

The Lectures
of
Irina Tweedie

The Empty Bell
Volume 8

Lectures:

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Translated, Compiled and Edited
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,
including Liselotte Treytl, from Vienna
who took the time and care
to meticulously review the mass of unedited material
that was used in this volume
for content and context
and to correct my limited German,
and Kerry Hardie
who has finally given me permission to give her credit
for having gone through all of the translations,
from the beginning
in a sometimes desperate attempt
to improve my English usage,
and Gillian Stokes
for her final review of volume's contents.

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

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Editor's note:

The first six volumes of the Empty Bell included almost all of the material contained in the original lectures. In Volume 7, the degree of repetition of previous material made it necessary to do some editing, and of in addition, readings from a German translation of Daughter of Fire were largely omitted. Volume 8 is the first of the volumes where the lectures have been severely edited. Some of the sections represent only 10% of the full content of the lectures, and altogether only about 25% of the material was used. I have included sections that presented something substantially new, including ideas and teachings, but also stories and asides. And I have included a large section that is essentially a repeat of her Berlin lecture on Kundalini because I felt that it presented the material from a slightly different perspective. I have also included some of the ancillary comments from both Mrs. Tweedie and others in order to retain the sense of the vitality and freedom of the meetings. While this degree of condensation is regrettable in that the resulting text no longer really represents the full richness of the gatherings, – some of these lectures were very lively and captivating – I felt that it was the only practical way to still be able to present the new and interesting material within the practical constraints of this project.

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

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

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Hamburg 1985

The Whole and the Part

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Hamburg, Germany
in August of 1985

Test. Test.

No, there is an echo. (*Everyone laughs*) Microphones are so difficult. No, there is still an echo. Please make it softer. (...) Yes ... No the echo is there again. There is still an echo, make it softer. (Now, from the audience, a resounding: "No!") It is OK? (*Again, in chorus: "Yes!"*) OK.

So! This evening, I want to speak to you about prayer. You know, there was a time when I was having an especially difficult time with my teacher. He was doing everything he could in order to grind my ego away. And when I complained to him about it, he said, "Why do you not pray?" Now I had always considered myself to be an atheist; I had never believed in anything. I had not prayed for years and years; I did not even know what it meant to pray. I remembered that I had prayed when I was five years old, but I could not remember what it was like. So I went home and thought to myself, "My teacher told me to pray, so I must try to pray." but then I thought, "What shall I do?" I lived in a small flat, five streets from his home. It was a flat in the Indian style, and as was usual, it had a small courtyard, and around this courtyard there were two small rooms and a veranda, and a bathroom and a kitchen. And the flat had a high wall around it. It was very hot. I put my bed in the courtyard and put my mosquito net over the bed and I lay there. And above me the sky was full of stars. The sky always seemed so near in India, so dark; and the stars seemed so large. And I thought, "Prayer? What can that mean? My Father who art in heaven? ... Or what?" And then it happened.

I flowed out of myself like a river, but I did not become less. And that is all that I can say. There are no words to express it. But there was such a bliss, something so endless in me. Afterwards, when I returned to myself, my knees were shaking. I was cold as death. I stood up, and I thought, "I have to make myself a cup of tea." I went into my kitchen and made a cup of tea. I remembered that it had been 9 o'clock at night when I went to bed, and I saw that it was already midnight. So I had been 'somewhere' for three hours. I thought, "What in heavens was that!" I was very confused. I could not understand what had happened. And I could not sleep. Then the next day, when I went to my teacher, I asked him, "Was that God?" I was still shaking inwardly. He looked at me, and said nothing. And I knew that when he did that, I could not ask anything more; that was the end of the conversation. And after that he did not look at me, and he did not speak with me, so I could not ask him anything more. And eight months passed before he said any more about this.

But I already knew how to get to this state. So I put myself into the same situation, and something happened every night. But it was always different. It was never the same twice. And it was more and more confusing. It was 'The Nothing'; it was the Void. And this Void was everything. But I was still not sure if this was the experience of God.

But I already knew, even then, that I would get a sign; and that if the teacher would not answer me, God would certainly help. I was sure that I would get a sign. Then one day I went to visit a friend, Pushpa. She was waiting for a telephone engineer, and she needed to go out to the dentist. She said, "Please, wait here for me. I will be back in an hour. If the telephone man comes, tell him where I want him to install the telephone." So she left and I sat there alone. And there were several newspapers, in English. They were Indian newspapers, but in English. And I leafed through them – I did not have anything else to do – and suddenly I saw a quotation from Daria Khan, a very famous Sufi from Sind in Pakistan. And the quotation was, "When I feel the Beloved in my heart, there is no form, there is only the perfection of love." And I thought, "My God! That is it!"

That afternoon, when I went to my teacher, he looked at me and smiled, so I knew that I could speak to him. I only said, "That was God, wasn't it?" "You idiot," he said, "It took eight months for you to know that!" That was all that he said. You see, that is the training. He did not explain anything to me. And it took me eight months: eight months of new adventures every night. And always different, always endless, always terrifying, and always with the greatest bliss. It took me eight months to somehow understand what it was. And even then, I didn't grasp it myself. I read it. You see?

This experience of God is completely confusing. One cannot understand it with the mind. And that is why it is so difficult. That is why, when I speak to people, I feel like a trickster. I tell you something that I really am not able to express. And so it is a kind of deception. And if I tried to explain something precisely, then you could easily misunderstand me. If I would say it one way, you could understand me in another way: misunderstand me in another way. So what should I do? And that is why the Sufis say that it makes no sense to speak about these things; that it is a complete waste of time. They say, "Sit down and meditate and have your own experiences, and then you will know." And that is the truth.

Now, the Lord is always the whole, and if you take something away from this wholeness, the wholeness alone remains. A part that is separated from the whole can never recognize the whole. It is only in dissolving into the whole – you see? It is through the experience of it ... that one can come to recognize, to realize the whole. And even then, not completely. I think that in the Indian scriptures it is said that even Ishwar the Creator can only see Brahma, the Absolute, through the veil of Maya. I find that this idea is helpful, because if even the Creator can only see the Absolute through a veil, what can we hope for? We are the tiniest part of That; only a very very tiny part.

Now, if someone decides to remain separate from the whole, and nevertheless struggles to understand it, he only indulges in intellectual gymnastics. One can examine the part, but one can only grasp the secret of the part in the whole. You see, even this is difficult to understand. In reality the part does not have its own independent existence, it draws its existence solely from the whole. If you recognize that the part, of itself, is nothing, then you have a chance to step beyond that part and become one with the totality. This is Sufi metaphysics. When you become united with something, then you cannot describe it objectively. This is similar to the fact that the eye can never see itself directly.

