blow on this light a little so that it burns a little clearer and stronger, and that is all. That helps in life. Then, one magnetizes some small object with a special power to help the baby; something that a child can carry if the child is large enough, or something that can go under its pillow if the child is too small to wear something around its neck. And when a child is a little ill, and you put this object under its pillow, it will help. It really helps. We have been doing these things in our group for many years, and it really works very well. If the child has a cough or the flu, you put this under their pillow, and the child will get better much more quickly.

The blessing ceremony itself is as follows. First one makes a cross on the forehead with oil – the cross is a great symbol: of sacrifice and suffering, of life and of surrender. Then one places honey on the mouth – the children like that a lot, and they lick it happily from their lips. Honey symbolizes that the child should only have sweetness in its life: in food, in feelings, and in experiences; and that they should only say sweet things. And so life itself should be sweet for them. Then one draws a six-pointed star with water – water represents the feelings – on the heart. That is the symbol of life, of creation. It is one of the oldest symbols of humanity. It comes from the time of the Assyrians and Babylonians, and is a part of the Jewish religion. It is a very important symbol of the heart. Then one puts salt on the palms of the hand – salt of the earth. Salt is something essential; one cannot live without it. Our cells have salt water in them because in the distant past we came from the sea. All life forms came from the sea. Salt represents the act of giving and the act of receiving, and being connected with the earth.

Then one makes a circle with garlic around the navel. That is the circle of protection. The area around the navel is called 'Hara' by the Japanese. In English it is the center of our 'gut feelings,' of primitive physical feelings: anger and love, sexuality: everything is here. And that, according to the Sufis, must be protected against the evil eye. That means against all of the evil and nastiness of the world. And then one puts a little earth on the feet; one makes the soles of the feet a bit dirty. Then you say to the child, "Your feet are dirty, and we have enchanted your mommy so that she will not wash your feet." And the reaction to that is always very interesting. When the child is bigger, you can explain it; but if the child is very small, they do not understand.

Just at the beginning of the ceremony, I do my own purification over a candle, and quite often the child is quite fascinated by this. Of course, if the child is very small then it may be a bit restless. But this purification is important. If there is something in me: some disturbance, or worry, then symbolically, the fire is supposed to take it away.

So we had this blessing this morning; and every mother whose child was blessed had to bake a cake. And when these cakes are prepared, every spoonful of ingredients must be added with a prayer, and the cake must be made with love. And you know, these cakes are really wonderful. One feels that they were made in this way. Of course, we ate a lot of them ourselves, but there was also a lot left over, and you will get some this afternoon.

Now, I want to continue with our theme from yesterday. I will continue to speak about the state of Dhyana. This may be a little technical, but it is important; important because over the years so many people have asked me about it. And very many people have had doubts about this state of Dhyana. After you have heard this explanation once, you will not understand it – I mean, you will understand it, but you will forget it. But if you get a copy of the tape-recording, then, after you have had an experience, you can play this tape and it will have more meaning for you.

Everything I am saying here is from experience and about experience, and experiences are far more important than a book that someone has written. Guruji said, “Books are the vomit of peoples brains.” (*There is astonished laughter.*) Then I said, “But you ordered me to write a book.” And he said, “That will all be experiences. That is another thing. Experiences are experiences and book-knowledge is book-knowledge.” When I spoke about the spiral, that was book-knowledge; it was interesting and explained many things, but it is, after all, book-knowledge. But there is no-book knowledge in my book. It is all what I or other people have really experienced, and that is why it is important. So even if what I have to say today is a little technical, please listen. One day it will be useful to you. One day you will be grateful that you have heard this.

Now. I have said that this state of Dhyana is not a dream state. How can you dream if you are not asleep? And I said that much later, after we have become accustomed to this meditative state, daily life gets steadily easier for us. You see, you may be doing an exercise in power. Not everyone does these exercises, but sometimes an order comes from Guruji, and then the person is given this power exercise. Then suddenly everything that is connected with this power becomes easier in life, and there does not seem to be an explanation for it. If you are on a meditative or devotional path, then suddenly, in life, the surrender to the light within you becomes easy. You see, one does not surrender to God – who is God, what is God? – God is everything and nothing. God is far beyond our grasp. How can we hope to surrender to Him? Really, one surrenders to that within oneself which is eternal, which is a part of God, without end, and unique. And we are all unique. There is no other person just like you are. Inayat Khan said this beautifully, “We are all tiny notes in the symphony of life.” And the symphony would never be the same if our own note were not there, just in this moment. When we die, that is something else; then other notes will be important.

So once we have become accustomed to this inner state of meditation, daily life becomes steadily easier, and there is no explanation for this change. Of course, there is a very deep explanation, but our minds cannot grasp it. When we are in the flow of this power, there is a peace that appears – a very special peace. And this power penetrates through to our normal, daily state and confers strength and inspiration to us, so that everything goes much more easily and effortlessly in this, our normal daily life. And that is because we must no longer consciously strain to achieve things. And here the word ‘consciously’ is important. Things suddenly happen because they have already happened on the inner level, in our inner mind. The outer mind does not know anything about this inner happening, but it receives it, as if through reflection; this new thing is reflected into it.

When we have the impression that our body dissolves – and we have already had such a question – or when we have a feeling of floating or rising, or that we no longer have hands or feet, that is a sign of the awakening of our inner consciousness. And these are important experiences. People come to

me and say, "I cannot feel my hands." or "I cannot feel my feet," or "I am cold here," or "I feel as if I had been cut in two, what shall I do?" or "I am completely paralyzed." These are already signs of the awakening of our inner consciousness. The physical body simply reacts to this opening in this way. And please, do not be frightened; these experiences are completely normal. I want to say again that you will not go insane with this meditation; you will not end up in a hospital, and nothing serious will happen to you. You might get a headache, but medical doctors will not find anything wrong with you.

By the way, someone told me today that a woman here had a headache every time she meditated and that no one could find a cause for it. I examined her spine – she had a little pain lower down – and I believe that Kundalini power has begun to awaken in her. Such a headache is one of the symptoms of this awakening. And a doctor will not find anything wrong with her; of that, I am quite sure. So she must simply bear it. That is the other side of the coin: because the body is quite dense, when something happens on the inner level the body will feel it; and sometimes you will experience that as pain.

You see, the things that happen on the inner level happen in a realm of incredible power, and the body is not accustomed to such power. It is true that we are very protected; it is true that our higher self does everything possible to protect this body that has served us so well in life. But the body – and it is a good body – is not at all accustomed to these vibrations, and the weakest part of the body will suffer. But that is only for a time. The pain does pass; it is not forever.

Some people experience a very strong heat, or even fire – as I experienced – in their bodies. That is the fire of the great purification, where every obstacle is burned. Please do not have any fear of these things. With this meditation, I can guarantee you that nothing bad will happen. I do not know about other meditation techniques. I have heard that there are techniques that are very dangerous, but I do not know anything about them. When people come to me and say that they have learned this and that and so on, and I know that it does not belong to this path, I never give them advice. I tell them that if they have a teacher, then that teacher will help them. And if they do it alone, then God help them, but that I have no idea what they should do. Because there are some truly very dangerous exercises described in books; exercises that can paralyze you, or that can so disturb the mind that the person can become confused for years. I know of such a case.

Now. To feel the Great Beloved in your heart is a real experience. I say to all of the people who have serious difficulties in communicating with others – you see, there are people for whom an intimate relationship with another person, man or woman, is rather difficult; they cannot maintain such relationships for very long. These are usually lonely people, and they are usually people that God has chosen. God says, "This is My heart. This heart belongs to Me." I usually give a piece of advice to such people; I say, "Look, if you really cannot have a good relationship with a man or a woman, and that condition has lasted for years, then perhaps you have already belonged to the Great Beloved in many former lives and your heart can no longer love any person anymore; you can only love That." We Sufis call God the Great Beloved, the only beloved of our soul; the one who will never betray or disappoint us, who will always understand; and where we are safe and secure for ever and ever and ever. Humans can disappoint us.

I know many people who say, "I have a cat or a dog, and that is better because they will never disappoint me." Yes, that is OK if that is enough for you. That would never be enough for me. And I think that we humans should not reach below to the animals, rather we should reach for the stars. We must strive. Only the highest is good enough for us, because we ourselves are Divine. We are made in His image. We are That. "Thou art That, Nachiketas!" said Yama, the King of Death, to the little boy Nachiketas, who came to this King to experience Truth. That line comes from the Katha Upanishads.

So I have said that to feel the Great Beloved in your heart is a real experience. But the mind will make you uneasy about this experience, and it will try to find interpretations for the experience in such a way as to turn your ideas about it inside out, and it will try to develop a system of ideas through which to control your behavior. Imagine: you are praying or meditating in the night, and you suddenly have the experience of unity, of incredible love, where you flow outwards, on and on, like a river, forever. And you do not become less from this outflowing. I flow out to somewhere, but I do not become less. And

the body becomes cold – perhaps it also becomes stiff, or it may bend far backwards, like a bow – that happens with some people. I have seen it with a small child.

The little girl suddenly arched, and the mother was terribly frightened. The child had had a Kundalini experience. Nothing more happened, but somehow this child had tuned into this power. So imagine that such a thing had happened to you, in the night, and you knew nothing about such things. It would be very very frightening. But afterwards this memory remains, this great memory of ... something. But you are not yet able to bring this memory into the mind. Then the mind will do what I just described. It will be very uneasy. It will be frightened and afraid. It will look for interpretations, and it will try to turn your own impressions inside out. It will try to develop a system so that it can regulate your behavior. And it will interpret and interpret and interpret; and one cannot interpret such an experience. But that has happened to me, and it happens that way to everyone.

Of course, the experience will appear as if cut into pieces, and chaotic. Real intuition, my friends, never behaves that way. It is always built on balance, on stillness, on inner order and harmony. So if you really want to use the inner intuition, when you have such an experience, remain completely still; do not interpret anything, and wait. The explanation will come to you quite by itself. A person will never be injured – and this is an important sentence – through real, great experiences! With two exclamation marks! Never!! You will never be hurt by really great experiences.

Mystics say that it would be false to only orient one's life inwardly. We must be oriented to the inner life and to the outer life. How can one have good relationships with other people if you withdraw completely from the outer world? It is not possible. How can you go through a process of transformation, and strive for union with the Beloved if you only live an inner life, and cannot test your development in normal, outer life. That is absolutely not possible. That is why the Sufis are not allowed to withdraw into solitude. It is not allowed for them to enter a monastery, at least not the Sufis of our line. They have never been in monasteries, not for thousands of years; and Sufism is older than Islam, older than the Upanishads.

You must remain in life where your higher self has placed you. Because the higher self, in the moment of free will, knew exactly what the human needs to experience in this life. So one should not, must not run away from life. You must marry if you can; you must have children if you can. You have to work in an office, or be a housewife. You have to do whatever life offers you, to live every experience that is offered. As the Sufis say, "The greater the obstacles, the greater will be the perfection once you have overcome them." You see, this is something incredibly great, incredibly real, and everyone who is on this path knows this.

So you cannot only live an inner life; you must live both: the inner and the outer life. You have to have contact with people. Before I said that there are people for whom such contact is very difficult, but that is then another thing. There are people who are somehow already singled out by God, people who belong to God alone. And for these people, life is not very easy. But they are exceptions to this rule. Usually, it is as I have described: that one must live a life just like all others live. Outer work and outer relationships with other people characterizes the perfected mystic, and not the withdrawn inner life. That is a condition of mystical life, and for the real mystic, there is no other possibility. One does not only live in the clouds. I have often heard people say, "Oh. Mrs. Tweedie, you cannot understand this or that, your head is in the clouds." But it is not true. I have to live here. And if I do not have any personal worries – but of course, I do have personal worries. Every human does – but even beyond my own concerns, I still have the worries of other people. I must pray for people, and work with them; "I must be involved with humanity," as Albert Schweitzer said. He was a great man and he achieved great things. Many people did not recognize it, but he was a great man.

What is the Self – the higher self? It is a state of being. It is not a being. We are beings, perhaps ghosts are beings, angels are beings, but the Self is a state of being. Why is it not a being? Because, as I mentioned yesterday, it is a ray. It is a ray of the spiritual sun. This ray has a conscious independent existence, but it is not a being. It is everything in one. Its substance and its being are the same. Please! That is philosophically quite correct. Substance and being are the two aspects of the

spirit. It is completely simple, but not very easy to understand. One must first know something of philosophy and metaphysics to be able to understand it.

The impersonal Divine – That – does not exist in a fixed space, and it cannot have a fixed or limited space because it interpenetrates everything. That, the higher self, interpenetrates you and me and the trees and the buildings and the air ... everything! So then, how can the higher self have a fixed space? That is easy to understand. In cosmic consciousness, the personal 'I' disappears into the All-Pervasive-Self. You see, I have to bring these things from another realm of consciousness, from the moment in meditation when there is no ego and no mind. It took me a long time to bring this into my conscious, outer mind. Of course, I had help. Without help, I could not have done it. So what I am speaking about comes from personal experience. I will repeat this again. It will be helpful to you when, one day, you begin to experience the state of Dhyana. The impersonal Divine does not exist in any limited, fixed space, and it cannot have such a place, rather it interpenetrates everything. In a state of cosmic consciousness, the personal 'I' is not there; it disappears into the All-Encompassing-Self. The 'I' that exists of itself is not the 'I' of a person. It is not individualized. It is the universal 'I', and is identical with the universal 'I' of every person, and identical with the Cosmic Self.

Many people have heard the following story about the Dalai Lama, but I would like to repeat it for you. Some years ago I gave a lecture for the International Transpersonal Association in Davos, Switzerland. The Dalai Lama was also there, and several of the participants were invited to a private meeting with the Dalai Lama. And luckily, I was one of these people. So Marie Louise von Franz and I were where we thought the meeting was to be, and we were speaking together about psychology when one of the body-guards of the Dalai Lama came in and told us that we were in the wrong room, and led us to the correct room. Marie-Louise said that she did not want to sit in the front, but rather all the way in the back. And I said, "Me too," I did not want to be seen. But then the president of the Transpersonal Association – who has since died – stood up and asked where I was. Of course, I had to answer, and he said, "Sit here." The Dalai Lama sat at the head of the table; the president sat to his right, and I sat opposite the president, just to the left of the Dalai Lama. And each person was allowed to ask the Dalai Lama one question – just one.

Luckily, they began with the president, so I would be the last one to ask my question. And I thought to myself, "I have no questions to ask, what shall I ask? I do not understand anything about Buddhism, and I do not want to know anything about the Dalai Lama." I respected him, but at that moment I had no idea what I should ask him. Then I remembered that I had already seen the Dalai Lama in India, at the Theosophic center in Adyar, Madras. He came there to dedicate a school for the untouchables, the Harijan, and while he was there, one of our educated Brahmins, Sankaramenon – he was already quite old, and has since died – asked the Dalai Lama, through a translator, one question, "Does the 'I' exist in Nirvana?"

At that time, the Dalai Lama was twenty-five years old, and he replied, with a very charming smile, "I am only a student, but from where I now stand at this moment, it appears to me that the 'I' must also exist in Nirvana, because if it did not, then evolution would make no sense." Then there could not be any evolution. And so I thought that I could ask him now, so many years later, if that was still his view, because that question had always tortured me, and that was from his own mouth! You see how interesting this is.

So when my turn came, I said to him, "Your Highness, perhaps you remember, in 1959, you were in Adyar to dedicate a school ..." And he interrupted me immediately and said, "Yes, I do remember." And I continued, "And perhaps you remember a question that one of our very educated Brahmins asked you? If the 'I' exists in Nirvana. Or do we all disappear, are we all annihilated?" And the Dalai Lama sat back and said, "Ahhh! Which 'I'? ... But the 'I' does exist and I still have the same opinion." And then he explained something about Theravada Buddhism and Hinayana Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism. And I can tell you that I did not understand a word, (*Everyone chuckles at Mrs. Tweedie's candor.*) because I do not know anything about Buddhism. From time to time he asked me, "Do you understand?" and I always said, "Yes, your Holiness." What could I say? If I

had said, “No,” it would have been too stupid, so I said “Yes.” But I was so happy that I had heard this answer from his own lips.

Then something very strange happened to me, and I do not remember anything more of the meeting. I do not remember how I left the room, or that the people outside congratulated me for my question. The other questions had been psychological or political – a T'ai Chi teacher had asked about the situation in China, and I had thought that his question had nothing to do with the Dalai Lama.

Later, I told my companion that I could not remember anything of what happened after the meeting, and asked what I had done. She said that I had offered my hand and smiled and had walked on. And I do not remember any of it. My memories begin when I was lying in bed in my room. That is my first memory. So something happened to my brain while the Dalai Lama had spoken to me, and that was a real mystical experience. And that is all that I can say to you.

So there is an ‘I’, even in Nirvana, something from each of us remains. Your own personal experience is still there. Because, as Teilhard De Chardin said, “God realizes Himself in man.” So when God realizes Himself in you, your experiences will be unique, and these experiences become a part of the totality of experience of the Great ‘I’ in the ocean of light. I think, I hope, that that is clear. So we are not annihilated. Something remains, but what remains!? What I can see in front of me will not remain, what you can see in front of you will not remain. But something does remain, and that ‘something’ is the essential experience of being. And that is philosophically completely correct. And now I come back – Oh we are almost out of time! And we will also have a short meditation. So I will speak a little longer, then we will meditate.