People attribute qualities to God according to their nature and their needs. But God does not only have the qualities that you attribute to Him, but an infinite number of qualities that you know nothing about. You see, when I want to meet God as the Beloved, I will describe Him as the Beloved, but He is much more than that. He is also a Judge and a Creator and a thousand other things besides. And every one of you would describe Him in another way. The Sufis say that every seed takes what it needs from the earth, from the sun, and from the air. But of course, that does not mean that every seed knows of all that is in the earth, sun or air. If you would ask a believer to describe God, his description could only take the form of his own surrender. He would only be able to describe God as far as he had surrendered to Him, and no more. That means that the surrender of the believer is a transmission of the nature of the Lord into human concept, into the personal human concept of the one who surrenders. And still this cannot be put into words, and can never, ever be complete. Even when you have the experience of love, here in this world, you can never quite put your experience or your understanding of it into words. Even when you love, you cannot ever quite put your own concept of it into words.

To what degree is one able to hear and speak of the Lord? In the moment one begins to describe the Lord, your speech no longer belongs to you, the ears that hear no longer belong to you. "When the eye sees, and yet sees not, when the ear hears and yet hears not, when the tongue speaks, and yet speaks not; only then will your speech, sight and hearing come from the Lord." I find that so wonderfully expressed. The language of the Sufis is so poetic. "It is only in the experience of the Lord that one can understand Him, but He cannot be experienced in the state of separation. Give up listening to anything except the praise of God, and then God will speak to you through you yourself. But that occurs only when your heart burns with the longing to end your separation from Him."

When you really long for the Beloved, you will not ask about His qualities. Let this longing go deep inside yourself. One who is dying of thirst will not ask about the qualities of the water in front of him; he only wants, desperately, to drink it. A starving man will never ask about the qualities of the food he is given; he only desires to eat it. I can only say to you that the nature of the Lord is such that you will always be unsatisfied without Him, because your real desire is only to be found in His nature. The very source of your real needs are there, in His very nature. As Saint Augustine said, "Our hearts will have no peace, until we find peace in Him."

When your little dependencies – the dependency on your body, on your husband or wife, on your children, on fame and fortune – when they all fall away, only then will your hidden desire for Him flame up and blaze. The fire of your real need will burn the dross of your ignorance; and it will unite you with the Beloved. Then the tongue will no longer speak, nor will the ear hear; and yet you will sing and hear the praise of the Lord. For such surrendered believers, it is the Lord Himself who sings His praise. If you are separated from your Lord, then you will never be able to sing or hear His praise. By surrendering deeply to God, even the greatest sinner will be transformed and will be immersed into absolute bliss. Wood that is thrown into the fire unites with and becomes the fire. Just as fire does not refuse to transform wood that is thrown into it, so the Lord does not refuse to take any soul into Himself. It is a sign of the immeasurable love of God. And that is why the only way to realize God's real nature is to become one with Him; and that means complete surrender in Him. And that is exactly what the Sufis try to live. Without complete surrender, everything you do or say, however beautiful your words, however holy your rituals might be, is nothing other than dead mechanics, and will not bring you to your goal. You can only realize God by being His subject and you can only be His subject by belonging fully and alone to Him.

Now, I would like to speak to you about prayer, and then I hope that you will have many questions. But first I want to speak about Sufi prayer. That it is very important.

We should not forget that progress on the spiritual path is always gradual. It can be compared with a ripening or an unfolding. One comes closer and closer to the light in one's heart, and dives ever deeper in one's very deepest being. That is the path. We dive into that within us that is a part of the infinite. That is the highest, the most advanced form of prayer: to dive into the infinite, into our own inner self. But in the beginning one usually prays for help. And there are other forms of prayer. There is the prayer of thanks for the goodness and grace of God that is given to us. There is also the prayer in which we ask forgiveness for our faults and mistakes; and there is a still higher form of prayer where we praise God, where we praise Him with hearts full of love. This kind of prayer is a song of praise for His splendor and honor. But the highest form of prayer is absorption. That is the prayer of the mystics and prophets. It means to surrender to God completely, perfectly; to disappear into Him.

Once, when I asked my teacher how one should pray, he said, "One can, of course, pray with words, but that is not the real prayer. Real prayer means merging: to become one with the Almighty that we call God. The goal is to lose yourself in the truth of His Being." And it is only by praying in this way that you can become God-conscious. One comes closer and closer to God. And not only that, but when you merge you are able to forget your limited self, until it is fully overcome and only the Divine Being remains. You see, the idea is that we so unite with God that we become a part of Him. Of course, that is the ideal.

This method of prayer brings perfection into imperfection. Then a miracle happens: a transformation takes place. And this really does happen. I have often seen this transformation happen in people. Guruji said, "Two masters cannot live in one heart, it must either be the small self, the ego; or God. When you lose the small self in the greater self, then only one remains." And that, of course, is complete surrender. "For the believers who have surrendered themselves to the Lord, there is nothing more to do." They experience both the joy and bliss that, as one says, is beyond all understanding. And really, once you have surrendered, you have nothing more to do. Nothing. He does everything. The Lord takes over everything, and Divine love follows gradually and becomes stronger and stronger. Desirelessness and the bliss of perfect stillness are the result.

Even unfulfilled desires resolve themselves in this process. It is a state of consciousness where the spirit functions on a completely different level; it is a state of communion with God. One returns effortlessly to this state between two actions or thoughts, until finally one remains in this state forever. It is astonishing how this inner state can help you to separate your real 'I' from your lifelong assembled identity, and how that leads to the state of desirelessness and the ability for intelligent discrimination.

You see, one gets such a feeling of freedom. The small self falls away; you belong somewhere, and That decides for you. You are completely protected and completely fulfilled. But to reach that, you have to go through a state of complete uncertainty; through a no-mans land where no one can help you; where, metaphorically speaking, there is no water, and your feet bleed. But it is worth it. Afterwards you are completely protected, and you are never again alone. Then you no longer need to have any longing. That, or He, is with you.

Now, this state begins when all of the esoteric and spiritual disciplines and practices are exhausted; or more precisely said, when all of the practices and disciplines you have been doing find their highest fulfillment, in that they merge into truth or God. The still small voice within you can only be heard when the flow of thoughts has really stopped. And this should not be confused with concentration or even with any form of meditation, although these can certainly be a bridge to this state. This is pure consciousness per se, which is one with ultimate truth. ... Now. This is a goal.