So, after liberation, only the innermost being will survive. That is why I have told you about the explanation of the Dalai Lama. After liberation, in Nirvana, only the innermost being survives, and it will live in the consciousness of God, everywhere and in every other being. That means that things are not separate as they are here, where you are many and I am one. This ‘I’ that survives is not the separate ‘I’ that we call the ego; rather our center, our innermost being finds itself in the center of the All-Encompassing Great Being. We will still be there, forever ... for all eternity, but we will not be the way we are here. It is only the essence of our experiences that will remain. The Sufis say that it is like the way the wind carries the fragrance of the flowers from branch to branch. It is only the fragrance of our experience that goes on. Look at that! The fragrance of our love, of our joy; the fragrance of our life and of our experiences, the innermost ‘I’. That is truly lovely. And the Dalai Lama confirmed that. You see how wonderful that is?

(Comment: And he already knew that when he was twenty-five!)

Yes, he was twenty-five. I have often met him since then. I always try to attend his lectures whenever it is possible. I saw him the last time, last year in Interlaken at the Rainbow Festival, and he was just as lovely as he was when he was twenty-five. But now his English is quite good. That was really the only difference.

So. I have said that in this state of Dhyana that I have called ‘half-Samadhi’, our sense of ‘I’ is not the separate ‘I’ that we call the ego, but rather it is our center, or innermost being in the center of the great All-Encompassing Being. And in this state the inner senses work as before. Yesterday, you remember, I said that there are inner senses and inner mind, and also outer senses and outer mind. That is important. So the inner senses and inner mind function just as they did before. You are quite conscious, you are not dead, and you have not disappeared. But the consciousness works differently from the way it works here. One not only has the feeling of liberation, but one lives in a completely different world. And this other world is completely different from the ordinary world in which we now live with our ordinary mind and senses. And this different existence includes a feeling of union and of separateness. So. There, we are united, and we are separate – both at the same time.

Now. When we enter the state called ‘Samadhi’ while we are still in an incarnated body, this feeling of separation does not exist. In that state, everything is one, but that is also a limitation. Yes! Because

real perfection is when separation and union are one: that is Nirvana. That is the best way that I can describe it. Of course, what I have said is far from perfect, but I cannot say it any better. Perhaps someone else can say it better, but I cannot. But you cannot begin to understand this with your mind.

So this is a new and completely altered consciousness, with a completely different kind of knowledge and a new way of seeing. And I think that I will stop here. We should meditate at least a little, because people want that. And there are still many interesting things about meditation that I will say to you tomorrow. And that will be our last day. And then we will see each other when God wills it. Somewhere in Switzerland or Germany or England, or somewhere in heaven! It does not matter where. We have about ten minutes.

So. Please make yourself completely comfortable and still, and do not think of anything except love and the Beloved.

(The meditation begins,

and ends ...

And the day's meeting ends.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Sufi Camp of 1988: Part 11

The Effects of Dhyana on Life

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Schwarzsee, Switzerland
July 2 – 16, 1988

(R. begins the day's session with a song of the Mevlevi Sufis ...)

Yesterday I tried to give you some explanation about the state of Dhyana. It is a subject that one could speak about for a long time. One cannot say very much in one hour, or one evening, or one month. Because if one really lives it, the whole of one's life is included in this Dhyana meditation. And that is the reason why the Sufis say, "One can reach God, or That, or Reality in this life." Because then the entire life is interpenetrated with God or That. The entire being of a person lives only for that, only to reach that. And if you live in this way, the best part is that life is no longer tedious or boring or lonely. It becomes more and more beautiful, and richer and richer and richer. I have already said that when one is young, one has no patience, and yet you have your entire life ahead of you; and that when one is old, one has learned patience, but one no longer has much time. And life – I can tell you from my personal experience – becomes more and more beautiful. Only there is one difference. One needs less and less, and the interests become more and more limited, and all one really wants to do is to meditate, because there, where you are when you meditate, is bliss.

There, where you meditate, is still. God is stillness, and can only be experienced in stillness. Meditation is stillness, silence. But God is stillness itself. Someone once gave me a little book from the Quakers, with the title, "God is stillness." The Quakers also meditate in stillness. And it is only in stillness that we can begin to develop that 'something' within us. It is only in stillness that we can catch this fleeting 'something' that one cannot really describe with words: the eternal within us. It is the same as the Great Eternal. But I think that one cannot say much more about it. It is rather difficult to put into words.

Yesterday I said that after liberation, after inner liberation, the innermost being, the innermost identity, will survive and will exist in the consciousness of the Divine. It will be all-pervasive and exist in all other beings. So one does not disappear, one is not annihilated. People often say, "Oh yes! One is annihilated. One no longer exists." I have tried to somehow explain to you that you are never annihilated; you cannot disappear. Nothing in nature simply disappears. Things only change. We will not disappear, but we will change dramatically.

One does not only have this feeling of liberation, but also one lives in a completely different world from that of the outer mind and the outer senses. And that includes a feeling of uniqueness and separation, and a feeling of unity, together! Here the sense of oneness and separation are two different things, but there it is one thing. And you have a new and fully changed consciousness, with a very different way to know things, and a new way to see reality. Later, when this new state of consciousness has completely reformed and reshaped the senses and the ordinary mind, we feel, quite unexpectedly, harmony. You do not expect it at all. And that changes your life. We see the world in a new light, as if

made out of a different fabric, and it carries a new sense of meaning. We have all experienced that from time to time: suddenly everything is new, as if newly born – like the way the world is completely new and pure after a hard rain.

Mystics say that there is only one single being in the entire universe. And everything, everything, is a part of this being. It is static and dynamic at the same time. You see, how can our minds grasp that? It is static – meaning it does not change at all – and dynamic – constantly changing, and always faster – both at the same time. The mind cannot begin to grasp that. That is why one has to experience it. When one has had the experience once, only one single time, then you will know it. It is the same with the fourth dimension.

We live in the world of three dimensions, a world of height, length and width. But there is also a fourth dimension – really there are fourteen dimensions, but the others are completely beyond comprehension with our minds. You see, mystics say that every planet is inhabited, every world is inhabited by beings. And if there is no air or no oxygen, or if the world is permanently very cold or extremely hot, that makes no difference, because ghost-like beings or spirits can endure anything on the physical level. But 'there', in this other dimension, on this other plane, everything is different, so when people go to Mars or to Venus or to the other planets, they will only find what our senses can comprehend, only what they see on the surface of things. In reality, it is completely different there. It is only that we, with our senses, cannot grasp any of it – we cannot even perceive any of it.

I have said that this one being is both static and dynamic. It is static because it is the pure existence of consciousness, of spirit. And spirit is really static; it does not change. And it is dynamic because it is the pure power of consciousness; that means that it is matter itself. One can say that spirit is masculine. The spirit does not change, and it is here – I mean There ... somewhere that we do not understand. And this unity is also dynamic, it has a dynamic aspect that is the pure power of consciousness, matter itself – that is feminine – and that is always changing and changing and changing. That is why, in the Hindu religion, the power, the Shakti of every god is always feminine. That is why all machines, all ships and trains and cars are really feminine. And this is reflected in many languages.

Power – pure power itself – is feminine. Here in our lives, we say that if something is feminine, it is rather weak, a little delicate. And that is true, and also not true. Material is weaker than spirit. And also material is stronger than spirit – consider atomic power. But spirit can also destroy, and in the end, spirit will destroy everything. According to the Hindu scriptures, when God breathes in, the world will disappear. But atomic power is the same ... perhaps ... I do not know. The mind cannot reach that. Perhaps the power of consciousness is more than the power of the spirit, because it is pure power per se, without limitation.

Now, our normal mind discriminates between knowledge and will or intention. You see, this is a new thought. In all-encompassing consciousness, knowledge and intention are the same. And how can one understand that? Even space and time are only separate on the level of the mind. We know space and we know time – that always goes on. When one is somewhere in space, you are there; but time changes every second, every instant. But on the higher level, time and space are one and the same. Electricity and magnetism, every natural power and every spiritual power, every energy and power that exists is nothing other than the one power, the might of the one knowledge that exists concurrently in all beings. And there, spirit and matter are the same; they are one. Look! Everything I am saying to you today is contradictory. And I say it to you in the hope that perhaps a few of you have had or will have, even just for the briefest instant, such an experience.

So the eternal movement of matter – called Prakriti, in Sanscrit – and the eternal stillness: spirit – called Purusha, the absolute spirit – are one and the same; and also two things. It is both! And that can be experienced by every one of you in deep meditation. I can say that because ... – you know, I am afraid to say certain things, because I am afraid that I will betray you by deceiving you. Because perhaps you will experience this in a different way from the way I have, and then what I am saying will have been misleading. But I think that you will not be misled if I warn you in this way now. Perhaps it

sounds a bit dogmatic, but that is only because I really know it and cannot express it very well. So I try to convey something to you the way a blind person might lead another blind person.

The entirety – spirit and matter – rests on a kind of etheric plane from which it plays everything out. That is Ananda, the plane of Bliss. Everything: spirit and matter, exists on a level of absolute bliss. It is such a bliss that if you would feel it in your heart, your heart would explode immediately. And everything lives and breathes in this bliss. And if that were not so, if this bliss did not exist, then no one could breathe or live and no existence would be possible. Now, that is completely abstract, but I cannot express it any better. I understand that it is rather metaphysical.

So. Does anyone have a question?

(Question: I am not sure if I can say it this way, but yesterday I had the impression that it would be a level of energy, and I thought of a magnet and iron filings, and the iron filings order themselves around the end of the magnet, but some of them stay unaffected and float around freely, and if you pull the magnet away, then all of the filings float around, as if it would be a kind of energy that builds up, as if it would be a kind of energy that builds up and then again disperses.)

Yes, that is a good example. I think you are correct. You see, it is very interesting that when we try to understand this with our minds, each one of us will express it differently to ourselves. And I think that this is a very good example.

I am terribly sorry but I think that it will be very boring for the English-speaking people today. These are concepts that I really cannot translate. It is true that my original ideas were in English, but I do not have the English text with me, and now it is really beyond me to translate it back into English again. So please be patient with me. Next year we will have another Sufi camp in Germany. And I think it would be better if those friends who are very dissatisfied with me because I speak so little English with them, not come to my lectures there. If you want to come to the camp, come, and enjoy the sun and the lake and everything, but do not come to my lectures. It is difficult for me to translate, really to retranslate everything; and also, it takes too much time. Some people have complained that I take too much time when I translate things into English. So be patient with me.

Now. You can live your daily life in constant contact with the Divine life. One can do it. And the mantra is a great help in this. So please! This is something concrete that you can do. You can remain in contact with the Divine life every day – every minute – every second – if you repeat your mantra every minute, every second: with every breath. But that is hard work, and very few people really do that the entire day. One needs an enormous amount of determination. As an alternative, you could allow yourself to be carried by beauty, for example, and that is somewhat easier. Beauty also brings us into contact with the Divine. Nature, in its loveliness and rhythm, helps us in any case to perceive Divine reality; it helps to make it easier. That is why people try to get out into nature.

We live in large cities, and especially in England, which is a small island, the population grows and grows and the forests and meadows – all of nature gets farther and farther from the cities. They use up the land to build so many new houses. So for us, in London, it is rather difficult to get out into nature. Here in Switzerland it is quite simple. You walk for half an hour and you are already in the mountains, or in the forest or on the high meadows. That is why people love Switzerland; and why they love to be in the sun and by the sea, in Italy for example. I think that the situation in England will become more and more difficult. Sometimes we are like rats, just like trapped rats. Every year there are more and more people, and there is less and less of nature.

Happily, London has many parks. They are protected and no one can build anything on them, and I think that is what saves us. Sometimes even I go into the parks for a walk when I have had enough of asphalt and bad air. Parks are never very far from you in London. There are three parks near where I live; and Hampstead Heath, which is a large and hilly park, is also not so far away. I would have to walk fifteen or twenty minutes to reach it. These parks are the only thing that saves those of us who live in London: there are trees and squirrels and birds. Without these parks, one could not endure living in

such a city. Asphalt and asphalt and houses and houses and houses. It is somehow all so gray and depressing. When I go to Italy or to India I can wear colorful clothing and feel good about it. In England, people only wear beige or brown, and if you try to wear a clear, bright color, you feel, somehow uncomfortable. Yes! The whole of nature there is gray: the air is gray, there is gray fog, and if you try to wear something even a little pleasant – well, at my age, I think, “No, I cannot do that.” But in India one can wear red and orange and yellow, and mix them in unbelievable combinations, and it is simply quite normal. Everyone does that there. And they all look as if they were born out of light.

So beauty helps us to reach God. Ah, and you see, the beauty that humans create – paintings and music – that also helps. Especially music. Music is a direct link to the Divine, to the soul. Music. It is very important. And I even say that every kind of music can help. Look at that! I personally do not like modern music, like they play in discos, but I do not say that it is not music for other people. For example, I think that the synthesizer will create the music of the future. I recently heard a concert on the radio in England. Unfortunately, I did not write down the name of the young Frenchman who played it. He played music on the synthesizer that almost put me into Samadhi! There were sounds that I had not believed to be possible; I did not believe they could exist. I do not recommend or advertise people, but Llewellyn said to me – he is the gentleman who led the journey through the unconscious for us; he is a friend – that he was with ‘D.’ who has a musical group. And that this man played something on a synthesizer for him. Llewellyn said that he had never heard anything like it, that it was quite extraordinary. His reaction to that music was similar to my reaction to this Frenchman.

This music is really something quite new, with quite new sounds; one can somehow create new sounds electronically. There was a sound in this man’s music that I had never heard before in my life. It was a wind and it was not a wind; it sounded like the sea, and at the same time unlike the sea. I had never heard anything like it. He took a sound from nature, and created a sound still more beautiful, as if he would improve on nature. You see, that is a very strange thing to say: to improve on nature. What could be more beautiful than nature? But I really felt like I was in heaven. So you see, beauty can somehow give us a tiny glimpse of that which we cannot grasp with our minds.

Now. Nature powers are conscious powers. Nature is conscious. The earth is conscious. When you cut a flower or destroy a forest, or dig minerals out of the earth, the earth feels it. There are moments in meditation when you know that nature powers are conscious; and I am not saying anything stupid, or something out of my fantasy. In the rhythm of these conscious powers, everything is alive. These powers affect us according to our own nature.

The house where I live, for example, has a garden. It is perhaps forty-five feet by thirty-five feet in size, which is already quite respectable for our part of London. We are not quite in the middle, but quite near to it. And you know, when I walk out of my door into my garden, everything, and I mean everything in the garden knows that I am there. The flowers and the birds and the grass, they all know it. I feel certain that everyone knows that I am there. I do not see everything; there are many things I do not see. There are birds hidden in the bushes and cats and squirrels. We have a hedgehog, and all sorts of things in our garden. But they all know that I am there. And it is such a lovely feeling to go outside and experience that. And one experiences it especially after meditating.

I go out into the garden and I have this clear, strong, physical feeling that everyone knows I am there. They have already noticed me. Some have noticed me as a friend, and some as an enemy. Some flowers are angry because they have not been watered, and some flowers greet me. Some birds wait for a worm; perhaps a robin waits that perhaps I dig one up accidentally while I am working in the garden. But really, believe me, it is such a feeling of love. It is also interesting that if I go into the forest, I do not notice anything. You would expect that it would be quite the same for me, because they too all know that I am there. But I personally do not notice it the way I do in our garden. And why? I think that the explanation is that I already know my garden. Somehow I am tuned into this one environment, just as one tunes an instrument to an orchestra, and that is why I sense what is going on there. I think that is the reason why I can feel that in my garden, and why a forest is rather neutral for me. For other people it might be quite the opposite. They would be aware of the feelings of the plants and animals in a forest, but not in an English garden.

So nature powers are conscious forces, and they have their own rhythm, just as everything in life has its rhythm. Now. These powers affect us according to our own nature. As I have just said, I feel something in my garden, and others will feel nothing there. And these powers have an effect on us according to our own nature. Usually they affect us unconsciously. We humans are only conscious beings on the surface of our existence. Cosmic forces work on us, as a rule, through our chakras; and in this sense, they have a great influence on our personal nature, on our personality. These forces work on us through the chakras, and they work on our nature and change us. We are constantly bombarded by cosmic powers. They influence us constantly.

We change each and every second. Some of us change a great deal, and some very little. And we are especially influenced when we are asleep; then we are very open to these cosmic powers. So these powers have the greatest affect on our personality while we are sleeping. But whether this power functions in us in a conscious or unconscious way depends on our respective stage of development.

You see, very often you go somewhere or other, and you have a particular feeling. It may be a feeling of anxiety, or a feeling that the place you are in is somehow strange or foreboding, or perhaps that it is very wonderful. We have all experienced this. I cannot say that I have experienced it and you have not. We have all had this feeling. Sometimes we go somewhere and say, "My God! There was a murder here," or "Something terrible has happened here." And in some places there is suddenly a joy in one's heart, and you think, "Oh! I will sit down beneath this fir tree, or in this meadow." And there is a lovely view, and you sit and meditate; and your meditation flies as if on the wings of the Divine. And you do not know how long you have meditated. Yes, we have all experienced that; there is nothing new in this. That means that something has had an effect on us. It might have been something in the environment ... or perhaps some cosmic force happened to be at that place just then, or a cosmic force came to you personally at that moment. Such situations can help these powers to become conscious in us.