That the prayer of absorption, the complete surrender in God, is the highest form of prayer, makes clear that every different spiritual practice leads to one and the same fundamental goal. And I am not just speaking of Sufism, but all spiritual practices. It proves the truth of the unity of every prayer, of every form of worship, and of every philosophy: not only Sufism, but all. In the East, this meditation or absorption is called 'The Mother of all Powers', because with this kind of prayer all of the useful and necessary powers come of themselves. And, in fact, this state of absorption is the source of all discoveries and all inventions. They all rise from this state of absorption.

But really, everything that one could say about the state of merging and about being constantly in the presence of God can only be said symbolically. In reality, these things do not allow themselves to be expressed, nor can they be limited by any description or explanation, because the practice and the practitioner are one.

You see where we have ended? In the highest metaphysics. Yes, that was difficult going! So, do you have any questions?

(Question: *Inaudible.*)

I am sorry but I could not understand you. (Q: ...) The acoustics of this hall are very bad. Could you please come to the microphone. Then we will all be able to hear you.

(Question: Mrs. Tweedie, you were a Theosophist, and I would like to know if you can describe any parallels between Theosophy and Sufism, or if you can give us some feeling for the difference.)

I think that Theosophy is everything, and so there is no contradiction between Theosophy and Sufism. You see, when I was with my teacher, I always looked for something that he might say that

would contradict something in Theosophy. But he never said anything that was not in agreement. It was always the same. I personally believe that every religion and philosophy really say the same things. If you scratch, only a little, only just below the surface, you will find the unity behind all religions. On the surface it may appear that they are different, but the deepest content is always the same.

(Question continues: Yes, I understand what you are saying and I too see it that way, but then, why did you look further if, in the end, you could have also come to God through Theosophy. What made you look for a physical Master?)

My dear, that was destiny that led me to my teacher. When I went to India, I did not go to find a teacher. But, although Theosophy is well and good, and the teaching is there, it does not give you a way to experience the training. Theosophy teaches through books, and real teaching is never through books. It is always from heart to heart. And you see, Theosophy has all of the esoteric teaching, but I do not think that they have anyone who can teach from heart to heart.

(Question continues: When you speak of this training, do you mean something that happens on the mental plane?)

No. Every teaching that you can learn from books is on the mental plane, but the Sufis do not teach anything in that way. Something happens between the teacher and the disciple, and that is the direct transmission of power. That is the difference. I think that that is clear in my book, but if it is not clear to you and you would come to me, I would try to explain it better. But one cannot reach self-realization with books, through books. That is completely impossible. It is a question of power, and books can never transmit power to you directly. The Theosophists have all of the esoteric teaching and wisdom, but so do the Vedas and the Upanishads; everything is also in the Koran. But when you have read these books, well, you have read them and perhaps you understood them, but that is all.

There is one sentence in the Vedas. I read the Rig Veda while I was in Adyar – in English of course; I cannot read Sanscrit – and the first sentence of the Rig Veda is, “The truth is one, but the wise call it by different names.” Now, once you have read that, you can close the book. Everything is already there. (*There is a ripple of laughter.*) But will that help you to reach God or the truth? No. One must walk alone, with bloody feet, and there must be someone who will help you. I remember one time that the president of the Theosophical society said, “Spiritual life is like a ladder. Someone helps you, and you help someone.” And that is true, and you cannot do that through books.

(Question continues: Thank you.)

Thank you for the lovely questions. Yes?

(Question: *Inaudible*)

Yes. You see, on this path of the Sufis, Kundalini energy is awakened slowly. In my case that was not true, but my case was somewhat unusual. My teacher was very ill and was dying, and in five and a half years he had to do what is normally done in thirty years. So in my case it was awakened rather quickly, but usually the Kundalini power is awakened very gently and there are no problems. Now this woman that you asked about was with a teacher in Kashmir, and this teacher was a Tantra Yogi. And in Tantra Yoga, Kundalini is awakened quickly. And unfortunately, the teacher had awakened the Kundalini in this woman, but then he did not know what to do when it got a bit out of hand. And this woman came to Gurujī for help. And Gurujī said, “Only the teacher who awakened the Kundalini can help the disciple. I cannot help her.” And she really had big problems. You see, in my case, I had terrible problems, but they were connected with the training. And after a time, all of these problems passed.

I remember that one day I was completely at the end of my strength. Kundalini is a terrible power; it is really atomic power. It is the same energy that is in matter. But you see, without this atomic power – because now I know from my meditations and visions and experiences, I really know that this is atomic

power – without the power of Kundalini, you cannot experience truth. One even says in the Theosophical writings that one needs a physical body to be able to achieve enlightenment. If you do not have a physical body with its Kundalini power, then you cannot reach it, and this power is really quite incredible.

But this woman's teacher in Kashmir had awakened the Kundalini in her, and she had serious problems. I know her; she is still alive, and is living in France. She is about my age. I have heard that she is rather ill just now, but I do not think that it is connected with this Kundalini experience she had. She is old and she no longer has a meditation group.

(Question: You have said that your teacher will not return to this world, to a physical body again. Will you?)

You see, I would say that about him. For myself, I cannot be sure that I will be able to reach him. I cannot yet know. But there are fourteen levels. The physical level is not the only one. There are other levels of consciousness, and other levels of being. There are seven planes of cause, and seven planes of effect. That means there are planes where one creates karmas¹, and other planes where one reaps the results of these karmas or actions. And beings are needed on these planes to work for humanity. This branch of Sufism works for humanity, always. Even after we have died, we continue to work for people, on other levels. Guruji said, "There are other levels where we are needed. We work for humanity." We do that in another body. Another time he said, "This physical body, of course, is nothing. When we die, then we have another body that is made of light. And this light body goes from level to level, and is almost immortal." That is not quite clear, but I cannot express it any better. You see, there are other levels where one can work, not only this level. And my teacher probably believed that he would be of more value somewhere else. Yes?

(Question: I would like to know if you have desires, if you are ever afraid of things, and if you are happy.) *(The audience chuckles at the direct innocence of the question.)*

I do have desires. You see, one does have desires. We are, after all, human. But if my desires are not fulfilled, then it is not important for me; that is the difference. And fear? No, I personally do not have any fear for myself. Once one is surrendered to the will of God, then one no longer has fear for oneself. But yes, I do worry about others. My fears are the fears of other people. You see, Rabindranath Tagore – no, I am not sure if it was him, and I will not just guess about such things – someone said, "When you have only touched the hem of the garment of truth, then you have no other desire than to tell others who they are, from where they have come, and where they are going." That is the only desire that remains. I have had some experiences and I want to tell you, "You too can do that." For God's sake, do it! It is truly wonderful.