Now. Death is a universal power. That is the only thing that awaits all of us with absolute certainty. The change that we call death – it is only a change – is a natural result of the effects of this power of change on matter. That is rather difficult for me to explain because it is something that I have personally experienced, and to bring this experience into words is not easy. We Sufis die before our physical death. This pre-death death is a state of the soul, or the mind, or consciousness, in which one sees the 'Law of the End' that we call death. I think I spoke of this the last time I was here in Bern when I spoke about Mechthild von Magdeburg. She said, "Do not be afraid of death," – this is God who is speaking – "it is quite simple. I breathe in, and, like a needle is drawn to a magnet, your soul flies to me." That is absolutely, completely true. And Mechthild von Magdeburg had that as a personal experience; that is certain, otherwise she could not have said such a thing. And that is Death. It is a change. I always give the same example. First, I sit here and look at this flower, and then I look out of the window. And that is all.

Now, the moment of death, the agony of death, can be very difficult; but someone who has surrendered dies gently – as I saw the last time I saw someone die – Marie-Louise had surrendered to God, and our teacher helped her, and her heart simply stopped. That was all. There was no agony, and no suffering; and she probably – not probably – she certainly woke up on another plane. It is as if one falls asleep for a few seconds, and then awakens again, but on another plane of existence. Of course when death comes to us in this way, it is a great gift from God; it comes by the grace of God. And death comes to us in this way if we live in the presence of God the whole time. And I mean now, today, from this minute on.

That is why a mantra is so useful, because a mantra reminds us of the presence of God. Psychologists say that you become what you think. And if we think about God the whole time, and live in His presence, then we will become That. Then we cannot become other than that. If we would live in this way, then the very cells of our body would change. Every cell of our bodies would carry the light of God – we carry it in any case, only we do not know it – but if we repeat the mantra, then we will come to know it. Then it becomes conscious, and that is beautiful. A great master – I do not remember who it

was – said, “Humanity can be divided into two parts, those who know and those who do not.” So I hope that we belong to those who will know, to those who will be conscious before they die. Then there will not, of course, be any death, only a change of consciousness.

I hope that all of this was not too esoteric for you to understand. Now. Do you have any questions?

(Question: Mrs. Tweedie, you say that one should repeat the mantra as often as possible. Is it not true that if you repeat it automatically that it becomes rather mechanical? Shouldn't it be done consciously and with concentration and love? Is it possible to repeat it the whole time without it becoming mechanical?)

You see, in the Upanishads it is written, “First you do the mantra and then the mantra will do you.” That means that it does become mechanical. It becomes part of your blood and part of the cells of your body. When you wake up in the morning, your heart is already saying the name of God. And what does that mean? It means that your entire body becomes That. And this is not connected with your mind, because this love was already there, and this love is also connected with the mantra, with the name of God. You see, we think that we have to radiate love consciously. But love can be completely unconscious in us. And love is connected with the name of God. Of course, one says that prayers must be spoken consciously and with love, but I have seen that, over time, the mantra becomes a part of your blood, of your body, of your breath, of your circulation. It is simply there. So I think that it makes no difference if it is done quite mechanically. It should be done as often as possible, and with the breath. When you are walking, you can coordinate the rhythm of your steps with your breath. That is quite easy to do, and I always do it. And what happens then?

You repeat this mantra, but you find that if you concentrate on something in this world, then the mantra stops for a second. Then as soon as you stop concentrating on this thought, you begin again, automatically, to repeat the mantra. But there comes a time when you will do the mantra the entire time. I can guarantee that it will happen to you. One can speak to people, or even give a lecture, and this rhythm goes on the whole time: in your blood and in your heart. It is like a double consciousness. One can speak or read, or listen to music. You can do whatever you like, and it is always there; like a background, like a foundation for your whole life. Then the mantra becomes the foundation of your life.

(Question: Is it important that one repeats the mantra, or is it enough to feel the love?)

One should repeat the mantra because in that way you are training your mind to think about That. You see, here is the great secret of reincarnation. You train your mind to always think about God. Of course, to repeat His name means to think of Him the whole time. Now, what you think of at the moment of death is decisive in determining if you return to this world or not. That is written in the Hindu Scriptures, and the Sufis also say that. When I think of something worldly at the moment of death, then I return again to this world. When, at the moment of death, I repeat the name of God – even automatically – then I do not have to come back. Gandhi, for example, always repeated the word “Ram,” another name of God. And he called out that name at the moment of his death, and he went to God. He will not return to this world. He went to God, to eternal bliss. The Christians also believe that. So the thought that you have at the moment of your death will determine if you will return to this world again, or not. And that is why the mantra is so important. I think that Inayat Khan said that in a very amusing way, he said that if I think of the jewels of my grandmother at the instant of my death, then I will return to this world to get them.

I know people who have money, enough money to live in luxury, but they live as simply as monks. And I have heard people say, “Oh, he lives so simply. He does not have a television, and does not have this or that.” And then I say, “This person already understands that the more simply one lives the better.” And why does this person understand that? Because he has already experienced luxury, and he experienced that these things are not at all necessary to be happy in this world. He has understood that other things are more important. So one should not criticize that this or that person lives so simply;

that they do not have a television, or whatever. These people could live in a castle or in a hut and it would not be important to them.

Swami Vivekananda described this indifference to luxury in a very lovely way in his autobiography. He said that the time came for him when it was a matter of complete indifference if he lived in a cave in the forest, or in the palace of a Raja – Raja is the Indian name for a king – it is quite the same for him if he stays in a five star hotel or in a tent or in a hut. It is really just the same. You only need what is necessary for you. But here of course, we see the difference between people. What, for example, is the most important thing for you personally? Is the most important thing a radio or a television? If it is, then you really need these things to live. But if you only need a cup of tea and a little bread and some straw to sleep on, and if you meditate and do not need more than your meditations, then that is enough. And really, my friends, that is enough, just the bare essentials.

It is a good practice in life to test yourself to see how much you can give up. I give up that, and that, and that; or perhaps I go on holiday and live just at the edge of survival. They have done some interesting experiments in London with young criminals. They take them to an island where they can just survive, almost not at all. And these young criminals who have robbed and mugged to have this or that, or to have a lot of money so that they can afford luxuries, suddenly begin – without believing in God or being religious – they begin to understand that, really, to be happy, none of the things that they had fought for were important at all. They find that, not only can they live without these things, but they can be happy that way. Here is the greatest difference between our exaggerated western civilization and the simple lives of the native American, or of primitive people. They were certainly happier than we are.

I have several friends who went to the United States and traveled through the middle of the country, and the weather was bad and the people were nasty. They told me that there is a great deal of poverty there – white poverty, poor white people who are very unhappy, and very angry, and very unfriendly. And then they traveled to Mexico – these are people from our group – and wrote me a long letter. In Mexico the people are terribly poor; people on the land there are extremely poor and have almost nothing to eat. But they are somehow happy. The children are happy and laugh and run around. And here we throw so much away.

I was in the United States about a month ago, and I have never seen such waste, so much food quite unnecessarily thrown away. It hurt my heart. And if you go into a restaurant in England, again you see how much good food is thrown away, and that with so many hungry children in the world. I have seen so many hungry children in India. In Sufi households, nothing is thrown away. Absolutely nothing. And if you really cannot eat something because it has gone bad – and that does happen sometimes – then you should have a good a compost heap, so that at least something gets to eat it. In our garden we have a compost heap, and we are very proud of it. Everything goes on the compost heap: all the peels and all the old flowers. And there is a collection of birds and squirrels and cats – we have no cats, I like cats but we do not have any, but they come to our garden – the whole world is there, and the hedgehogs sleep there too. The children recently saw a mother hedgehog and four small baby hedgehogs. They live in the compost heap, and have their nest there. They have the grass and the food, and since the compost rots, they even get some warmth from it. (*Mrs. Tweedie is very animated, as if in the consciousness of a hedgehog! ...*) So if they can find a dry place: it is a wonderful place to sleep... I mean for a hedgehog, not for us!

How much more time do we have (Half an hour.) Something has happened to my watch. It says that it is eight o'clock at night. (*Everyone laughs...*) I think that I pushed something that I shouldn't have pushed. I am a bit afraid of these electronic watches. One pushes somewhere, and suddenly, something happens. It is the same with my electric typewriter. I thought I should get an electric one because it would be faster. Well ... (*More laughter...*) I only look at it, and things happen. Things appear that I didn't write at all. But you see, I thought, "I will not be defeated by that!" And I sat down and mastered it, and since then it doesn't do these strange things. But I must always be alert, or else suddenly a whole row of words appear, or a whole row of letters, and I had nothing to do with it. I think that I am too old to learn such things.

People ask me, "Why don't you get a word processor?" (*Now, everyone is really laughing ...*) That is a kind of computer, and they are quite inexpensive in England. For a few hundred pounds sterling, you can have a good personal word processor. And I said, "No thank you." A word processor will write all sorts of things that I haven't written. Better not. It is something that one would have to learn, and I cannot do that. And I have been told that it is not so simple to learn. For young people and for children it is very easy, but for us older people, it is terribly complicated. One has to learn so many details. Yes, you have one? (...) Yes, it is not easy. But some people say it is wonderful. They can correct things so easily.

In the United States when my book was edited – I do not know how that works here – they print 600 pages at once using a computer. So if I find a mistake, they have to print so much to correct it. And of course, there are always some mistakes – there are words that are misspelled, or the words themselves are wrong; for example, you are in a Sufi path, not a Sufi bath. There were similar mistakes in the German edition, and they all had to be corrected. The Americans also made a few mistakes, and I wrote them asking that they fix them. They wrote back saying that it would be too expensive to correct all of the mistakes I had found. They could change a few things, but that they had to print six hundred pages at once, and that it would be too expensive, so I only asked them to change the very important mistakes. Well, a few mistakes are not important.

Now. I have already said to you that when you begin to meditate and do spiritual practices, you may sometimes perceive colors, hear voices or see scenes – entire scenes – that appear before your inner senses. None of these experiences belong to the physical plane, but rather to another plane of our consciousness. And that does not mean that we have gone insane, or that something has gone wrong. The value of such experiences in terms of your ability to perceive reality depends on what level of perception you had reached before you had this experience.

You see, there are many planes, and that can be confusing. And that is why the Sufi says that one needs a teacher. We all, and I mean all, arrive at the state where we begin to perceive things, and it is difficult to know what we are actually perceiving, and on what plane we are perceiving these things. If you are alone, if there is no one who can explain it to you, that can be very confusing and very difficult. We need someone who can say, "Yes, that is this plane or that plane, so do not be afraid. That is only a passing experience, and after that you will experience this." One really does need that kind of support. (*An infant cries out or sneezes, but very sweetly*) Oh! A small guest has arrived. A little angel, and a beautiful one too. OK. Everything is in order.

These experiences, these visions that we have on many different planes are not yet the absolute truth. Please, there is always 'I' and the vision. There are always two. And Absolute reality is always one. But one must cross these states. You see, I have spoken about these stages, and someone asked me why I spend time on them. On Monday, right at the beginning of all of this, a gentleman said, "I have also experienced these things and I did not consider them to be important, and now I have passed that stage. I am not interested in them." Yes. It is not important, but it is important in that we must pass through this stage and leave them behind to be able to go still deeper. All of this is still an expression of duality; and on the level of Absolute Reality, there is no duality. But we must first experience this state of duality, even on other planes; not only here on the level of our minds. Here, there is not only duality, there is plurality.

Now, we can also feel fear, anger and depression during these experiences. Please. Depression is a completely normal state for a normal human being. Everyone can become depressed, and that does not mean that one is depressive. Of course, one can be considered to be depressive if the depression is very strong, or if it lasts very long, but every one of us has experienced depression. These emotions will be called up by the resistance of our lower nature. The resistances show themselves as our disappointments and our faults; as the ego that is dissatisfied with this and that and that; as the ego that criticizes and criticizes. What is criticism? When do you criticize, and why do you do it? You criticize because something hurts you, something disturbs you; it rubs you the wrong way. Otherwise you would not criticize. It is in the nature of people to love the comfortable and to run away

from the uncomfortable. That is psychologically correct. So you criticize that which does not please you, something that gets on your nerves, something that gives you, in some way or another, pain.

A Yogi never criticizes. And why? Because he says, “Thy will be done. You have sent me this, and so everything is OK, and the world is beautiful.” Here lies the secret of Yogic bliss and Yogic contentment. I have already said all of this several times here. This is not the first time that I have said it. Perhaps I am saying it a little differently today. But really, I always repeat the same things. None of us can say anything new. We repeat the same things my friends, just with different words, and one cannot repeat these things often enough. As I have said, all of this comes from personal experience. And it is very difficult to find a way to express these things. I fought and strained; and ‘I.’ translated what I wrote into German – and she did that very well. It was quite a work of art to translate all of this.

So I have said that everyone has this resistance within them. These resistances are in us, and most are produced by the little self: by the ego. The ego creates them; it invents them. These resistances are the results of the pressure that the higher spiritual forces place on our lower nature. This is very interesting and very mysterious. As I said, the ego produces these resistances. But the ego produces them because it is under pressure from the higher powers. Somewhere in our own unconscious, we know about this other reality, and the ego is opposed to the development of that consciousness in us. Our mind does not welcome new things. I will give you an example.

When a scientist discovers something new, or invents something completely new, all of the other scientists will be against him. “It is something new, and I do not believe in it, it cannot be that way. I know the truth and what you are saying is nonsense.” And then they begin to investigate and to consider this new thing, until they say, “Aha, there is something to this after all.” And then they find that this new discovery is quite true. But in the beginning the mind will always say, “No. That is impossible. I know it to be the old way. I have experienced it that way, so I can be sure. My mother and grandmother did it that way, so it is good enough for me. I do not want to know any more.” It is terrible that we do that, and it is an obstacle, but unfortunately we all do it. And the most dangerous part is that we do it unconsciously. We simply reject what is new to us.

Now, spiritual life does not have any horizon, does not have any boundaries. If we could somehow impress on our minds that there are no boundaries, no horizon, then we could begin to be able to open our minds to new impressions. And one can learn to do that. I learned it, and I see that others also learn it and learn it well. But of course, that takes time; you cannot do it in twenty-four hours.

So our resistances are a result of the pressures that something within us puts on the ego. Of course, I mean that the soul and the inner mind create this pressure. And this pressure creates a stress for the ego: it gets nervous. Our lower nature will try to block any change; and spiritual life means to change completely. One turns over a new leaf, so to speak, and goes in a new direction. And this inner process is incredibly interesting to watch. When you have become accustomed to controlling your thoughts and your mind – when your mind and your spirit obey your will – it is very interesting; it is an adventure. And you can watch how the resistance to change slowly disappears. But, as I have said, that takes time. One must develop the ability to distance oneself from these feelings of resistance. I am here, and the mind is there and I am in charge. A strange kind of duality has to develop. The real ‘I’ sees the small ‘I’, the false ‘I’. One must go on and on with one’s meditation, as difficult as it might be; and we all know just how difficult that can sometimes be.

We must still persevere, as much as we might suffer from loneliness or from grudges – like the grudge a man can have against all women or that a woman can have against all men. That is the small self. ... Hmmm ...

You see, why should we carry a grudge? Who can offend us? Who can hurt us? What, in us, is offended; what is injured? It is the ego. Why shouldn’t we use the large egos of others to erase our own egos? It is very difficult to do, but very useful. Some people take everything personally; whatever people say, they take it personally, even when the comment was not meant personally at all. I know people who take everything personally, and of course, they are always offended. In English, one says,

“You have a chip on your shoulder.” Something sits on your shoulder and irritates you. Everything is unpleasant for such a person. And it is because they have an inner grudge that they take everything personally. And this inner grudge ... you see, such a thing may have been passed on from the parents. You might have picked it up when you were quite small. Or it may be a part of your character.

Such a grudge will go away through meditation, but that takes years. If you want it to go more quickly, then go into analysis. Then it can be resolved in two or three years. I have seen such things. So when I see that someone comes to me and says, “I want to meditate and do this or that,” and I see that they have so many obstacles within them, I say, “Look. If you come to me, to us, and meditate, then all of your problems will clear themselves; but it will take many years. It will take many years, and during that time you will suffer. Find a good analyst and go through analysis and it will be much faster.” And that is the truth. That is especially true of the grudges that we carry. They are very dangerous because they come from the unconscious. And then you cannot do anything about them because they are unconscious.

Some of the things that are in the unconscious can never become completely conscious. They can only appear on the boundary of consciousness – on the boundary to the unconscious – just enough that we can grasp and understand them ... and do something about them. And what can we do about such things? We can understand them. And accept them. And use them. It is not enough to say that I know why I get angry about something. I, personally, am able to turn my anger. I am able to be angry, so to speak, without getting angry. Because sometimes I must get angry, and I must show that I am angry. If my child does something wrong, I must say something. Then the next time, I say something again, and again and again, but finally I lose patience. And then it is completely OK to be angry. It even says that in the bible. But you must know why you are angry, and how far you should go with your anger. Children that have been beaten, beat their own children in turn. And they beat their partners. That is a fact, and every psychologist would agree with that. In former times in England they used to beat the children a great deal in the schools, but now it is completely forbidden. Even parents should never really beat their children.

We are born in God; we are created in His image. So naturally, every child, even when they are very small, has an inner pride, a Divine pride, within him. It is terrible to pull down a child's trousers to beat him. Ahhh. So many people were completely destroyed in that way. A child has the Divine within him, children are holy. It is a sad place where there are no children. I am so happy that this hotel rings with the sound of children's voices. There are really a lot of children here. Sometimes they are a little noisy, but it is not the whole day. And when they are finally put to bed, of course, everything is quiet.