And as to whether I am happy, Yes, I think that I am: absolutely and completely. I am happy for myself; but I cannot say that I am happy for the world, for other people. So it is the unhappiness of others that creates difficulties for me. But for me personally, everything is fine. Everything that He wills is good. Thank you for the lovely question.

(Question: You have said that the spiritual path that you are trying to bring us closer to actually begins where the path of individuation ends. But isn't it true that many people still have, let us say, problems even to be a good citizen? And I count myself among them. And now, I have the question: what meaning, what value does what you have been telling us have for those of us with these kind of difficulties? How can it help us to be able to bring our normal lives into balance? How much can these things help? Or should we first go through psychotherapy before we begin this next phase?)

¹ Throughout the volume, I have used the lower case when karma is used in the sense of 'action' or 'cause', and the upper case when it refers to the philosophical system.

(Mrs. Tweedie has not understood the question, and asks the man to come to the microphone. He does and asks the above question and returns to the audience, but his German was both complex and quickly spoken.)

My problem is not that I could not hear you, but my German is too limited to understand. Could you please come back? *(The man returns and explains his questions to Mrs. Tweedie.)* Thank you, now I have understood completely. It was quite a straight-forward question, and it was completely my fault that I did not understand it.

So. I said that spiritual life begins where the path of individuation ends, psychologically speaking. But of course, that does not mean that one must first go through analysis and complete the process of individuation before one begins a spiritual path. What I meant to say – and it is clear that I did not explain it very well – is that one can begin the spiritual path at any time. As my teacher said, to go into solitude – into a monastery or into the forest or jungle – and to meditate there in order to realize God is a limitation. We must be able to realize God here, in this life, while we are living normal lives among people: we marry and have children, and we have careers. We have to be able to experience the truth with all of these difficulties. As Guruji said, “The greater the limitation, the greater will be the perfection.” So I confused you in speaking about the process of individuation. I really wanted to point out that the terms ‘individuation’ and ‘realization’ are not the same. Thank you. That was important.

(Question: Could you tell us when you were born?) Is that really necessary? (Question continues: Yes, for me.) OK.

I was born on the 7th of April in the Julian calendar; in the Gregorian calendar it is the 20th of April. (Question: Wasn't Hitler born on that date?) Yes, other people were also born on that date, but I have nothing to do with them. I was born in 1907, in Odessa in Russia, on the Black Sea. Yes, to calculate my horoscope chart, you will need an ephemeris. I am not quite certain that it is the 20th of April by the Gregorian calendar, but I think that that is right. *(There is a long slow wave of laughter.)* I will tell you why. The Russian Christmas falls on the sixth of January here, so it is not quite two weeks. And it was calculated in that way in my documents, in my passport, and so forth. I know that it was the seventh of April by the Julian calendar, and it was not yet sunrise. My father told me that the sky was already light, but the sun was not yet up. So I am probably Aries. ... Probably. *(Again there is a lot of laughter.)*

(Question: You have said that if we come to know the truth that we will be changed; in what way did you change through that process?)

The changes were, of course inner and not outer changes. I probably look just like I looked before, only much older. You see, it is the values that have changed. Things that used to be very valuable for me have now lost their worth. I can give you an analogy.

Imagine that you have a very small child, and that the child is playing with matches. You come into the room and you see your child playing with a box of matches. Now that is terribly dangerous. But you do not simply want to take the matches away from the child because then the child will cry. So instead you take a big red ball, and you say, “Look what a beautiful ball.” And the child will throw the matches away and grab for the ball. Then you will have changed the values for the child. Do you understand? But perhaps I can say a little more about this.

This world is not important to you anymore. There are a thousand things that had been important to me and are not important for me at all anymore. And other things become infinitely important. For me personally, meditation is infinitely important. My greatest bliss is when I am with ... something. But I cannot describe this ‘something’. And yesterday, in speaking about someone I said, “Oh, I like him so much.” But then I thought, “Who do I not like?” There is no longer anyone that I do not like. For me, every human is wonderful; every person is an adventure; every person is something magical. There are no ‘unpleasant’ people. That does not mean that I never give someone a hard time, or even that I never throw anyone out of my group in London. Oh yes! It is the same if your child does something very wrong; you also have to scold it. If you see someone do something wrong, you have to show that you

do not like it. But, the way humans develop and change is so wonderful, and when you are young I will give you another example, and perhaps that will make things clearer.

When I was quite young and in school, there were exams and there was so much homework, and somehow I never noticed that I had grown up and become a woman. Psychologically, I was still a child and somehow I never really looked at my body, so it just changed by itself, unnoticed. And then I was at home one day during the school holidays in the summer, and I took a bath. And there was a mirror in the bathroom. I looked in the mirror, and saw that my body had changed a great deal. And I had not noticed it before. These parts of me were 'me', but although they belonged to me, I had not noticed them. That is the way it is with inner transformation. I am 'that', but I do not notice how much I have changed inwardly. I only know that the values are very different. The friends that I used to like a great deal are no longer very interesting for me, and I am also very boring for them. Many doors close to you, and others open. Is that now clear? That is the change.

I just thought of something that relates to the question about the Theosophical Society. Before I came to Gururji, I read something interesting in the literature of the Theosophical Society. I think it was Bischoff Ledbeater who said that the Atman or higher self can be seen about four or five inches above the head of a person. I once asked my teacher if that was true. And he said, "Yes it is true." So you see, what the Theosophists say is completely true. And one can also see the soul in the eyes of a person. I think Gururji said that one can see the soul in both the eyes and the forehead.

After you have once seen the soul of a person, then you can never again look into their eyes without remembering how they look on another level. Whenever I see a person for the first time, I think, "How would their eyes look there?" They are the same eyes, but of course, much more wonderful. It is something ... something Divine. We are all Divine; it is only that we do not know it. We have forgotten it. And humans are pure love, because God is pure love. But we have forgotten that too. That is why the Sufis say that the only evil is the ego, the 'nafs'. If we would each overcome our egos, then everything would be different. There would no longer be any wars; then we would know that you and I are one, and we would never hate another person, and we would never be envious. If you were happy, and I was unhappy, I would not be envious. If I can see that you are also me, then why would I be envious?

(Comment: If we want a meditation, now would be the time to begin.)