Oh. Last night, I came out of meditation at four in the morning and I heard a child, perhaps five or six years old, crying. It was such a lonely crying, and so sad. I listened to it for some time. Of course, someone comforted the child. It did not cry for very long, but I listened to it and thought, “My God, a soul in a small body, and it cries so terribly.” it was an unusually lonely cry. I would guess that it had a bad dream. But it moved me very deeply. So we are already born with this sense of the Divine, and somehow, a child already knows it.

Somehow we know that only the best is good enough for us. The proof is that if I have a car, I want a better car; and if I have a washing machine, then I want a better washing machine; a more beautiful house, a better husband or a more beautiful wife. (*Everyone chuckles. Well, it would be nice ...*) Nothing less than the best. Only the very best is good enough for us. But the small ‘I’ confuses the outer things with the inner values. Happiness does not depend on a car or a wife, or a husband or a house. These things will always disappoint you. It is your inner values that have to change, so that the house and the outer beauty of the wife and the car have no particular value to you, that they are simply not very important to you. Something within you has to change. We cannot change the world before we change ourselves. These youths who throw bombs in hopes of changing the world will achieve nothing. But if we would all change ourselves, then the world would be a lovelier place to live.

So, however difficult it may be to meditate, we have to persevere with concentrated efforts. Over time, everything will become clearer, and here I say, and this is a promise, “If you persevere, everything

will become clearer, and everything will become peaceful.” I can promise you, as someone who has gone through this, that it will clear – for all of you. Everything will be peaceful, and all of your questions will be answered.

Certain visions that we can see in meditation – the sun, the moon, the sky – are connected with the opening of our inner visionary power. We may see great things, stars, for example. And these visions are connected with the opening of our inner sight. Please. It is still duality, but it is already a ray of light. The subtle visionary ability is a part of the inner consciousness that works on another level – I am saying the same thing in another way – and because these visions are a sign of these developments, they should not simply be pushed to the side. They have a meaning for the development of the inner being, the inner ‘I’. Only, you should not give these things too much importance. One should simply think, “Aha, that is a sign that I am now able to grasp something.”

All of these things still belong to the level of illusion, the level of delusion. They are not yet the truth; but, as I said, they are already a ray of light, a ray of truth. There are some visions that are a symbolic expression for our spiritual growth and for important spiritual experiences. For example, as I said before: golden light that comes from above is a sign of great bliss, of moments of absolute Oneness and a feeling of great power; you feel that the world is yours. But these feelings, these experiences, are so new to you that you cannot experience them in your normal waking state; so you get this symbol, as a sign, as a promise. And that is lovely. These are signs of a brief dip into Divine consciousness, and that is such a wonderful consolation. You have fought, and there was a wall in front of you. You could not meditate, and as I have often said, God was dead for you, and to whom should you pray? ... And then you have such an experience. And you say, “Aha! I must go on!” And then, you do go on: one step, ten steps, fifty steps, a hundred steps. You find the strength to continue.

But the most important experience is the feeling of peace, of stillness – the stillness of the mind. And this state of peace can become rooted in our daily lives. How often have I said to the group, “Aren’t we happy people? We have peace. If we have nothing else, we have peace in this peaceless world.” We are always at peace. What could happen to us? We might suffer. Yes. And we can die. According to the mind, that is the worst, but it is not the worst. It can even be the best, because this body gets older with time, and after a time it becomes a nuisance, and that is very humiliating. The knees hurt and one cannot get out of the bathtub. It is, altogether, not very lovely. I always tell young people to please, not get old, but of course they do not listen. (*There is a laughter break here.*) So the most important feeling, the most important experience is peace – and that is not duality. Until now I have always spoken about duality, but this is already unity. And this great peace can become anchored in one’s daily life.

You see how I gradually try to lead you to what I really want to talk about: to unity. I had to make a huge detour to make myself understood. And here we are. Peace is already not illusion, it is a part of the truth. To be balanced and serene is not only the basis of meditation, it also becomes the basis for one’s entire life, so that all of the people you meet in your daily life – your husband or wife and children – however noisy or disturbing, will no longer affect your inner peace.

Children especially can really drive you crazy. Ach, sometimes they really tire you out. But then there comes a time when they no longer tire you out. Yes, there is noise and it is not quite pleasant because you want to do some work, but they no longer get on your nerves like they once did. Then you can no longer mistreat the child. I read in the newspaper, and heard on the radio how a woman had mistreated her child. She said that the child had been such a problem that she could no longer stand it. But after you have found this inner peace, such things can no longer happen to you.

Why couldn’t this woman tolerate her child anymore? Because she herself was not balanced. That is not the child’s fault; it is the mother’s. But when you reach this state, where you are completely awake and completely grown up, then this is no longer a problem. This process of growing up is a long one. I know people who are sixty or seventy years old who are not yet grown up. This awakened and mature consciousness encompasses all of the everyday activities of life, and that is already a state of unity on this everyday level of consciousness. You see how magnificent, how wonderful that is. You will

have found unity on this level of plurality, with its millions of things. You are grown up and have found eternal peace. And then you are the master of your life. And that is where Divine consciousness enters the human being.

God is the stillness, and we can only experience God – or That – in stillness. We can only experience ourselves, in God, in stillness.

(And the Suficamp ends ...)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Zurich 1990: Day 1

The Inner and Outer Path of the Soul

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Zurich, Switzerland
in April 1990

Let us begin right away, because I have a great deal to say. And what I have to say is something that is very mysterious. I want to speak to you about the soul.

We speak of the soul, and everyone knows – because the religions tell us so – that we all have a soul. But who has ever actually seen a soul? Has anyone ever been able to touch a soul? Do we have any proof that we actually have a soul at all? It is all well and good to say, “We are told that we have a soul,” but ... we are human, and we want to really know about these things. The soul comes into this world in search of knowledge; and the soul is greedy for this knowledge. And that is something that we do not know. We simply accept that we have a soul because we have been told that we have one. Of course, we cannot know that with our senses; but I say, yes, it is true that one cannot touch the soul with one’s fingers, but somewhere we all touch our souls whenever we see something beautiful: a wonderful picture in a museum; when we hear the song of birds; when we see a sunset, the first light of a day, or a sunrise. And especially music. Music has direct access to the soul.

So somehow we are able to touch our souls. It is simply that we do not know that it is the soul. For example, when I say, “I want ...” How much of that wanting comes from me as a persona, and how much comes, as a kind of message from ... somewhere else, to me: to my body, my mind and my feelings. You see, the soul sends us ‘telegrams’ the whole time. The fact that you are sitting here now – should you be thanking your soul for that? Perhaps; but the soul said something that somehow awakened you, and so you came. You might have only come out of curiosity; as I have said: the soul is greedy for knowledge. And now, to confuse you completely, I will read some wonderful quotations. And then we will look more closely at exactly what this soul is; and how the soul functions in this life and in our inner life: in our psychology.

So, the first quotation comes from Meister Eckhart, “God must be born in the soul. God is the Nothingness, the Void.” “The soul is something immeasurable. It is a replicate of the entire cosmos. Everything that exists in the cosmos is also to be found in the soul, as in a mirror. The soul mirrors the cosmos, and everything that exists in the soul, also exists in the cosmos.”

Bhai Sahib, our teacher said, “The soul of humans is as large as the universe.” One day I told him, “There is this infinite love. How can a small human heart bear so much love?” He only smiled and said, “Small human heart? The heart is as large as the entire universe.” And the heart belongs to the soul; one can experience the soul through the heart. But we will speak about that later.

“Look, and you will find everything within your own self. Reach into the infinite, which reveals itself as both the way and the truth, until you realize the union with the Divine Mystery in its totality.” Of course, this is again Meister Eckhart. And the Sufis say, “The human is a ray, that comes from the

heavens and which clothes itself in the material of the earth.” Or, better said, “The human is a ray that flows from the inner world, and which dresses itself in the properties and qualities of the physical world, of the material world.” “The human body is only a vehicle of the soul, which comes from the heaven and takes on this body as a residence, and that for only a brief time. And through that, the individual appears in two distinct forms: the soul and the body. And the meeting of soul and body gives birth to the mind.” – you see, the mind is the meeting of the soul and the body. That is already a mystery in itself – and these three together form the individual. “Our Divine inheritance is a spiritual current that arises from the eternal spirit that is the source of all existence.” “The soul possesses power, might, and creative power,” – there are many powers: there is a great power, and many smaller powers – “and that is your Divine inheritance.” Look what we are! We are gods! All of us. “The soul is like a lodge, it shelters everything.” But this is all rather – what can one say? – over-powering.

Now, Sri Krishna Prem said, “The path begins at the goal, and leads back to it – quickly or slowly – both are within the soul: for the goal and the path are one.” And then from the Great Mundaka Upanishad, “This is the truth: just as a blazing fire sends out thousands of similar sparks, so, Oh beloved, are living souls of different forms sent out by the imperishable Brahma, and they return humbly to Him.” Our life, according to the sages, takes its source from the soul at birth, and it ends in the soul with death; or said differently, “When we are born, we come out of the world of the spirit, and when we die, we return to it again.”

And here is another interesting quotation. This one is from Werner von Braun, and I like it a great deal because it is pure science. Werner von Braun was a rocket expert. Of course, he died a long time ago. He said, “I believe in the immortality of the soul. Natural scientists have proved that nothing can be completely annihilated. Therefore, neither life nor the soul can be annihilated, and so they are immortal.” That is very important: “Neither life nor the soul can be annihilated, and so they are immortal.” I find that to be very lovely. You see, nothing can be annihilated in nature; things only change their form. When we are born, we come from ... somewhere, and we usually cry. And when we die, we return to That. Let us hope that we are smiling when we die. The Sufis know what is there.

I received a letter – ‘I.’ is my witness – from a young woman from Los Angeles in America who lost her husband. He only died a few months ago, so she is still crying for him. It is terrible when you lose someone that you have been so much in love with; it takes years to be comforted. I know; my husband died, and I also loved him very dearly. And this woman wrote me that she saw her husband in a dream, and it was such a real dream: he was really there with her; and she immediately asked him, “How are you?” And he said, (*Mrs. Tweedie now speaks in a racing voice:*) “I am very well, only I have a great deal of work to do.” (*Everyone laughs, partly because of Mrs. Tweedie’s emphasis on how hard he had to work.*) “On this level,” he continued, “one has to work for humanity, one has to work for people when they need help.” And then he disappeared. And in her letter she wrote, “I have been happy for days since I had this dream.” And you know, what he said is true. We Sufis too work there. It is beautiful to be able to work for others.

To return to the soul, there is a Hermetic saying, “So immeasurable is the soul, that in whatever direction you choose to go, you will never find its boundaries.” So what is the soul? It is immeasurable, larger than the universe; it is the most intimate, the most beautiful part of us. It is the one thing that is really capable of love. The heart belongs to the soul. But where is the soul in the body? The sages say that the soul interpenetrates the body from the toes to the tips of the hair. When you touch your foot or leg, you touch your soul. When someone touches your leg, they touch your soul. When we embrace someone, we also embrace the soul of that person. Then there would be two souls quite together, just next to one another. So the soul interpenetrates the body; it is in the body. But! It is also said that it is as large as the entire universe. You see, for the soul there is no space. It can be everything or very small or nothing, and it can be in several places at the same time.

You see, I am trying to say something with words that you can only experience in the depths of meditation. At the deepest levels of meditation you do not only recognize the soul, you also recognize the Beyond, and the first thing that you will notice when you enter this state is that you will not find any God there. For me that was such a shock! I did not, of course, expect a God who sat on a cloud with

angels playing harps around Him, No. But I thought that I would see something infinitely wonderful, and there was nothing: only me, in the infinite, in immortality, in almightiness, alone. I was the smallest of the smallest part of the whole, and the greatest. Almighty. It is said somewhere, that the shining dewdrop of the soul will, one day, dissolve itself in the shining sea of Unity. But I say it will not. It is the shining sea, everything, that will flow into the shining dewdrop! And it already flows when you really experience the deep levels of real meditation. But I want to wait for tomorrow to speak about these states. That is not today's theme.

So now I seem to have gotten involved with some quite useless topics! I have said so many contradictory things, so many paradoxical things, that you must all be thinking, "What is she talking about? I do not understand anything at all." And it should be that way. You see, when you reach the state where you do not understand anything at all, what happens? The mind gets stuck; it becomes confused and startled. "She has said that this is not true and this is not true and this is not true. And? Where am I now? Nowhere!" Then you are open for something new, for some new information. And this 'new information' is as old as the stars, as old as the sun. There is nothing new under the sun. Socrates already said that, and he was much greater than all of us sitting here together.

But somehow, we do know that we have a soul. We have been told it, and sometimes we have felt that there is something in us – a kind of urge for beauty, an urge for the unusual, an urge to experience, an urge – perhaps only curiosity – but always an urge that always leads us on, that always wants to give us something new, as a gift. And in the history of humanity, we know that there were people, and that there still are people, who know from their own experiences that the soul is a living reality. But this idea of a gift is also important. What we are given is a gift. And when one gets a gift, it is always without effort. It is given to you. Yes, we can make efforts, but then we may still not receive this gift. The real gifts, the gifts from God, are free. "Here it is, take it." You can, of course, say 'no'. And many people do that.

Now, let us make some effort. I am asking you to make a great deal of effort to pay attention to what I am saying, and to how I am saying it. I am trying, in my not-so-good German to find the right words. We can prove that we have a soul. We want to have an idea, an image, of what this immortal, and as it seems, this immeasurable being in us is. It appears as if it is another being; that it is not 'me', that it is something different and something much much greater. And it is much greater. But it is also me; and that is also absolutely true of each one of you. And you can prove it to yourself if you want to. But in order to begin to understand this, we have to return to the source; that means to the beginning of time, and to the beginning of creation.

Now. Imagine that the perfect spirit, or 'God' if you wish, is a spiritual sun, a spiritual sun that sends out its rays. And that every one of these rays is a soul. The sun, of course, is a sun; and a ray is a ray: a ray of the sun. A ray cannot exist without the sun, and the sun cannot do other than to send out its rays. So the ray is the result of the being and nature of the sun. Does not our Christian religion say, "We are made in the image of God?" But in the deep state of Samadhi, (*Mrs. Tweedie raps out the next words with her fist on the podium,*) you will not find any God outside of yourself. And why? ... You will find God in your heart, absolutely and completely, in all of His radiance, in all of His Glory. It is true. God is you, ... and I, and the leaves on the tree, and the cats and the spiders and the light that we see with our eyes, and our enthusiasm and our death and our tears and the time that passes ... and kills. ... Everything is That. And there is nothing other. And this is where one finds security.

We are sometimes so insecure. We are so afraid. We need security. We need to know; we need some thing to hold on to; just a little. But spiritual life, mysticism, will take everything away from you. It will pull the carpet from under your feet, and still it will give you the greatest security. And then you will know; and then you will say, "That is the truth." And then you will never again be afraid of dying. I travel around Europe a great deal, and also in America, and I try to tell people, I somehow try to prove to them that they do not need to be afraid of death at all. Some few try to experience it themselves, in deep meditation, and that, of course, is a good thing. But most people are so afraid of death.

You see, the soul is the greatest friend of the small self, but also its greatest enemy. Because the small self is very afraid of this greatness, of this infinitude. It does not believe in it, because, "Today I have a headache, and tomorrow I have rheumatism; how can I be so great? How can I be as large as the universe?" We identify with our body as if it is 'us', but it is not even our body. It is something that the soul uses to be able to live in this world, and that is all.

So I have said that the ray is the result of the being and nature of the sun – this image of the ray is the best image that I have been able to find – and this ray is the image for the relationship between the soul and the eternal spirit. And this eternal spirit is His ray, a ray of God. And the person who has reached self-realization is a god. The person who has awakened this power within himself – this power which in Yoga is called Kundalini – can no longer be called 100% human. They are already at the level of the Divine. This power itself, Kundalini, is called the Goddess Kundalini.

So all of you, and I, are a current, a current of energy, similar to a current of electricity. You see, that is a bit (*She feigns a shiver ...*) strange and uncomfortable. We are only a current, only a ray; just like electricity: here today and gone tomorrow. And we behave as if we were eternal; as if we will live forever. We never think that we will soon die, especially when we are young. Of course not.

Now, I said that we are similar to electricity. And that that is the only reality! Every other part of the human being is illusion. The only fact is that we are a current of energy; that is the only truth. The illusion is that you have a body, that you think, that you love, that you are here or there, and that you do this or that. The truth is only the fact that you are a current. That is reality.

And now I want to stop for the moment. I feel that someone has a question. I ask you to speak quite loudly. I will repeat the question for the recording that is being made, so that later you can make sense out of the answers. So. Someone here has a question for me. That is what I felt. (*Silence.*) No? There is someone here who has a question. ... OK, then we will continue. You can ask the question later. It is a bit uncomfortable to stand up and ask a question in a loud voice, even when it is an important question.

So I have said that the only reality is this current within us. And Sufis say something even more mysterious. They say that within the human heart there is a mysterious substance – they call it a substance and not a current – and that it is this substance that is the pilgrim on the path; not you or I, but only this substance in your heart, the longing in your heart: that is the pilgrim.

You see, things keep getting more and more mysterious. And then there is this great quotation from a great Sufi, "Only that which you cannot lose in a shipwreck belongs to you." And of course, in a shipwreck we can lose everything, even our lives. So then, what really belongs to us? But we behave as if we will live forever. We contaminate the earth; we have no respect for anything; we doubt and we are rebellious. We need to be more humble, much more humble. Humility is a very great virtue.

So. I have been speaking about the soul for twenty minutes, and now I must ask, "Then what are we really, you and I?" Are we this small miserable something that can be extinguished for all eternity, like a candle? Or are we something immeasurable, without limitations, without boundaries; something that exists forever and ever and ever? And what a strange idea, that we, 'real' beings are only a single current, something incomprehensible and seemingly so transient? Only a ray of light. Yes. We are only a ray of light, but a ray of light is everything. "The ray flames up and takes form, and is withdrawn when it has traveled through the paths of its experiences;" that is, both the inner and outer paths of the soul. So it flames up and takes form – the body – and is withdrawn – when we die – when it has traveled through the paths of its experiences.

Now, in order that the ray, that this presence, is able to have all of these experiences on the most dense level of the created universe, which our earth is supposed to be, the soul comes into the world well prepared, and under the best conditions. That is the law. Or to express it differently: the ray is given the best opportunities possible to have those experiences that the ray – that the soul – needs: those experiences which are necessary for its inner development. And here is where free will enters.

We do not have very much free will on this earth. Free will comes in before we are born. It is then that the higher self – the soul – decides which experiences are necessary; and it is then that the parents are found, and the inheritance, and the other conditions that will be necessary in order to have these experiences. For example, and I always give his same example, I may choose to be a housewife or a laborer, or I can be a judge, or some kind of nobleman. But at the end of whichever life this soul chooses, the experiences will be the same. It works out so that the experiences are the same. Now, let us say that I have chosen to become a judge. I will be born into a certain family and have the opportunity to study, and so forth. Or perhaps I will choose to be only a housewife, and my life with my children and husband will be quite enough to make me happy. At the end of either of these lives, the experiences will have been the same: exactly what I, as soul, needed. Of course, this is only an example, but it is a good example.

So in order to fulfill one's task in life, in order to have the right experiences, the soul must follow a two-fold path: the inner path and the outer path. And each of these paths, of necessity, run parallel to one another. They compliment one another, hold the progress of the earthly life in balance, and correct each other accordingly as is needed. So. There is the inner and the outer path of the soul. And it is sometimes very confusing to distinguish – almost impossible to know – which path is the inner and which is the outer. In the end one does know, but in the moment sometimes one does not, and it can be very confusing.

And that is very deep and wonderful. One could speak about it forever, and not just for an hour or two. So many thoughts are coming into my head right now, but I have to let them go. We need to stay with the theme, or else I could still be speaking tomorrow morning, and you would be so tired that you would all fall asleep. (*Everyone chuckles softly, but someone calls out "No, no!" And the laughter gets louder. But Mrs. Tweedie responds with:*) Yes, yes! Just wait! I am far from finished! You still have plenty of time to fall asleep.

So, the outer path is what we all know: our physical life, our presence here on the Earth. And it is here that we learn all of the lessons from our environment and from our outer requirements, according to our state of consciousness and our ability to comprehend things. Some people are born without much intelligence, because they somehow need that state. Some are very intelligent, some are very intellectual, some are only interested in spiritual life, and some only drink beer and go to the pub and have sex, and others throw bombs and do such things. Look how different we all are.

But those who have gained the wisdom to understand no longer criticize anyone. Never. Who shall we criticize if we believe that the human is made in God's image. The human can be misled – the one to mislead is always there – but perhaps even this experience is necessary in order that the person be able to overcome this 'misleader'. And if the person is too weak to overcome this difficulty, perhaps he will be given another opportunity. But, in any case, it is all experience. And it is all necessary. So criticism is not necessary.

So the outer path of the soul is ... just our normal life here in this world. In this moment, I am speaking to you, and you are listening to me. And later you might go out somewhere and drink coffee or go to the cinema. That is the outer path of the soul. That should now be quite clear to you.

The inner path, however, encompasses of all these experiences in a psychological way. We must bring the essence of all of our experiences together. To use the analogy of a Persian poet, "As the wind collects the fragrance of blossoms, from branch to branch." So it is only the essence of the experiences that we have here on the earth that we take with us after our death, that we take with us into immeasurable eternity. Please. I want you to understand this correctly. Only the essence of our experiences remain, not the experiences themselves. Only the essence; one could say the 'perfume' of our lives.

When you meditate tonight, please think about this – this is an assignment – think about what the fragrance of your experiences might be after you have ended this life. Let us say that I will die

tomorrow. Now. Up to now, what is the fragrance of my experiences? What is the assembled essence? Could you say 'Yes' to this essence in this moment? Could you say, "Yes, I have not lived my life in vain. I have tried, I have battled, I have suffered." Or must you say, "I have lived my life in vain." But if you feel that that is true, then you still have time to change it. That is the beauty of a life: one always has the chance to do something better; the opportunity is always given to us. That is the law. And you ask, "What law?" Ahhh! It is the law of God.

But. To proceed on this twofold path, the inner and outer path, the soul needs to be somehow equipped for it; it must have talents, so to speak. And what talents does the soul bring with it? One says that we enter a body, but one does not simply step into a body. It does not happen that way. If you have seen it, even once, then you will know; but you see ... you cannot explain these things with words. But that is the best that one can say: that one enters a body. Really, you do not enter a body. You already are the body. But if I say that, it is still more confusing. So let us say: you enter the body. And you enter the body in order to fulfill the goal for which the soul came into this world. And what qualities do we need for that? The qualities that we will learn here, after we are born. We do get these qualities, but that is not all that we get.

Now do not forget that the soul comes from the Absolute. It comes from the spiritual sun itself. And the soul brings two qualities from this highest of spiritual levels – that is a very important statement – and these two qualities are embedded in the substance of the soul. That means they form part of the very essence of the soul; that the soul cannot separate itself from these two qualities. You cannot say, "I am here, and here are my qualities." No! You are that. They are a part of the very nature of the soul.

These two qualities express themselves, on this, the densest level of being, as two requirements. The first is the will to live. This need is deep inside of you and you cannot escape from it. And the second is the will to worship; that is, the aspect of love. These are both dynamic powers that the soul carries with it into life. The soul brings only these two desires with it into life; every other desire comes into existence during the earthly life. You see the way a child behaves. It wants this and it wants that, and it wants that, and "if I do not get it I will scream!! until the others give it to me." An infant is completely wild, completely aggressive. One day, a young father told me, "I have a child now, and I was never before loved for myself." I didn't say anything, but I thought, "Yes, for yourself, but only because you can give him something." That is the instinct. They will yell and scream; the child wants something from you. But it does not yet love. For the moment, it does not know what love is. The love of children is really quite an egoistic love.

And these two powers are called dynamic powers because they are the two most powerful inborn driving forces of the soul. They are parts that can never be separated from the soul. You see, I am constantly repeating myself, using different words in order to make this comprehensible, because this is a new thought, and a new thought needs to be absorbed; and having these ideas illuminated from different sides helps that process. So. Let us look at the first of these forces: the will to live.

The will to live manifests itself at the lowest level as the survival instinct, and in that role, it has the highest importance for the survival of the individual. It is simply the desire to exist. And it is to be found, not only in us, but in every living thing in nature. We all know how strong this will to live is in us. To be able to fulfill this desire, this need, we need security, food, warmth, and a minimum of comforts: money, homes and everything that makes our lives possible and more or less bearable. That all comes from the will to live. All of these things belong to it. It is the drive to find 'My place in the sun.'

Now, it is interesting that the seven deadly sins all belong to this category of self-preservation instincts. If I eat too much, that is gluttony: one of the deadly sins. If I have much more clothing than I need, that is vanity. I need clothing to survive, but that can become vanity if I have closets full of clothing. Almost every malignant growth of this sort is connected with the will to live. What is jealousy? It is the desire to own something; to obtain it and to hold onto it. What is killing? To conquer an enemy or a rival in order to be able to live better; to have a bigger place in the sun. And so forth and so on. This is interesting; that almost all of the great sins belong to this will to live.

The higher expression of this will to live is the desire for knowledge. So the will to live is lived on the physical level as the survival instinct, and there is also the will to know. The Sufi Inayat Khan says, "The soul longs for clear realization, and when that realization is blocked, there is a feeling of frustration." We want to know something so that we can feel that we are alive; and we feel that the more we know, the more we are alive. The desire for knowledge is the greatest drive behind our quest for every experience, every discovery. The foundation for the whole of the progress of humanity is to be found in this drive, in this driven desire for realization. It is the root of every form of creativity: art, science; all of the great acts of humanity. It is an endless theme, and we could speak about it for hours. Think about this, it is very interesting.

But you see, this desire for realization can very easily change to greed. Just as the body can be greedy for food, so the mind can be greedy for knowledge. Knowledge is the food of the mind. Humans come into this world to have experiences, and the soul is greedy to realize something from those experiences. We want new food, new places; we want to meet new people, and have new experiences. We travel, experiment, change our circumstances and surroundings and chase after new experiences in every possible way in order to know more and more. We are all greedy. ... Hmmm.

Now we go on to the second force, the will to worship: the aspect of love. This is the loving side of the soul, and it is in this that the soul is a part of the Divine Being. And so love is the beginning and the end of our real substance. Humans are love itself. The wise say, "God is love," and "We are created in God's image." And so love is our real life. This love reaches far above our personality, even above this entire life and the next. We are love, as I said, and we will always be love. It is quite simply true, it is only, unfortunately, that we forget this sometimes: the human is love itself.

But you see, when we observe love, it itself has two sides – look how complicated all of this is – the lowest expression of love is the love for things of this world. And this love can be very powerful and can mean everything to us. We can have such a love for our automobiles, our homes, our professions; for power and money. Children love their parents, a husband loves his wife, and so forth and so on. And we all know just how strong such loves can be. We can make all sorts of sacrifices for it. We can even die from it!

We can love many things, and we do. Guruji once asked me, "How many things do you love?" And I said, "Oh, many things. There is the song of birds, the rising and setting of the sun. I love India, I love England, I love people. I love this and that ..." "Your heart is like a hotel," said Guruji. (*There is some surprised laughter.*) "To really love, you can only love one." You see? That is the problem. We love so many earthly things. But if you would ask me if it is bad to love your children or your parents, I must say, "No. it is not bad." But we do not take that with us into the beyond. We can only take the fragrance, the essence of our love into the beyond. We are, after all, a ray. Do not forget: we can lose everything in a shipwreck. We can only take the very essence of our lives with us, as a fragrance, as our offering to the King of Love.

That is the lower aspect of love: the love for the things of this world. And of course, there have been many murders because of this love. But this love also has a higher expression. The higher aspect of love is to be found in compassion, in all-encompassing love, and finally, as the love for the Divine, for the 'Great Beloved' as the Sufis call Him. We call God the Great Beloved, He or She, it makes no difference. God also has a feminine side. Every great Saint, every great Yogi, and all of the wise were lovers of God. The great Ramana Maharshi was a Vedantist, and one says that the Vedantists do not particularly emphasize love; but in a moment of abandonment, he implored God, "Oh God, if you do not embrace me now that you have abducted me, where would be your chivalry?" It is a flame of infinite longing: this call of the soul of the great Ramana Maharshi.

And now I would like to speak of something somewhat different. I would like to speak to you about the great longing.

What is longing? Longing is the feminine side of love. Love has two sides: a masculine side and a feminine side. The masculine side says, "I love you. I am coming to you." So this love goes outwards;

it is an active feeling, the active aspect. The feminine side of love says, "I long for you. I am waiting." This is the passive feeling, the passive aspect of love. ... Can you hear me in the back. (Yes.) If you cannot, please say something. I had the feeling that someone (*She intends to say 'could not hear me', but says:*) wasn't listening to me. (*There is a gentle wave of laughter.*)

And the feminine side of love, this longing, is a very powerful thing. It is much more mysterious and more hidden than the outer side of love. This longing is the answer to a call from far, far away, that repeats itself eternally in the human heart. It is God calling us to return to our real home. This longing is the first cry in us, in every one of us. It is this longing in us that pulls us back to our source, to our spiritual origin that is, at the same time, our last and highest goal, because, according to the Sufis, the source and the goal are one. And you can find this symbolism of the feminine in every religion.

In Christianity, they say that it is the Mother of God, Maria who takes the sinner by the hand and leads him to her son, Jesus. We Sufis say that it is the feminine side of love that saves us. In Christianity it is the Mother of God, and for the Sufis it is the feminine side of love. The symbolism is clear: it is the feminine side of the Divine; it is the inborn longing of our soul that leads us to spirituality.

You see, every one of us – certainly every one of you who is sitting here now – will one day have to ask yourselves, "Why am I here? Why was the world created? What is it all about?" And then this person, who came into the world to have experiences – the soul that came into the world – must suddenly stop and look around. And it says, "Why does all of this exist? What does it all mean? There must be more than just this life here. There must be more than the religions say there is, more than only my desires and drives, my family, and everything that concerns me." And that is a response to a call from far, far away; it is the feminine side of love. It is an echo in the heart. And this call was already in our hearts when we first came into the world! And if that were not so, then the human would never return to God, because He, the Almighty, created such a beautiful world, so full of wonderful illusions, that we forget everything else.

In the Lord's Prayer there are the words, "Lead us not into temptation." Does that mean that God could lead you into temptation, like the devil? No, but he blinds you with His Majesty: nature, people, music, all of the interesting things of life, the splendor of the world. Yes. He leads you into temptation, and he laughs! (*There is a ripple of worried laughter ...*) "Ahh! You have forgotten Me." And then He sends you some great suffering, and then you remember Him; and then again you hear this call in your heart: this mysterious small voice. And then the person begins to go home.

Inayat Khan had a lovely example in one of his books. You must imagine a mother and a small child, and the child sees a lovely lake ... or the ocean, and the child begins to run towards it. It is so wonderful, see how it shines! – the great illusion of life – and the mother runs after the child to pull it back, but the child cries, "No, no. I want to go there." We are just like that. ... But as we grow up and begin to think, we go less and less eagerly towards these illusions, until finally, we stop and look around. And we see the snow-mountains behind us: the high snowy peaks. And then we return to them, hoping to find our home. This example from Inayat Khan is only one example, but it is a good one.

So, this longing, the feminine side of love, is the feminine call of the soul for God. We are born with this call, and without it, without this feminine aspect of love in the hearts of people – men and women – we would never find our way home. But you know, women also need to develop their feminine aspects, because now they have to fight in life, just as the men do, and they – we – forget that we are women.

We have to learn to hear this call that is within us very, very clearly. You will see that in every spiritual gathering there are always more women than men. And why? Because we have the quality of intuition. I do not mean that men do not have intuition. Oh no. But in women it is somehow more natural. And with this feminine quality, we know something; it is only that we cannot describe it. But this something is the call that we sometimes hear. One can even hear it with these ears, but only in meditation, or sometimes just after. Now, how can we learn to hear this call better? (*A nearby infant suddenly breaks out in tears, and as the mother takes it out.*) Oh. Someone is unhappy; it was too much.

Yes, that happens sometimes that children are unhappy in such a meeting, because the energy is too much for them. Together, we create an incredible energy. It is not only me that does that; we really do it together. I try to explain something to you that is almost impossible to explain, and you try to understand it with your whole being – I can feel that. And that creates a very powerful energy. And if a child is too sensitive, then that energy is too much for it. Swami Rama, of the Himalayan Institute in Pennsylvania, loves children. All Indians love children very much. But he does not allow children to come to his Institute because he says that it is too much for them. So children under thirteen years old are not permitted to come there. I do not say that it will do harm to every child, but it is difficult for them to bear, and we do not need to subject them to unnecessary difficulties. A child is not yet far enough. He must first really enter life and experience it, and then he can begin to leave. These vibrations can be too much for a child.

So. As I said, how can we come to hear this call better? It is not good enough to simply tell you about experiences and different states of consciousness. I also have to tell you how to reach these things yourselves. And that is what I try to do. Perhaps, if you get a copy of the tape-recording of this lecture you can play it again and again, and then you may be able to grasp things that are too difficult for you today. I am speaking about so many different things, and it is impossible to understand it all at once. Now. How can we come to learn to hear this call better when we are at home? Yoga – spiritual exercises – are interruptions of our normal outer activity. They are pauses of calm and quiet. One goes inside and waits; and that relies on a feminine quality. I go inside and I simply wait. It is exactly the same with music – and this is a wonderful analogy – there is the sound: the masculine activity; and then there is a pause: the feminine. There is the call: the masculine – and the echo, the answer or the repetition: the feminine. That is such a wonderful analogy. And if you think about this, and about the other things that I speak about today, even just a little, you will see that spiritual life is such an adventure. There is no adventure like the spiritual adventure.

So. The musical style of a composer is comprised in the way he places the pauses; that means, through the feminine. Pauses define the music. Notes alone are wonderful, but they alone cannot define music; they need the opposite, too; they need the feminine. And the intervals and pauses create the rhythm, too. Pauses are the rhythms of sound, and in that way the feminine creates the rhythm of life. I find that statement quite beautiful, and that does not come from me: the feminine creates the rhythm of life. One cannot exist without the feminine. But of course, one cannot live without the masculine either. But too many people have denied and suppressed the feminine completely. And that is why the world is in such a state.