OK. Would you prefer to continue with the questions, or to meditate? (*There is a chaos of voices in a hall with very live acoustics.*) OK, how many of you want to meditate? (*People raise their hands.*) Oh! All of you. Oh gosh! (*There is a friendly burst of laughter.*) So. Meditation! That is lovely. I am very happy about that. (*There follows a period of chaos as people prepare to meditate.*)

Now this is the meditation of this Sufi school, but every meditation will lead you to the truth. Every Yoga, every philosophy, every religion will lead you to the truth, if you are diligent, and you do your practices, and of course, if it fits with your temperament. It is very important that a spiritual path somehow fits with your personal temperament. I send many people away from my group. I tell them, "This path is not for you. It is not for everyone."

(*I have omitted Mrs. Tweedie's description of the details of how one does the meditation, because that topic is repeated many times in these translations.*)

In every Yoga book, in every school of Yoga, they will tell you that the first step is to still the mind, and that if you cannot still your mind then you cannot have any real spiritual experiences. Our path is the path of the mystic, and on such a path people have wonderful experiences on another level. But you cannot reach this other level until you are able to still your mind completely.

So. This meditation is easily described, but it is not easy to do. In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna told Krishna, "The mind is more difficult to tame than the wind." Sometimes it takes years. But I know people

who have been able to do it in a few months, and I knew someone who came to me who could already do it, because he had already done it in previous lives.

So we will try to do this practice now. And we will do it for ten minutes. One does not need to do more the first time. And of course, you can do it at home. But I want to ask that when you do it at home, you do not look at the clock while you are doing it. It is not important that you do it for five minutes or more, or even for less. It is the quality that is important, and not how long you do it.

So, now we will begin. Relax. Take one deep breath, and go into your depths, deep into your hearts, where there is stillness and love and peace. And as each thought arises, melt it into the love in your heart

(The meditation deepens and the evening ends.

)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Vienna 1985 – Excerpts

A Bird Sings for God

**Based on a series of lectures given
in Vienna, Austria
on August 3 & 4, 1985**

(Question: *inaudible.*)

One day Guruji said to us, “We Hindus follow a kitchen religion: one thing is cold, one is hot, one is pure, and one dirty; one thing is Satva and another is Tamas. One should not eat onions or garlic because they are unhealthy. One can only do this with the right hand, and that with the left. It is all nonsense.” And then he said, “And the Moslems pray five times a day and then they go and cheat each other in the bazaar.” And then he turned to me and said, “And you Christians?” I had not expected that at all. “You say that yours is the religion of love. And do you love?” I could only stand there and say, (*In a very innocent voice.*) “No.” (*Everyone laughs.*) Every religion begins wonderfully, but after a thousand years the priests spoil them – the people themselves spoil them – and where are the religions – our Christian religion and every other religion? – nowhere. I hope people do not spoil Sufism too in this way. It is already a bit shaky.

(Question: Can one somehow contact people after they have died?)

I will answer by telling you of an experience I had with my teacher. One day one of Guruji’s other disciples told me that Guruji could let me meet my dead husband. But I thought, “No, he has been dead for a long time, there would be no point.” And then I thought about it, and I decided that I would ask. But when I asked him about it, he said, “No, it would be of no use. If I would bring you to him, he would not recognize you at all.” And I said, “What?!” And he said, “No, he would not; and even if I made him recognize you, he would say, “Ah, yes, yes. Long ago she was my wife.” I could only laugh. I said, “Then please, don’t show him to me.” If he wouldn’t remember me at all, that would be too humiliating. We had been so happily married.

On the other level, after we die, everything is very different from the way things are here. One cannot begin to describe or explain it. I can only say one thing about it. This is a great consolation, and you will not find it in books. It belongs to disciple training, and it is important. After death, you will never meet anyone who is your enemy, or anyone you strongly dislike. Never! And why? It is quite simple. It is because the vibrations, the frequency, would be different. One could think of radio waves. If you are not at the same frequency, then you cannot meet. And if someone is an enemy, or there is something that you do not like in another person, that does not mean that they are bad, or that you are bad. It is simply that the frequencies are different. Someone who understands electricity will understand this exactly. The laws of nature are the same everywhere. So what people say about hell and the other states that come after death, as far as I personally know, as far as I have seen, are not true. You will only meet those people who are on the same wavelength, at the same frequency as you yourself are.

But once you have reached the state of a high Yogi, then it no longer has any meaning to say that you meet 'someone'. Because in that state, this 'someone' and you would be one and the same. That is a fact. For such people, there is absolute unity. Thank you for your question.

(Question: You said that Sufis meet in the night. Is there something special reason why you meet in the night? Is the night a special help for spiritual life?)

No, you see, when we are asleep, we are free. As Rumi says, "The king is not in his castle, and the prisoner is not in his cell." (Question continues: But one can also sleep in the day.) Oh yes, one can also sleep in the day. And every time you sleep you are free. The body sleeps, but the soul goes free. (Question continues: So one could also understand the saying from the Bible, "To those who belong to Him, He gives it in sleep," in this way?) Yes, that is wonderful. Say it again, but louder so that everyone can hear it. (*She does.*) Yes, I personally would understand it in that way.

(Question: Can all of creation – all of the plants and animals – also have a spiritual life?)

... Yes ... but not quite the way it is for us. You see, when you are in deep meditation, you have the ability to understand the singing of the birds. And birds are sometimes in ecstasy with God. Now, scientists say that birds sing when they want to proclaim their territory. And yes, that is also true. They proclaim their territory and tell all of the other birds, "This is mine." But! While they sing, the vibrations of the singing itself bring them into ecstasy. And this ecstasy is really the ecstasy of God. But there is a difference. The bird does not know that. It does not have the intelligence or the understanding that we have. But we only have this intelligence and understanding when we have reached the level of Yogis.

But normal people too have wonderful moments of bliss, and sometimes they know what this bliss really is. For example, when one is in love with another person, there is sometimes such a feeling of bliss. And this bliss is never really about this other person. It is always God's bliss. It is said in the Brihadaranyaka (*Pronounced Bree-had-aran-yaka*) Upanishad, "You do not love your wife because she is your wife, you love her because she has a soul which is God's soul" So it is the relationship from soul to soul. "You do not love your husband because he is your husband, but because he has a soul which is God's soul." That is why you love him.