Now I want to go on to another topic. What is spiritual life? Spiritual life is, in truth, none other than a question of speed. One can compare it to a higher frequency. All of you who play or know music will understand this analogy. One lives at a much higher pitch than the normal frequency of non-spiritual life. The inner path is simply at a higher frequency. It is similar to the tuning of the voice of a musical instrument. To quote Inayat Khan, in one of his beautiful books he says, “We must bring the instrument, and we must tune our instrument so that the Great Player can play upon it.” He compared us to musical instruments. He died many years ago, but he himself was a musician. And that is why a spiritual teacher or a Yogi or a Guru does not teach in the normal sense. What they do is to raise the speed, to raise the frequency of their disciples. They tune the disciple into something that is fundamentally nothing other than the disciple’s own soul. And here, by this detour, we have returned once more to the soul.

All wisdom is already within the soul. No one can teach us anything spiritual, not even a little spiritual. We already have everything within us. One must only discover it; one must only uncover it. It is hidden and well covered. So we must look into our own souls, into our own hearts to be able to find it.

So. Do you have any questions? Come on. Start the ball rolling Yes, please?

(Question: Earlier, you said that the soul is perfection, that the soul is Divine, and now you have said that the soul comes into this world in order to learn something. That seems like a contradiction. Is the soul perfect or not? Could you say something about this?)

Yes, you are correct. It does seem to be a contradiction. What the soul must learn is to be able to live in the body, and have experiences in this body, in this world. Teilhard de Chardin said, “God realizes Himself in man.” God, the creator, wants to have physical experiences, and that is why he created us. There is a wonderful sequence in my book that relates to this.

One day I entered the garden and saw Guruji speaking to a poor woman. She was very poorly dressed, and she was very very poor; probably a beggar. And she sat in front of Guruji – by that time I could understand a little Hindi – and said, “My son is dead, and my grandchildren are sick; we have lost so much, and others have died ...” and she told Guruji of a thousand misfortunes she had endured. And she asked him, “Why did God create this world so full of sorrow?” And Guruji leaned over to her – he had such an expression of love in his face ! – and he said, “My daughter, He created the world because He was alone, and He wanted your company.” God needs us, in order to have these experiences. The Divine soul needs our experiences, which we eventually bring to the ‘Ocean of All Light’, one day when the world comes to an end.

And each one of us has different experiences. We are all completely unique. My experiences will never be the same as yours. There are the different experiences of men and women, but beyond that, every one of us has unique experiences, millions of experiences. And all of that will become part of perfection at the end of the world, at the end of time. So the soul helps – the soul that is itself God – helps the Almighty to experience life through us, helps the Almighty to have the experiences of our lives. Are you happy with this answer or not?

(Questioner: I am not yet quite satisfied. May I add something further?) Yes, of course, (Q: When I love a woman, then I have the experience of the feminine aspect of my own projection, and so I experience myself, and in that way God experiences Himself through us. Is that what you mean?)

Yes, yes! Exactly! You have answered it yourself. Look at that. You do not need me at all. (*There is a wave of skeptical laughter.*) You have answered that yourself. Thank you. I hope that that will be on the recording. And if it is not, then tell the people in charge of the recording that they should put it on afterwards. (*More laughter.*) It is a good question and a good answer. So! Another question? (*Silence.*) Ah no one is asking anything. Probably the poor people are all so confused that they don't know what to ask.

Yes, I would say that you should definitely listen to that interchange again. Recordings are very good in that way. Perhaps if you have a group, or if you meet sometimes, then you could play this and discuss it afterwards. Unfortunately we do not have enough time for that here. Yes?

(Question: In this meditation, it sometimes seems that we lose our consciousness. How do we know that the soul is conscious during that time?)

That is a very good question. You see, the soul is always conscious, even when you are sleeping. Our meditation is not sleep, but when you do this meditation, your mind does not function in its usual way. Rather, your mind returns to the original mind of God, and that is on a much higher level – this is a little technical, but it is exactly what happens – and our ‘conventional’ mind, our small mind or brain has no awareness on that level. But somewhere you do know it. Just as sometimes we come to know wonderful things in dreams.

Yesterday someone who has been coming to our group in London for several years told me of a dream that she had when she first came to me, years ago. She told me that she had already told me this dream, but I did not remember it. She dreamed that there were two circles placed in such a way that a kind of almond shape was formed where they overlapped each other. Now in the Cathedral at Chartres there are two circles that overlap each other in the same way – I think it is over the main entrance – and in the middle, in this almond shaped space, Christ stands as if blessing those who enter. These two circles could mean the two worlds, or Yin and Yang, or the two aspects of creation: the masculine and the feminine, darkness and light, and so forth. And the equilibrium is in the middle. And it is that is where the teacher is. One can only reach the teacher when you have stilled the opposites within you. But that is very technical, and that is something that we speak about in our Yoga classes. I cannot say any more about that here.

But the soul always knows, my dear; it is never unconscious.

(Question: Are there good souls?)

Well, yes, one might feel, ‘Yes, that is a good soul’; but really, in this case, you are simply speaking of the person: that they are a good person. There are no evil souls. All souls are good, but a soul can be more or less developed. Sometimes I speak of a ‘young soul’. They are people whose souls have not had so very many incarnations, and so they do not know a great deal. They are still quite young; but with time, they will become older and wiser. (*There is a chuckle of gentle consolation.*)

But the soul is always intrinsically perfect and all-knowing. But again, that is in a hidden, in a covered way. One has to uncover – dis-cover – all of it.

You see, I cannot help but speak in contradictions, because the truth can only be grasped in contradictions. “This is true and the opposite is true, and this is not true and the opposite is not true.” And what then happens to the mind? You see, these things only appear to be contradictory. First the mind is confused, and jumps from one statement to the other, back and forth, and back and forth. And then, in despair, it stops somewhere in the middle; and it is exactly from this position in the middle that is it possible for the mind to reconcile the contradiction; because really, there is no con ... cont ... contradiction. Aach, I cannot speak German anymore. Well, I never could, but that is not the point. *(Everyone can only laugh. More contradictions!)* Thank you. That was a good question.

(Question: You have said that the body is a tool for the soul to enable it to develop, and that we only develop through suffering. But I want to know where joy, the joy of life and the joy of the body, come into all of this. Is there no place for that?)

But there is no contradiction. The joy of the body and the joy of life are quite legitimate. It is only that then we forget God. I spoke about that in relation to the call from God. We forget God when we are happy, and we remember Him when we suffer. So what I said was only in the context of this example. In general these things are not bad at all. The joy of life is a wonderful thing. But if you reach the level of the soul, there is only bliss. The level of the soul is the level of bliss, and that is such a bliss that one can never experience in normal life. The joy of the body is absolutely nothing in comparison to it. It is such a bliss that really – it is a stillness, there is ... ah! There are no words for it. But sometimes we reach that level.

You see, there are states – especially when you do a great deal of Yoga and meditate a great deal – there are moments during the day when you suddenly feel so wonderful, so good; something so tender just touches the heart; so tender and so loving. And then if you would try to ask this person, “What are you thinking about?” the person would say, “Oh, nothing.” Because in this moment, the human mind is thrown into the Great Mind. One experiences something that the mind does not yet know about. For those who do a great deal of Yoga and meditation, in the beginning they too do not quite know, but later they know exactly what happens. You see, our mind is like an animal and one can train it. In the beginning you do not grasp these states with your mind, but tomorrow you understand a little more, and the next day still more, and finally, you come to know quite precisely what is happening. It is very difficult to bring the experiences of Samadhi into the mind, but you can train your mind to do it, and I will tell you how you can do that. I will speak about that tomorrow.

And now, we have to begin our meditation. We will meditate for twenty minutes, and then, unfortunately, we must be on our way. We will be thrown out, and there is nothing to be done.

(There is a rustle of movement, and then a gentle chaos, as people prepare for the meditation.)

I will not tell you to sit as comfortably as possible, because you cannot sit comfortably now; not after you have been sitting here so long already; but try to relax your body enough so that you notice it as little as possible. When it is too uncomfortable, then it disturbs the meditation. And for those of you who are here for the first time ... of course, the meditation is described at the end of my book and it is quite easy to read, but I will tell you once again.

We must feel love in our hearts. Love is a feeling that one can remember, and the memory can bring this feeling back. Think about love, just love; and fill your heart with this love, in silence and stillness; calmly and relaxed. Only that: the feeling of love. The mind has no role; it is still. But of course, thoughts will appear. You will remember things and think about what you have to do tomorrow; you will wonder if the meditation is almost over, and think that you are tired and all sorts of other thoughts. Simply imagine that each one of your thoughts appears on a screen, like a television-screen. This is only an idea to help you; there is, of course, no real screen. And you grasp each thought and drown it in love. And if you are able to do this exercise well, then the thoughts will really be drowned, because the dynamism of love is much more powerful than the dynamism of thoughts. And the thoughts will really go. Then you simply remain still until the next thought comes. That is not really a meditation. It is a technique for Yogic relaxation that is used to still the mind and to create the stillness in which you can have mystical experiences. But of course, these experiences only come after years of practice. And now we will try this. So. God bless all of you.

(The meditation begins, already in deep stillness. ...)

(And the first day of the two day session ends.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Zurich 1990: Day 2

The Eye of the Heart

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Zurich, Switzerland
in April 1990

(Mrs. Tweedie begins in English) It seems to me that we ended with (*'I.' reminds her to speak in German, and there is a long wave of relaxed and happy laughter ...*) It is always so difficult for me to change languages. I was just speaking in English and my brain is still working in English.

So. I think that we ended with the musical style of the composer. And the importance of the pauses, and that spiritual life is none other than a question of speed. One can compare it to a higher frequency; a much higher frequency than that of the normal, non-spiritual life. So the inner path of the soul is merely a higher frequency. One can compare it to the tuning of an instrument. Then I gave you the example where Inayat Khan said that we are the instrument, and we have to tune our instrument so that the Great Player can play it. I think we got to there.

Now, since spiritual life is a question of speed, and not simply the absorption of information, a spiritual teacher, a Yogi or a Guru, will never teach in the normal sense of the word. What he does is to raise the speed, the frequency of his disciples. He tunes the disciple into something that is fundamentally none other than the disciple's own soul.

You see, these are very important statements. They seem so simple, but ... I have never seen these things so simply put. I have tried to say them in a way that is understandable to you, because, of course, I do understand that what I said yesterday was very confusing for many of you. And well, if you have only heard it for the first time, you certainly cannot absorb it all. These are new ideas. I do not mean that this is 'something new under the sun'. I think that we all know that it is not; but it is new for you, here, now. One can express these ideas in different ways, and now, in our time, we must try to say these things in a modern context so that these ideas can be understood. What one finds in books it is often said in such a way that it is difficult to understand.

So. Our frequency must be raised, and this is none other than tuning into our own souls, and that is at the very highest frequency. Now. What I am going to say to you is simply science: one speaks about how spirits can pass through walls. But scientists say that there is an enormous amount of space between atoms. Of course we do not perceive it that way on this dense, physical level. But there is so much space between the atomic particles that if I were one particle, the next one would be in Bern, two hundred miles away. So of course, a spirit that is quite diffuse could pass through those atoms. And to again use one of Inayat Khan's ideas: consider the way that salt dissolves in water. That is very similar to what I am describing.

So the soul is at a finer frequency. And so, in order to reach our soul, or to hear or touch our soul, we must become much much finer. That is really all; it is simply at a higher frequency. I hope that that is understandable to you now, because it is very important.

Now, when our frequency is raised enough so that we have stepped beyond the limited level of our minds, then we can begin to speak about enlightenment. Look how completely simple this is. We are speaking of enlightenment, which everyone thinks is something incredibly complicated, but in fact it is quite simple. We must become finer, and that is all.

Now, the real learning happens through unlearning. The more a disciple knows, the more difficult it is for the teacher. That is why the teacher loves a disciple who does not know a great deal. Such a disciple is empty and one can easily put something into him. If the disciple comes full of his own knowledge, then the teacher is not able to put any real knowledge into him. We all know that; the teacher must take the knowledge that we have learned here on this earth away from us. But really, all that the teacher has to do is to raise the speed of the inner power of the disciple. And that is it; that is all. The teacher has to speed us up. And that is done with the power of the inner planes.

When one is in the presence of the teacher, one is quite automatically sped up. It is a process that is exactly like what happens with electricity. When two electrical conductors are parallel to one another and close to one another, and one has a weak current and one a strong one, then the stronger current will strengthen the weaker current. That is a law of nature. And it happens in the same way here. We are now together, and there are people here who are spiritually 'weaker' and others who are 'stronger', and we will all be accelerated by those here who are stronger. That is the law. And people who are very fine notice it. And in this way the atmosphere helps us, sometimes, to understand what we are otherwise unable to understand.

So the teacher teaches beyond the intellect. And it is his job to always draw your attention to your own inner longing. The training is none other than the process of awakening this longing. And it is this longing – the feminine side of love – that leads us to the Truth. So the teacher uses methods that function like a mirror for the disciple, in order to reflect something to the disciple; and that something is exactly what the disciple needs: him-Self; that with which he can tune himself, just as one tunes an instrument in music. And the further he progresses on the path, the more alert he becomes for this reflection, the more he begins to recognize those of his own thought patterns that betray him, and the dead-end streets of his own emotional difficulties.

This morning 'I.' told me something that I found very interesting. She said that the last time she was with me in London, perhaps one month ago, when she was sitting in the train, she realized that she had always thought that she lives at two different levels. That sometimes she can tune in to one of the levels, and sometimes to the other. And then yesterday, after the lecture, she realized, "But of course. these two levels are the inner and outer path."

And when we make progress with Yoga and meditation, we become more and more aware of the inner side of our ... psychology. And that is very interesting, because then the person, the physical body and the intellect, can work with the soul. And which of our inner states come from our soul? Or rather, what are the signals or messages that come from the soul to us, here in this world, to the body and mind? Now this is really quite simple. When you see something beautiful, when you have the wish to see something beautiful, when you want to listen to music, when you discover something that touches you, these always come from the soul. The body and the normal mind can be logical and practical, but the feelings belong to the soul. One says, 'the heart', but of course, it is the soul; not this heart that beats in your chest. So these are the signs, and you will notice that there are thousands of signs: simply that you have come here, for example. And what about wishes and desires? Do they come from your free will? Is that what made you want to come to a lecture – this, or any lecture? Or was something whispered to you? I say that it is the soul that whispers it to you.

We, here in this world, know the feeling of ordinary daily life. But when there is something more, something finer, that is always the soul. Our soul, as I said to you yesterday – please! I hope that you

remember it – the soul interpenetrates our entire body, from the toes to the tips of the hair on our head. It must be very boring for the soul. (*There is a ripple of laughter.*) But at the same time, the soul is not in the body; it is the body and it is not. It is so fine and subtle that it can be everywhere; yesterday I said that the soul can even be in more than one place at the same time. You see, the soul is in the body and so it is not on its own level; and yet, at the same time, the soul is on its own level. You see, all of these parts fit together; they are all of one piece: the body, the mind and the soul. And that is why the mantra is so important.

There is so much material in this lecture, and I want to share it all with you, because it is all-important and will be of help to all of you. But it is not so easy to grasp, especially for those people for whom these ideas are completely new.

The mantra is important, because when we breath in, the soul touches its own level, and when I repeat the mantra in this moment, then I help the soul to have the experiences that it came into this life to have; I help it to reach the goal of this incarnation. And that is why doing the mantra with the breath is so very important. When you breathe out, then you enter this life. And when you breathe in, then the soul touches its own level; and if that were not true, if the soul did not have this instant of bliss, then we could not live. For the soul, this life is terrible. Yes, it is true that the soul is free on another level, but on this level it is bound and can only leave the body when the person dies. It is really a sad situation, but also a wonderful one.

You see, the soul receives an order from God to have certain experiences – this refers to every one of you ... and to me; and to everyone in the world. Millions of experiences, millions and millions and billions of experiences. But in order to fulfill that order, you must accept limitation. And when you say the mantra – and do not forget, it must be done with the breath – then you help your soul. And when you make progress on the spiritual path, you will become more and more conscious that your soul has an inner path, and you will be able to work with it, consciously, with all of your human dignity.

Now. The teacher always tries to bring the disciple nearer to the truth. Even the seemingly trivial comments of the teacher are important. Shock tactics are important. And in these ways the teacher works to allow us to see our own conditioning, and to thus expand our range of experience. And so, as the Sufis – as all mystics say – a teacher is necessary. But the outer teacher will always point to the inner teacher. The teacher says, “You see, I cannot really teach you anything. Everything is within you.” But it is only if you listen carefully, only if you hear what the teacher says and you try to understand the inner meaning of these things that the teacher will be able to help you. Only if you do these things. Otherwise everything will go in one ear and out the other and you will not understand anything.

One speaks of the real secret of the innermost consciousness, or the higher self – they are the same – of this great secret that is within us. And this great secret – the inner self, the higher self – that is within us, is so very great that we can really call it ‘Our Father in Heaven’, just as Jesus called it. When he said, “Our Father in Heaven,” he meant this inner essence, the higher self that is greater than the universe. Yesterday I tried to make that clear.

In order to get access to the Absolute Truth that is within us, we must learn to still the thought process. It is this thinking, our constant involvement with daily life, which of itself is very important, that prevents us from experiencing this greater reality, this truth. But to develop oneself enough to be able to experience the fullness of this reality is a long and exhausting process. A little here and a little there: a word from the teacher; a situation in life; something someone does or says: perhaps a relative, or someone we love, or a boss. And if we look at how we can grow through these situations we see that life itself is the greatest Guru. And in this process of growth, the teacher helps you. There is no point in running to India, or in looking for a teacher if you are not yet fine enough to understand and participate in this process.

The Dhyana meditation that we practice here is one of the keys to making us finer. I am speaking of the meditation that is described in my book. This practice helps us tune in to the fineness that belongs to the inner path of the soul. This Dhyana meditation teaches us to shut down our endlessly

chattering minds, and gradually to make the higher levels conscious. It can be done. I know people who have done it, people who have been successful. No one can say, "Oh it is too difficult, I will never reach it." Well, if you want to say things like that, they are negative thoughts and of course you will not achieve anything. Forget all of that. Simply say, "The word impossible does not exist in the dictionary of the lover. If so-and-so has done this, so can I." And why not? The essence, in every one of us, is the same.

Now. This meditation that we will do, this Dhyana meditation, is not complete without love. And this love will be awakened in the heart of the disciple by the power of the Teacher, until it flames up and fills him with longing for the Truth of the Absolute. This longing is the driving force that pulls down the wall of the ego and burns all of its dross. And it is this longing that, after an inner journey through the dark night of the soul, allows the experience of the union with the Beloved, as the Sufis call the Divine. We call the Divine the Beloved, the 'Great Beloved'. And this Great Beloved never abandons us. He gives us the last, the real security; the only real security. Nothing is constant in this life, but there is constancy There. There, there is always bliss; everything that we could wish for is there.

So the training on the Sufi Path has nothing to do with renunciate asceticism. That is why you are more likely to meet a Sufi in the market-place than in the solitude of the mountains. The Sufis say that life is the best teacher, and that once you have overcome your conditioning, and have thrown out your old programs, you will have eyes for the beauty of real life.

You see, then the grass is greener, the flowers are more beautiful, and the sky is bluer. Every person is an adventure, a discovery. And children are something so very wonderful that one can even be afraid to touch them. The birth of a child is such a mystery, something so incredible. And so is death ... when we close our eyes forever, and this world disappears, and we begin to open our eyes on another level. We die here, and we are born on another level, and that is all that death is, neither more nor less.

So you will have eyes for the beauty of real life: a life that is one with the entire universe. But you see, we humans simply confuse outer happiness, where we are merely caught up in things that are supposed to make us happy – are supposed to make us happy – with inner happiness. We confuse the outer with the inner: this inner happiness that lies beyond our egoistic desires. If one were able to experience this inner happiness, even for an instant, then these other pleasures would fade forever. We would recognize the mendacity of these superficial pleasures and they would fall away from us like a set of old clothes. That is what Jesus meant when he said, "When you hold onto life, you will lose it; but when you give up your life, you will gain it." Well, that is a rather free interpretation. They are not quite his words as they appear in the Bible, but that is the sense of it. And the Sufis say, "Only that really belongs to you which you cannot lose in a shipwreck." And of course, you can also lose your life in a shipwreck – and how easily! One simply drowns.

Now, this learning process that I am describing today is quite different from the way one usually 'learns' in normal life. There is an inner and an outer path of the soul. We are living here on the outer path, and we must learn to tune in to the inner path. And we can do that learning through meditation. We can all do that. And why don't we do that? Ahh. We have a thousand reasons.

This learning process is very different from normal learning. In this learning process there is no duality. Look. Learning always implies duality, but now I am saying that here there is no duality. One can only convey great truths in paradoxes; only in contradictions. Whenever I try to learn something, there is always me – the learner – and the thing that I want to learn. There is this duality. But when I am accelerated, the knowledge comes directly into me, on its own, and so there is no duality. So you see, there is no paradox, and I am not really speaking in contradictions. It only appears to be contradictory.

So this knowledge comes by itself. And this is a completely different process from what we experience in normal life. And it is the only way to real wisdom, the only path to the wisdom that we all have by our very nature as souls. We already have it all, only we do not know it. And that is the job of

the spiritual teacher: to lead us to an awareness of this inborn knowledge. And so a spiritual teacher teaches in quite a different way from a normal teacher here in this world.

In England there is an expression, 'listening in', that means to listen to the radio, to tune-in to a channel. This image is a very good description of what I mean by inner wisdom. We have to tune our inner receiver to this wisdom, and then we will receive the real voice from within ourselves. And to live in that way means to fulfill the purpose of one's life, the purpose of your own individual life: the reason why you were born in to this life. Of course, each one of us has a different reason; we are, after all, all unique. There are no duplicates of any of us.

The Sufis say that it is very difficult to be a human being. Our lower powers are made of physical matter and pull us down to the earth. But our soul belongs to the Kingdom of God, and it pulls us upwards to the heavens. So we are constantly being pulled in two opposite directions. The angels, on the other hand, have it much easier. They belong to the heavens and nothing pulls them down to the earth. And meditation is the only, and I repeat, the only thing that can help us. When we, with our own free will, do this practice, then we become free; but if we do it out of any sort of compulsion, then we are slaves, just because of what we are doing. So we should never feel compelled to meditate, otherwise we become slaves. We must do it of our own free will, and we must recognize that it is the only way to the truth. It makes no sense to do this practice or that one – practices other than meditation – expecting to find the truth.

But meditation itself can have many aspects. T'ai Chi is also meditation. Work can be meditation. To help someone can be meditation. Look at all of the possibilities! And that depends on you alone, on your own free will. I cannot say that often enough. When you say, "I cannot really meditate. I cannot sit down and close my eyes and meditate because I do not have any time. I have a child, and the child cries." Then you can be with your child. The bathing of a child can be a meditation. Learning can be a meditation, if – and this is the important part – if you say to the Beloved, "I do all of this for you." Then our entire day, our entire life will be a meditation. And then you do not need to sit and meditate. And one learns to do that more easily when you are with a teacher. Otherwise it can be rather difficult. The whole day we are splintered into a thousand different personalities in our many roles as humans. We have to be a father and a mother, an employee, and so forth. And then there are all of the patterns of our conditioning, the demands of life, and so forth and so on. To be a human is very difficult. The Sufis say that, and how true it is!

Meditation is the only way to reach this inner wisdom, but anything that you do can be done as a meditation. Meister Eckhart said, "In meditation, we make ourselves empty. Only the most hidden part of our heart remains: our own light, the small spark that is our soul." And I have said that you do not need to sit and meditate, you can take life itself as your meditation. Yes. We can do that, but only if we are able to make ourselves empty. Let us say that I have to repair this watch. I make myself completely empty; my entire awareness is on this one thing: that I have to repair this watch that sits in front of me. It is then that the most hidden part of us, in our hearts, becomes free. And that is what the Zen Buddhists call, 'Living in the present'. Then it is a meditation. If you can stay in this state, then you do not have to sit and meditate; you only need to repair the watch. You see how subtle the boundaries are? They are incredibly subtle, and that is something that we need to learn. And you can learn that on your own. Many people have done that. But of course, it is easier to learn it with a teacher.

Many people do not believe in the unusual abilities or legendary acts of the Sufis. People think that it is all quite impossible. But these people do not know what real faith is. What I have been speaking to you about – everything I have spoken about today – can be done, but for it to have any meaning, for it to have any effect, you must also have faith. I always give the lovely example from the Bible, when Christ appeared to his disciples on the sea of Galilee during a terrible storm. He walked on the waves, and Peter said, "Oh Master, I too would like to walk on the waves." And Jesus said, "Come." And Peter stood up on the water and began to walk. But then he became afraid, and in that instant he began to sink. And Jesus helped him and said, "Oh ye of little faith, why do you fear?" You see, we must have faith. So here we have another difficulty: faith.

Very very few people know what real faith is. They believe all sorts of things that are not true: they believe out of habit, or because some authority says it is so; or perhaps just from wishful thinking. But real faith is something completely different. People who have had spiritual experiences are capable of it. And that is why my teacher told me, "I will not teach you anything. I will give you experiences. Do what you want with them." So people who have had spiritual experiences are capable of faith. But once one has had his own personal experiences, then the accounts of great abilities and legendary acts of others are useless. "Yes," such a person might say, "that is all very nice, but that was not my own experience. It is good that people have such experiences, and I do believe these things, but for me personally it is useless; it is only second hand."

We do not understand that we cannot write these things down in some fixed way or put them into pigeon-holes. As soon as we would try to do that, the things themselves would change. Time passes and things change. Today we are different from what we were yesterday, and tomorrow we will again be different. The things around us will be different, and we will think differently than we do today. In seven years I will be a completely different person, and you will too; all of us will be.

A friend can become an enemy; love can change to hate; goodness to cruelty. But our minds cannot work, cannot function without these categories – these categories that seem completely permanent. That is why the wise say, "Thinking is a process of unknowing." Once you really 'Know', then you no longer need to think ... then you no longer need to read. And when we are in the state of deep meditation that is called Samadhi, we become a thinker who does not think. We are in our center. The thinking process continues, but on the periphery, on the surface. But 'we' are not there where the thinking is going on; we are in our center.

Guruji said, "Knowledge without experience is useless." And meditation will lead us to experiences, and thus to the real knowledge. That is why we make efforts; that is why we meditate. This path does not require any effort. Things are given to us. But in the beginning, one must make an effort to be able to be free of effort. And that is why I have said that meditation is the most important part of all. Only meditation will help us to reach ultimate reality, the highest level of enlightenment. These are very important statements. And I hope, one day, that we will all be capable of reaching this state ... perhaps not today or tomorrow, but perhaps the day after – or perhaps now!

So, we will have our pause now: relax and unwind a bit. And we will meet again in thirty minutes.

(The pause begins with everyone already in motion ... and conversation. And then, thirty minutes later:)

I think we should begin now. We do not have much more time together. *(The audience settles down quickly.)* So. Now I will continue.

Great seers of former times believed that there is a mysterious substance to be found in the human heart. And that when this substance is activated by love, it will lead you to immediate realization. That is another way to say the same thing that I have been saying today. The Sufis call it a 'mysterious substance'. It is the inner path of your soul. And when your human perception is activated through love, then you can tune-in to this process that is the inner path of your soul, and that tuning-in can lead you to realization. And according to the wise, when we understand how this substance in our hearts is activated, then all of the wisdom of the universe – and heaven itself – belongs to us. Here is the mystery: somehow, just like in music, the inner path of the soul begins when we can tune-in to it. And then the way is free for us. That is the green light that signals that you are free to go on.

And the wise say that the soul brings this substance with it into this world. They call it a substance, and I call it 'the inner path of the soul'. The soul brings this substance with it when it comes into manifestation as a human being, and this substance is the real essence of the soul; it is, as I said yesterday, embedded in the soul. It is the all-perceiving sense, the light of intuition. You see, we are now onto another topic, but these topics are connected. This all-perceiving sense is the traveler on the path of the mystic, and we all have this sense in us. It is not the person, not the personal 'you' or 'I', as

we know or see them in this world. It is something within us. Yes. As someone said to me this morning, it is a duality. We work on two levels: this level, where we see and know each other; and the other level that we can only guess at, and about which we discover more and more as we meditate.

But please, never forget that it is only this something in our hearts, infinitely difficult to understand and infinitely enduring, that is the pilgrim; it is not you and it is not I. It is only this something that is the traveler within us. That is why it is said in the Upanishads, "The Pilgrim and the Path are one." It is, after all, a strange statement: that the path and the one who walk on the path are the same, and are both 'I'. That is the meaning of this. And they are one. The path is none other than this something within us that desires, in the very highest sense, to go on. Do you understand?

I am trying to make the things that we might know from books simpler for you – in every possible way – because sometimes one is able to understand, and sometimes one is not able to understand. One needs to bring these things into a modern way of expressing them. One must try to say things in a way that people can understand them. Again and again, people come to me with such simple questions; questions that are written about in thousands of books, questions that I myself have answered a thousand times in the last almost thirty years or so. One has to try to say these things again and again, but in different ways, expressed differently. But it is really just the same truth. There is really nothing new under the sun.

So I have said and emphasized that it is the intuition, the all-perceiving sense, that is the traveler on the path of the mystic. Now. What is intuition? One says that intuition is a feminine quality. That is all well and good. One says that women are much more intuitive than men, and again that is all well and good. But I know men who are much more intuitive than most women. And I know women who are not intuitive at all. They are like stones; you can knock and knock at their door, and nothing comes out. It is the same as trying to get milk from a stone. (*Everyone laughs at her newly coined expression.*) It is impossible. I know of one particular woman who is like that; she has become so very hard, and so lonely; and the worst problem, the problem is that she no longer believes in anything.

Intuition can only be awakened with love and faith. I have just said that today. Do you remember that? Did each of you remember that I already had said it when I said it just now? Perhaps you never even noticed that I said it in the first place. One must learn to listen, to hear. Now, I want to speak a little about intuition.

One says the intellect is the source of knowledge, but that intuition is the source of wisdom. That is in all of the books, and that is what all of the sages say; and we all know that too. Our intellect knows that. So we could say that intuition is the ability that makes it possible for people to have direct contact with the world of the infinite, the eternal presence, the world of pure spirit. Like a bolt of lightning, suddenly it is here.

Now. Every invention, every new experience, everything that science has discovered, comes from the world of intuition, not from the world of the intellect, not from the brain. What does one do when one wants to discover something, when one wants to invent something? One works on it. You might, for example do mathematical calculations. No one has ever actually seen an atom, but mathematically one can say that an atom exists, and it can even be proved. But to have arrived at that, people had to work a very long time. The entire identity of the person must go into such a work, and that means that the person must surrender completely to this work. So even here we find that surrender is necessary. And complete surrender is complete faith. You must have faith that there is something to be discovered or clarified, and that something will result from your efforts if you work enough on it.

Then you live with this problem and you sleep with this problem; you are so occupied with these thoughts that you become quite empty. And then, one day the mind gets stuck and stops; and in this moment, when the mind is completely still – and you see, in meditation we try to reach just this state – in this instant the spark of inspiration leaps in and Bang! You have your solution. And that is true of every discovery. It is true of every kind of work: scientific work, engineering, everything. And it is only the intuition that can do that, never the mind; and that is because the intuition comes from where all

knowledge is: from the world of pure spirit, from the soul: the soul that lives in the oxygen of pure spirit. And in this way, inspiration is our bridge to the world of pure spirit.

So, the key to the door of this inner world lies in the human heart. Isn't that wonderful? One does not reach it through the action of the mind, but rather through the action of the heart that brings the person, ever so gradually to a state of consciousness in which the intuition can freely unfold.

Now, the higher the world or plane or state of consciousness, the more subtle, lighter and more intensive and faster are the vibrations. When someone wants to come further in these higher worlds, he must work on himself to become ever finer, with finer vibrations, so that his vibrations are in harmony with the worlds he wants to reach.

When Goethe wrote about the harmony of the spheres, he must have meant that the different spheres, the different worlds, were in harmony with one another, each in their own musical key. That is certainly what Goethe meant. So the more harmonic a person is, the more a person is in the position to come into contact with these higher worlds or levels. Goethe also said, "Intellect and reason are only formal abilities," – you see, Goethe was an incredible genius – "but it is the heart that supplies the contents, the material." Look at all of the many things he wrote about, and so long ago. Somehow he had tuned-in to That, and so he knew. I find that Goethe was one of the greatest. I think that he was a Master, and I think that he belonged to the Hierarchy. I believe that is true. Of course, he had faults, but we do not know ...

You see, the great Saints and mystics, great people sometimes do things that those around them do not understand. And we are so limited by the contradictions of the world, that we believe that they are faults or something that should not be; but that may only be our conditioning. And he lived so long ago that one really does not know what really happened. But in any case, he was certainly a genius.

A great Yogi, Ramana Maharshi, once said, "Wisdom consists in trusting one's heart." When someone begins to listen to the voice of his heart, and to follow it, then he is on the way to becoming intuitive. When Carl Jung went to America, he met with some of the native Americans there, and one of the chiefs of one of the tribes he visited told him, "You Europeans think that you think with your head. We think here, in our hearts." So you see, the wise say that. Why don't we listen to them?

So I repeat, when someone begins to listen to the voice of his heart, and to follow it, then he is on the way to becoming intuitive. Of course that is connected with feelings. And this listening is the feminine side of love. It is a feminine quality. What would the world do without the feminine? And our society constantly denies the value of the feminine. We deny it constantly. The feminine is always oppressed, and it is the blood, the red blood of the world. It is the voice of the soul.

The talent of the intuition is that it allows you to mediate between, to reconcile, the higher and lower worlds, between the world of the imperishable and the world of the perishable. And because intuition is one of the qualities, in us, that is imperishable, we have the possibility to grow into this world of the imperishable. I have used the expression 'to grow into' intentionally. One grows into it, just as a plant or a flower; you become that. And it will become a part of your substance.

The greater your heart is, and the greater your life force, the more certain your ability to grow into the world of intuition. Metaling expressed this wonderfully; he said, "Those who know, know nothing unless they have the power of love. The real man of wisdom is not the one who merely sees. The one who really sees the furthest is the one who loves people the most. To see without love is only to peer into the darkness." Yesterday I gave you the example of a young woman who lost her husband, and who is still crying and in despair. He only died a few months ago, the poor man. I say, 'poor man' because he had suffered so much; he died from cancer. And she dreamed of him and in the dream she asked him, "Jerry, how are you?" And he answered, "Oh! Very well; only I am so very busy. I have so much to do! Here we must work for others." And that is it; that is what I am talking about.