Love is always based on a relationship between souls. This special bliss is never, ever connected to the ego; it has nothing to do with the ego. For example, the last ecstasy in sexual intercourse, in orgasm, does not belong to the physical body. That is always a moment of ecstasy on the level of the soul, on the level of Atman. That is why it is so incredibly strong, and that is why it is so overwhelming. When you make love with your husband or wife, try to look at this. Of course, while you are examining this feeling, you cannot really do anything, and while you are involved in the doing, then you cannot examine it. I can guarantee that it is difficult because I have tried it. (*Everyone sees the difficulty and laughs.*) But, if you try, eventually you can do it. And you will see that in this moment you do not belong to your partner. In this moment, there is an explosion into the infinite. It is a fireworks explosion into the infinite. In this moment, the partner does not exist. He exists before and after, but not in this moment. In that moment you exist somewhere in infinite space. It is a moment of eternity, and this is given to us so that we will have children. So this ecstasy is a Divine creation of God that is projected into humans: both man and woman.

It is a little complicated. No? You have understood? God bless you. There are things that people who do not have a special interest in spiritual life do not understand at all. And you have understood me. So you have some talent in metaphysics. Yes, that was a very good question.

(Question: I wanted to ask you what sort of prayer or meditation you do just before sleep in order to join your group in the night?)

I cannot tell you. I can only tell those who belong to this path. Other paths have their own methods, and if you belong to one of these paths I have no right to tell you these things. This is a part of this particular path. And even if I were to describe it to you, it would have no meaning for you. It would not

work for you. On this path there is a small practice that one does just before going to sleep, and then we are together in the night. Everyone who follows this path – those who are tuned to this wavelength – join in the night. It is all connected with vibrations. Every spiritual path is a path of energy. So, I am sorry, but I cannot tell you.

(Question: Are these experiences of unity that you describe similar to paradise as it is described in the scriptures?)

Like experiences of paradise? I do not know. I can only speak of my own personal experiences. But I think that one can find these experiences of unity described in the great scriptures of the world, like the Upanishads. And I think that they are often wonderfully described. You can also find them in the writings of the great mystics like Saint Teresa of Avilar, and Saint John of the Cross, and also the great saints. They all describe this state very well.

You see, my teacher forbid me to read while I was with him. He said, “Before you have realized God, books are only an obstacle. But after realization, books can be very useful in helping you to better express yourself.” But not in the beginning. And why? Because then the mind becomes too proud. If I have studied a great deal, and am, perhaps, a doctor of philosophy, then I know better than the next person. So, are there any other questions? No?

So. Our meditation is called Dhyana meditation. And in this meditation we concentrate on the psychic heart center. The heart center is near the spine, at approximately the height of the physical heart. It is to the right of the heart, but not quite in the middle. That is where it is in my body, and in your body it would be there too, more or less. Now, when we concentrate on our psychic heart center, it begins to vibrate. Ah. What happens when we concentrate on something? Prana, or Divine energy – life energy – follows your thoughts. One can direct it with one’s thoughts. So when you concentrate on the heart, when you concentrate on this center, this center begins to vibrate, and your ability to love will increase. And as this ability increases, you will love more, and when you love more, this ability will increase. It is a kind of chain reaction.

So, from the standpoint of energy, you bring your heart center into vibration, because you feed it, as it were, with energy, with Prana. Then your love increases and you become a better human being. You become more loving and softer and you become more understanding. You train your mind to become still and to remain still. And when you do that, you awaken a mysterious energy within you, an energy that is connected with Kundalini. You see what a chain reaction this is!?

And then everything that is dark within you will come to the surface. It is like self-analysis. Let us say that you stole something at some point in your past – just something small – and then you tried to forget it; you forgot all about it. Then suddenly, as you try to bring your mind to stillness, this memory comes up. And you dismiss it immediately saying, “Oh. But I am not like that at all. That was long ago.” Then this thought returns to the unconscious and disappears. But in your next meditation, it comes up again, and again, and again. And it will continue to torture you until you recognize that, for example, you are not nearly as honest a person as you had thought, and that even today somewhere in you there is still a part that could steal something. Or perhaps you did not pay a bus fare. Yes. And that is self-analysis. And then, through this meditation, because these things begin to torture you in earnest, you begin to actually do something about these things, and to improve yourself. And here is the secret of this wonderful meditation: the more we improve ourselves, the faster we will realize the truth.

You see, Yoga is not about miracles, and is not about having power and ruling over people, and it is not about riches. Yoga is absolute humility. Yoga is to work without working, to make efforts without making efforts; it is running while you are standing still. And in these things, this path is very similar to Zen Buddhism. I am speaking about this path of Yoga, which is really the only one I can say anything about. But every other path is just as good.

(I have omitted Mrs. Tweedie’s description of the mechanics of the meditation.) And now I want to do this meditation with you. *(As she begins to lead people into the practice, a bird starts singing – full*

and happy – somewhere nearby, and continues through the explanation and the meditation.) So. Now we will actually do this practice in earnest. Please relax yourself, either sitting, or if you have enough room, you can lay down; it makes no difference. You must completely relax. And now we take one – please, only one – deep breath. And then continue to breath completely normally.

And we imagine that deep within us there is a wonderful place, where there is stillness and eternal peace, God's peace; and there is love. God is love, and the human is also love, (*The bird is singing away here!*) created in God's image. And we go deeper and deeper into our selves. We go, in complete humility; completely surrendered. And still deeper, into the deepest depths of ourselves. And after you have found this place, remain there. And imagine that all of you – your entire body – is within this place, and nothing remains outside of it. Think of your body and look to see that not a hair remains outside. Everything is there.

And then you look at your thoughts. You can be thinking of this place, yes, but when other thoughts come, then you grasp them and drown them in the love in this place. And this feeling of love must be genuine and true and warm. It makes no sense to only think about love. Love is more than thought. You have to feel it. And that is all for ten minutes.

(The meditation begins ...

... and ends ...)

So we will continue until our tea break, and afterwards there will not be any more teaching. We will simply be together. And if someone would do it for me, I would like to buy some apple juice for the tea pause. We can all have our tea, but then there is nothing for the children who are here, and that would be nice if they too had something. Even dogs like something special now and then.

And now I want to say a few things about the human soul. I want to begin with a few really wonderful quotations. You know, when I have such wonderful things to read, I feel as if I had wings, as if I could fly. I am so thankful that I have things like this to inspire you.

“The soul is something immeasurable, it is the reflection of the entire cosmos. Everything that is in the cosmos can also be found in the soul. And everything that is to be found in the soul also exists in the cosmos.”

“Oh thou, who wander in search of your own secret, look, and you will find everything in your own self. You are the infinite that reveals itself as both the path and the truth. You are the union of the Divine mystery in its fullness.” And my friends, we have forgotten this, and that is a shame. That is why people are needed here on this earth to remind you. There are many people who ring bells; they ring bells in your hearts: your own bells, in order to remind you of who you are, where you have come from and where you are going.