The greater the life force, the easier it is to grow into the world of intuition, and to see without love is only to peer into the darkness. So even in the beyond they do that. You see? That is the law, and it applies everywhere! (*Mrs. Tweedie says the next sentence very emphatically.*) We have to love, we have to work for others, and if we do not do that, we will never progress anywhere. We often grow into the world of intuition very gradually, and we slowly begin to recognize that happenings that others consider to be miracles are simply part of the one and only reality. So, as Novalis said, "A miracle is the only reality." This single reality, that sometimes appears to people in the form of miracles, is an expression of the world of reality, the world of Truth. And intuition is the ability that life gives to humans; it is the ability that the human has brought with him. It is the ability to become more and more united, more and more one with the world of Truth. You see? That is the goal.

And now, I am really finished with my lecture. I have said what I wanted to say to you. I have only been able to say it all very imperfectly. I have said it hesitantly. I stammered and repeated myself, because there were times where I thought, "How can it be possible for me to express that?" And I myself was aware that many of you could not at all grasp what I was trying to say. And I am ashamed that I could not say it any better. Well, perhaps others have said it better, or will say it better than I have. I do what I can. (*There is a quiet murmur of gratitude.*) But we still have a little time.

Oh. Before I speak about Perfection – but I do not think that I can cover all of perfection in ... (*She looks at her watch.*) in a half an hour ... (*There is a ripple of easy laughter.*) But before I do that, I want to read you something that I found very lovely: a Sufi story.

We have spoken about such difficult things, things that are so difficult to understand; really 'Big Stuff' – as one says in English – 'Heavy Stuff'. And why have I spoken about all of this to you? Because I have already been here many times, and most of you already know me or have read my book. You have already been doing spiritual practices for some time, and we are already friends: we already have a relationship of the heart with one another. And so I can speak with you quite differently from the way I must at other seminars, where the people do not really know me at all, and have not read my book, and do not know what it is all about. So. Now I want to read you a light and very lovely little story. It is a Sufi teaching story; and the contents of these stories are always rather special, as you will see.

There are many people who are unhappy with themselves and with the world. They think that in life they fare no better than a dog. They have neither faith nor doubts, and feel neither joy nor real pain. Other people are repulsive to them because they think that these others are only given to stupidities and half-measures – this is all very proud, isn't it? If I say that I am better than the others, oh my God! That is ego! – So. Such a man, or woman, said to himself one day, "What is going on here? Why it everything the way it is? I see no sense in anything. I will go and ask, and I will change the world! – You see, this is all pride – so the man in our story began his journey, but there were a thousand roads. Which one should he take? He stood there, and said to himself, "I will ask the earth about life. It has so many treasures and secrets within it; it will know." But the earth said, "I am just as sad as you are, and beyond that, I am at the mercy of people. What they do to me! And how shall I know anything of life when I carry the dead within me?" (*There is a ripple of laughter.*)

"I will ask the wide sea," thought the man. "I will be clever, and I will ask the wide sea." So he asked the sea, and the sea replied, "I cannot quench your thirst for knowledge. I myself am thirsty. I long for the pure water of the river." – so the sea cannot answer him either – Then the man thought, "The wind must know!" But the wind said, "I have no power and no goal. I blow first here, then there, and am not allowed to rest." "Then, perhaps the dangerous fire knows," thought the man hopefully. But the fire was throwing ashes over itself, as is common among disheartened people, (*Everyone laughs!*) and said, "How should I know? I am just as sad as you are. I often cause senseless devastation and if I have nothing to burn, I die.

Then the man asked the sun, the moon and the stars. But they all said that they are only small ignorant parts, and the sky added, "I myself wear the black clothing of mourning every night, and in the morning I turn red for shame at the crimes of this earth. The stars are only glowing coals on my head,

and the blue of my vault is only the empty opening of a door. Destiny catches me by the ear, and spins me through the course of the day, just like you.”

Then the man turned again to the earth and asked the stones, the plants and the animals if they could tell him the sense and purpose of life. But he was only met with astonishment. “Are you not he who is responsible for us? You, who are, according to God, the only being with understanding, are asking us? “Ahhh!” said the man, “So I will have to ask my mind.” But that didn’t go very well either. The mind answered sharply, “You are out of your mind to ask the mind such a thing!” (*Everyone is enjoying the story.*) “The thoughts of the mind are only valued by the unbelievers. The faithful think with the thoughts of the heart.”

So finally, the man, who was already worn out from his search, asks his heart. But the heart replies, gently and sad, that it is only a servant, and is only a reflection of the sun of the soul. (*The atmosphere in the hall suddenly becomes very still and attentive ...*) Completely broken, the man turned homewards, and sat in front of his house and scratched his head. And suddenly, for the first time, he heard the rustling of the sea of the world-soul, and it said, unasked, “You have searched the whole world in vain, until you landed on my shore. You are a part of me, dive deeply into your own self, and you will find you are looking for.”

And the man threw himself into the ocean of the soul. And as the Mu'ezzin let sound the morning choir of trumpets, the man could recognize the value and beauty in every thing and being, because he no longer stood in his own way. And so began the bright dawn of a new morning of his life.

I found this story quite by chance, as if chance really existed! You see, when I am preparing a lecture, things come to me, quite by themselves. And I thought, “This story belongs to the soul, and so I will have to read it.” It is a lovely story. (*Everyone agrees, but the mood is very still; caught in the magic of the story and the telling.*) Yes. He asked everywhere. But until he dived into the world-soul, he could not find the answer.

Now there is another quality that belongs to the soul, and that is the quality of perfection, of excellence. Perfection can be developed, because it is dynamic. Yes. It is the most dynamic thing; it is the living power of creation itself, and so it is a feminine quality. Perfection means to be completely whole. And to be completely whole means to enter into something in such a way that nothing of you remains outside: to be without reservation and undivided. And what does that mean? It means surrender. And surrender is the most important thing on the spiritual path: to enter into something so that not even the smallest part remains outside, without reservation and undivided. “I surrender myself. Everything in me: (*Now almost whispering.*) body, mind, spirit: everything ... my heart ... my life ... for you, Oh Beloved.

Then it makes no difference which meditation, which exercises, which method we practice. Then every method brings success. If you go into your mantra completely, so that not even the smallest part of you remains as an observer – please, this is important – then you will become the mantra. In the Upanishads it is said, “First you do the mantra, then the mantra does you.” So you see, it was already said in the Upanishads so many thousands of years ago. Then one would only have to say the mantra once. You would not have to repeat it at all. It is like the Koan in Zen Buddhism, you say it once, question and answer, and you have reached the truth. One single cry from the depths of your soul, from your entire soul, and that is enough. There is nothing more to do. That is perfection, and one can reach it.

But, one thing here is important. We are not allowed to have any doubts – this is where faith comes in. You see, I come back to everything again and again – because otherwise we would always have doubts about everything that we did. Doubt kills every effort. Gurujī told me, “You make progress, and then suddenly you have doubts. And these doubts throw you back by months, and then you have to begin over again.” That is in my book. And it is terribly sad. I made progress – I knew it – and then I began to have doubts, “Aach, this is all nonsense,” and “Is this all true?” and “What did he mean?” or

“Perhaps he lied to me,” or “Perhaps he is not a great man after all, and I have only imagined it all.” And I would have to begin again from the beginning.

So doubt kills every effort. And even the slightest hesitation prevents us from remaining fully involved. Our mind will question our actions and deny them; and even after we have arrived at some state, it will put that too into doubt and drown it.

Now. There are many different levels that energy can work on; we all know that. You can give all of your effort to the first level without ever being aware that there is still a second level: the inner level. Every level has to be entered and included, every level has to be integrated: both the inner and outer levels. And when you have the feeling that you are unable to do any more because you have no more energy, then you simply continue, you simply go on. (*Here, Mrs. Tweedie is very animated and emphatic, and the audience is ... unsettled and puzzled.*) It does not matter if you are too tired; keep at it! I tell myself that I will never get anywhere AND I continue with my efforts. That has happened to me.

I sat under the mango tree and said to myself, “Others have managed to do this before me, and others will do it after me. I will also do it. It all seems to be in vain, but I will still do it.” And then something will happen to you; then you will reach something. How much you will reach I do not know. I also do not know what I have reached. It is something, but I do not know how much. When I see the enormous horizon of what is possible to reach ... perhaps you and I will reach it, but I do not know. But the deciding moment is when you choose to go on; simply, without any pretension, and without hesitation.

How will you know if you have included all of the different levels? You will suddenly feel a surge, a shove of energy, and this shove of energy is the dynamic spark that goes on, the substance that is the pilgrim. Our person, our persona, is only taken along. The all-perceiving sense: intuition, leads, as it develops further, to intelligence: to this special intelligence that is not subjected to or dependent on the mind. So I am not speaking about the intelligence of the mind, but rather of the light in one’s heart; the light that discriminates between truth and the false glitter of empty appearance, between the bewitching illusion of this world, and something else. There are these two things: the illusion and bewitchment of this world, and the final truth.

So. Intuition is an additional sense, beyond the five senses we are familiar with. According to the Sufis, it is the light in heart, the eye in the heart. It is an additional sense, the sixth sense. It really does exist, and we can reach it. We have the other five senses that make it possible for us to live in this world; and this is a further sense, a spiritual sense, without which it would be impossible to find our Holy Grail, to reach our spiritual home.

You see, this will be a new idea for many people. They have never read it anywhere, and really, it belongs to the training of the disciple, but I have been permitted to say it openly here today. Earlier, no one except the disciples knew about this.

This spiritual sense is also known as the light in the heart, and as ‘the eye of the heart.’ I find it wonderful that I have been permitted to speak about this.

So I hope that I have been able to make myself understood. The mysterious substance – I am now repeating what I have said – is the all-perceiving sense of intuition; one could also say, ‘the inborn knowledge’ – inborn knowledge because the soul brings it with it – or the inner voice, or Divine Guidance. When it is further developed, it will lead to the arch-intelligence in the eye of the heart.

Buddha said, “I cannot give you the truth, but I can give you the longing for the truth.” Look how lovely that is. You see, I repeat myself again and again and again, but each time in a different way. But I find this quotation really inspiring. Yes! I cannot give you the truth, but I can give you longing. “Look at me, and your capabilities and possibilities will begin to come to life; something will begin to strive towards the future. Something within you will begin to long for what could be.” Again that is Lord

Buddha. Look at how poetic this is! Something will begin to strive towards the future. Something in you will begin to long for your own heart; and to long for what could be.

No one can give us the truth. Not Buddha, not Jesus, not the Gurus, and not the great teachers. No one. We have to do that ourselves. We have to somehow reach that ourselves. As I said, perfection is the totality; it is wholeness. And to be whole means to enter into something in such a way that nothing of you remains outside: without reservation and undivided. And this wholeness can never be exhausted, never. One can never empty this wholeness. So when love is all-embracing and comes from the depths of the heart, it can never be exhausted. Look at that! This is the greatest truth, and it belongs to the training of the disciple. But really, we know it anyway; we do not need this teaching. And you will never reach the end, the boundary of meditation. If you enter it completely, with your whole being, there is no boundary. You can never exhaust meditation.

Now, when the entire energy is included into the world of the spirit, one no longer has any sense of time. There is no time in the state of Samadhi. You can only perceive time in relationship to limitation, and that is why our sense of time always gives us a feeling of limitation. Time is the feeling of limitation. Time is relative. One can feel it go more quickly at one time and more slowly at others. And so, of course, it must be relative. But the totality is timeless; one cannot compare it to anything. I hope that I have not confused you too much. Time is relative. But in deep meditation, there is no time, there is no change, there is no process; and that is the reason why we are unable to recognize God. If there were two Gods, then we could compare them, and in that way we could grasp the meaning of what God might mean. But then God would no longer be all-encompassing, He would no longer be the One God; and so He remains unrecognized to us. And I think that this is where I end, (*Now laughing,*) after such an important statement, there is nothing more to say.

And now I want to give you twenty minutes to ask questions, because I feel that many of you do have questions. I would be pleased to have another two hours for your questions, but we only have twenty minutes. So. Are there any questions? Is there anything in your heart that you feel you need to ask?

(Question: I was hoping you might say a little more about the last thing you said.)

Oh. What did I say? (*There is a ripple of laughter ...*) I spoke about if there were two Gods, yes? So, if there were two God, then I could compare them. I could say, "Yes, this is the one, and this is the other." Then we could compare them, and we could come to understand them in that way. And then we would come to understand this concept of God. Look, you know that this is black because there are other colors. If everything were black, you would not know what black is. So the fact that you are not able to compare God to anything is the real concept of God. You can never know God because He can never be compared with anything. So God is that which is beyond comparison. And only God is beyond comparison. If there were two, then you would know what God is, but then, God would not be God. Is that now clear? (Questioner: Yes.) Good. Thank you for the question; perhaps there were also other people who also wanted to know more about that.

(Question: You spoke about how important it is to have a teacher on the path. But have there been teachers in our Western Christian culture? I do not mean these would-be teachers and Gurus.)

The woman said that I always say that a teacher is necessary, but in Western culture we do not have teachers. So then I have to ask you, what about Jesus? Everything that Jesus said is also to be found in the sacred writings of other traditions. You can find it in the Upanishads, in the Jewish Torah; it is the same in the Koran. I remember when I gave a lecture about the Gurudom of Jesus. I find that Jesus was one of the greatest Gurus in the history of the world. I do not believe that he was the son of God, because I cannot accept that God can have a son. He can overshadow someone, but God does not need a son; he has no relatives. (*Everyone is surprised into laughter ... that becomes quite a wave ... almost a roar.*) But Jesus was one of the greatest Gurus of the world, and in my lecture I gave examples from the Koran, from the Torah, from all the different scriptures. And they all said the same

things with different words. And you see, they are different because the Great Ones had to speak according to the conditions and requirements of their time.

Jesus had to speak to the ignorant fishermen in a different language from the one the Buddha used with the educated and sophisticated priests of Hinduism. And Mohammed had to use another approach for the Arabs who were constantly fighting with sword and saber, and who were always at war; men who despised women. He had to use another language. But if you scratch below the surface, just a little, you will find that the truth is the same.

I studied comparative religions for many years, and you know, all you have to do is scratch a little bit, and you will find the same truth. We have had great teachers here in the West: Saint John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, but do we read them? Or do we try to live as they did? No. We look for other Gurus who are much more interesting. Perhaps we travel to the East, or at least to somewhere different. There are great teachers in America. ... There are great teachers in England. My dear, the greatest teacher is you yourself, in your wholeness, in your splendor that you will discover one day. But to reach that, you need faith, and for that you need your heart; you need the ability to surrender and the ability to suffer. We humans are so made that when we are happy, we never think of God, but when we suffer ... when we lose someone that we love so very much.

What, after all, actually brought me personally to a spiritual path? It was the death of my husband – my husband whom I had loved so deeply, so ... infinitely. I was married to a naval officer, and when he died, I too wanted to die. But then one event after another brought me to the path. I was, as if guided by the events of my life. Then I began to study and I saw, “Ah, death is not the end.” And then I went more and more deeply, and then my destiny led me to my teacher.

And if you really want spiritual life, there is a spiritual law ... there is something called Karma; there is a law of cause and effect. I stretch out my hand, and the result, the effect is that I touch my clock. Now, when you have a really great wish for something, when you want to know something, that becomes a cause. And the effect will be that you will come to know it, after you have made enough effort.

I remember an event with my father when I was five years old. I no longer remember what it was about, but I had cried because I had wanted something or other. When one is five years old one does that. And we do that too! (*There is a laughter of embarrassed agreement.*) Only not so loud, and perhaps a bit more secretly. So I was crying. And I went to my father and said, (*Mrs. Tweedie now imitates a whining, crying five year old,*) “Waaa! I didn’t get ... ” whatever it was. My father was reading the newspaper. He laid the newspaper down – I remember this very clearly – and he said, “You didn’t get it? That is your own fault. You should have wanted it more,” (*There is a sparkling of happy laughter!*) and then he returned to his newspaper. And you see, I was very young, I was five years old, but I thought, “AHH!!! That is true! And now I will want (*Now yelling through clenched teeth!*) and want and Want and WANT! (*The laughter crescendos!*) And I am Aries. All of the astrology people know what that means, so you can ask any one of them. (*Everyone laughs.*) So I do not need to say any more about it. I think that I answered your question. (Q: Yes. Thank you.) Thank you for the question. (*People start to applaud.*) NO! No no no! Please! When you do that, you destroy everything that I have said. You should never clap at a spiritual lecture. When you do that, you destroy all of the vibrations that have been created. So please do not applaud. But you did not know, and there was very little applause, so you did not disturb anything this time. (*Everyone laughs.*)

So! (*Lifting her water glass for a drink,*) Cheers! Cheers for your soul; for the inner path of your soul. And now we will have twenty minutes of meditation, because if we do not meditate long enough, people always come to me and protest, and I have heard enough protests; I don’t want to give them more cause. So. Twenty minutes of meditation. And we will end with that.

I described our meditation yesterday, and I will not repeat it; I will only give a brief introduction, perhaps for those who are new here today. (*People continue to settle down, and a mother takes her child out,*) Yes, it will only be for twenty minutes. You see, the energy is very strong during the

meditation, and that is difficult for the children. But have you seen how wonderful the children here are? And how well they have behaved! So!

We relax, with the body as comfortable as possible. There is love in your heart. Just love. We sit, and we love; it is not important who we love; we simply love. And we are all love: the body, the mind, the heart, everything. And if another thought comes into your mind, a thought that is not love, then you grasp this thought and drown it in love, and nothing should remain except this love ... for twenty minutes. Thank you.

(The hall has already become very still ... and the meditation continues to deepen ... and deepen.

... and the seminar ends.)