And now from Sufism, “The human is a current that descends from the heavens and draws the material of the earth to itself,” or better said, “The human is a current that flows from the inner world, and clothes itself in the physical qualities of the outer world, the world of matter.” That it ‘clothes itself’ in the matter of this world is an important statement. “The human body is only a vehicle for the soul. The soul comes from the heavens, and takes this body as its residence. And that is why the individual appears to have two presences, appears to be composed of two parts: the body and the soul. The meeting of soul and body gives rise to the mind at the point where the soul and body meet.”

So, it is the meeting of soul and body that gives rise to the mind, and it is these three together that form the human being. Our divine inheritance is a spiritual current that originates in the source of all being. The soul has might and creative power. That is its divine inheritance. The soul is a lodge: it accommodates everything. And the mind too is only a ... capacity.

And another quotation, “I am a child of the earth and the starry skies, but my race is from Him alone.” We are something so immeasurable that one cannot begin to describe it.

Now, we want to see how much we can grasp, how much we can use our imagination to get just an idea of what this immortal and seemingly immeasurable being in us is. You see, religions speak of the immortality of the soul, and so we know about it intellectually. But we Sufis know it from our own inner experiences. If you are able, even only once, to reach the deep states of meditation, where you can function, or be conscious, on another level, then you will know that you are not your body. This is not the experience that one can have when you come out of anesthesia – mediums also experience this state – where one sees one’s own body lying on the operating table, and you are somewhere outside of it. That is something different. The experience that I am speaking about is a different state of consciousness. And once you have had this experience of the soul in deep meditation, you will never be the same again. We experience that we are really eternal. But all of us must already have some hint of it: everyone behaves as if they would never die. We never think about death. Look at how you yourself behave. We behave quite stupidly; we waste our power and our minds, and we do stupid things with our bodies.

I remember that I did very many silly things when I was young. Now I cannot anymore. I do not have the strength. (*Everyone laughs at her excuse.*) Yes, otherwise I would still be doing them. It is only that I cannot anymore. I remember when we went skiing in Switzerland. We would ski all day, and then dance until four in the morning. Then we drank some coffee and were out on the slopes at eight. Of course, we were all dead tired. And how long could one do that? We did it for a week! At the end of the week all of us were exhausted. And that was our holiday! We went home well refreshed.

And I remember mountain climbing. Now I can’t even climb up a tiny hill. I would be gasping for air after a few steps, like a fish. But I used to do mountain climbing, even rock climbing! I grew up in Vienna, and we went climbing on ‘The Rax’. (*A mountain about sixty miles south of Vienna.*) And one gets so exhausted ... I remember that we would spend the whole day climbing, and then we would arrive at the mountain hostel in the evening. I remember eating the most impossible things: thick fat bacon and beer. I cannot even look at bacon anymore, it is so fat that it is impossible to digest. But I digested it then, and green potatoes, too. Everything. What stupidities! The poor human body gets subjected to all of these things. And well, it is not very healthy. But we all do that. We forget that we will die. We have this body and we use it, and then it disappears.

It is said that not a leaf can move on a tree unless God wills it; not a hair can fall from your head. I am trying to quote the Bible, but I am not doing very well. But I think that you know what I mean. And not even a tiny sparrow can fall from a tree without Him knowing. So why do we sit here and complain that the world is a terrible place to live; that everything is terrible and that everything is corrupt and dirty? In truth, the world is wonderful. But some people have even forgotten how to laugh, some people have forgotten how to be happy. And they do things that they think will make them happy. They drink and take drugs thinking that these things will help them; that they will feel better. But they do not. They can only feel better when they come closer to the truth. Because when they do that, their minds expand to such a degree that they come to understand why things are as they are. And then they are no longer afraid ... of anything. All of these fears are worthless. None of it is important. Even what I am saying to you is not important.

So, what are we after all? Are we this small miserable something, that will be destroyed for all eternity, as some people believe? Or are we something immeasurable, without limits or limitations; something that has always existed and always will exist; something that exists eternally. You see, the Siegfried motif², the motif of the hero, is nothing in comparison to this. The soul is immeasurable and eternal and great. And every possibility is in you and in me. But this is yet another proof that spiritual life is a deep need for us.

² A motif is a recurrent, usually musical theme, in this case from Richard Wagner's interpretation of early Germanic mythology. Mrs. Tweedie compares this wonderfully heroic motif to spiritual reality.

Why do people love this hero-motif so much? Why do they make so much effort? Why are there so many songs about this theme, and so much poetry? It springs from this longing in us. Every one of us knows that somewhere, we are That. But here we are so limited. We are men and women. We become ill and cannot even move. Or we have to go to the office, and we have a boss who yells at us. We are small. But somewhere we know what we are. Somewhere we know that we are something infinite.

(Question: There are people who steal. Perhaps it is because they have the feeling that they do not have enough. I know that, really, there is more than enough, and if I understand and really believe that there is enough, this life would not be so impossible.)

Yes, that is absolutely correct. But you see, the drive for self-preservation is so strong that you will always be afraid that you will not have enough. And that develops into greed. You see what I mean? This drive is so ... mighty, that in order to ensure that you have enough, you will begin to save more and more, for yourself and for your children. For example, someone told me something very interesting, something that I had never understood.

A psychologist told me that when a child does not have enough protection or enough mother's milk, not enough warmth or attention, then somehow the very cells of the child are so programmed that the person will have a deep psychological hunger for things for his entire life. He will have a compulsion to store up things.

And you see, I too have this hunger, and I never understood why. I am Aries and Aries people are usually generous; they usually do not save anything. They don't keep anything for the next day, so to speak. But for me, it was always very important to have things. I had more and more and more clothing, and I never even used what I had. I had dresses that I never once wore. Now I have given almost all of my property away. But when I would give my dresses away, I would always buy new ones. And why? Then, when I was given this explanation, I thought, "That is true for me too," I was born too early, and I was the first daughter, the first child, and my mother did not have any milk. At first they tried to raise me on cow's milk, but I always vomited, and was always blue. I almost died. Then they found me a wet-nurse to breast-feed me and it was OK. But of course, it was another milk, from another woman, a Russian farmer. It was not from the body of my own mother. And so for the cells of my body, this milk was not as good. I had physical problems that I still have. I am now seventy-eight, and these problems began because of that. And when I heard this explanation, I found it very interesting. I found things in myself that I had never understood. And now I understand why these parts of me are there. And now I can more easily and freely give things away, because I understand why I needed to cling to them: furniture and money. ... That is why my teacher treated me so badly. That is why I had to give everything away: because I held on to these things.

If the teacher sees that you are still dependent on the things you have, that you still want them, he will take them away; and that is what my teacher did with me. But I never really quite understood why this need was in me. I only understood that from a spiritual standpoint it had to be that way. And so I gave it all up. But it was more than just a requirement of spiritual life. It was connected with the innermost part of my being, part of that essential quality that each of us brings with us into life.

You see, today, in this lecture, there is not one word that I have not personally experienced as the truth. And your hearts are saying 'yes' to what I am saying. There is no objection from your hearts. What I am saying is within each of you. I find that so beautiful when one finds a sound, a note, that has the same vibration, the same inner meaning for everyone; something that says the same thing to everyone. Then it carries a special magic.

(End of excerpts)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Bern Seminar of 1986: Part 1 of 4

Kundalini Revisited

Based on a Series of Lectures
given in Bern, Switzerland
In March of 1986

So, my friends, it is lovely to be here with you once again. This morning I want to change the program a bit. I am supposed to be speaking about the relationship between the teacher and the disciple in the Sufi tradition. But I think that I would like to continue with the theme that I began in Interlaken, Switzerland. I made some comments about Kundalini and I want to continue with that theme. Of course, to make it understandable, I will have to repeat what I already said in Interlaken, so if you were there it will be a little repetitious for you. But I will say a great deal more on the subject, and I hope that you will be able to help me.

You see, I have been giving a great deal of time and effort to the problem of spiritual power because, since October I have been exposed to it a great deal. What has happened to me personally is that I am so much in love. I am in love with ... something ... that is very difficult to understand. It is a nothingness. It is the greatest bliss that one can experience, and the greatest pain when you cannot reach it. It is a 'nothing' that answers, a 'nothing' that loves. But if you try to touch it, there is nothing there. The feeling is of the most tender human love, and I have had the greatest difficulty trying to somehow grasp all of that with my human mind. And it is, of course, connected with Kundalini.

According to the Yogis, Kundalini is the power that sleeps at the very base of the spine, and which, with time, begins to awaken. But a part of this power is always awake. The power is already with us at birth. It is a part of our bodies. Yogis say that only human beings have this power, but I ask myself if the animals do not also have it. According to the Yogis, this power is like a snake. And this snake has a tongue, a forked tongue. One part of this fork flows into life and functions as sexual energy. But this is the smaller part, perhaps only a third. And the greater part, two thirds of this energy, helps the person to reach self-realization. Now, I ask myself, animals also have sexual energy. How does this work for animals? And we will speak about this.

I hope that you will be able to help me, because I fight with experiences that are new to me, experiences that are not described in books, and that one can only experience in meditation. These are forces that have a grip on my body, and that have made me, in some ways, younger. Being in love makes you young. And in another way, I am so amazed, and completely helpless, and I do not know where to go. So I hope that we will speak about these things together: about animals and even about plants. There are also masculine and feminine plants. And even stones react to positive and negative vibrations. I do not mean negative in the sense of bad or 'less than'. No. I mean as an answer. There is the sound and there is the echo, the call and the answer, just as with the positive and negative wires in electricity. And magnetism and the power of Kundalini can both be compared to electricity, in every sense. In electricity there are amperes and volts, and both magnetism and Kundalini have their corresponding qualities.

Now. Is it possible that only humans have this power of Kundalini, as the Yogis say? Somehow, I do not quite believe it. But I cannot give you an answer now, and I do not know if I will ever have the answer. But I have found that when one is with other people and is able to speak with them – you see, ideas come, and perhaps I will be able to help you, and you will be able to help me. But first I will say a few words about Kundalini, more or less what I said in Interlaken, so that you will have enough background to understand what I am speaking about.

You see, I have already said that we have this power of Kundalini in us from birth. When we are born, this power is already in our bodies, just at the base of the spine. But this power remains in a dormant state until puberty, along with sexual energy. We know that our sexual system is essentially developed from the time of our birth, and simply remains in its dormant state until a suitable time for its activity. And Kundalini is an aspect of this potential.

Now, sexuality is the highest and most subtle manifestation of our Shakti, of our physical power. And it is the lowest and most physical manifestation of our spiritual creative energy. You see, this creative energy has incredible power. Look at what happens, for example, when we fall in love. I think that almost everyone has been in love at least once in their lives. I remember quite exactly how it was for me when I was in love, and of course, I was in love several times in my life. It is like having a spring in one's body. Suddenly we accept ourselves, we love ourselves. When we are in love, suddenly our body is somehow important. We want to be more beautiful, so we take better care of ourselves. We wash ourselves more. (*There is a ripple of amusement.*) Yes! It is true.

There was a young man in my group twelve years ago who was never very clean and always dressed very badly. He was quite young, perhaps sixteen or eighteen, and he always gave a sloppy appearance. Then I did not see him for several months. And then he appeared again, well dressed and quite clean. He told me, "You know, I am so in love. And she is the most beautiful girl in London." You see? Everyone has experienced these things; this is nothing new.

And the person that we love is the most important person in the world for us. We think about them and fantasize about them. For us, only this person exists. The Sufis say that the beloved is alive, and the lover is dead. It is as if we were dead. We are no longer important. What is important is to appear beautiful for the beloved. So in a way, love is always a kind of surrender. It is total and complete surrender: physical, emotional, and spiritual. We become young and beautiful and light as a feather, and the world becomes like a fairy tale. The world is transformed. But of course, really, the world is the same and we are transformed. And that is the lowest aspect of this power of Kundalini.

Now, what happens when, after years of effort and meditation, somehow this other power, this other part of Kundalini, is awakened in us? – I say 'somehow' because I do not really know how that happens. I do not think that anyone knows – we only need this one part, this one-third, here in this world. The other part, this two-thirds part, remains sleeping until it awakens. In my book it is described how much suffering this power can cause when it begins to awaken. That is all in my book, and I will not repeat it. But when this power is awakened, it is much stronger and more powerful than the love of this world.

The love that we experience in this world transforms our world when it transforms us; it makes life like a fairy tale. It is like a kind of magnetism that is difficult to explain, but everyone knows this feeling. But to have an idea of what this other level is like, you must imagine that this force is ten or twenty times more powerful. And our small mind, or small feelings – they are small when one compares them with the vastness of That – cannot grasp it. When it comes, there is confusion and there is suffering, and at the same time, indescribable bliss.

Now, we Sufis speak of the Beloved, and also of being in love with the 'nothingness'. And that is a paradox. Is there a Beloved – are there two? Or is it nothing – where one's self disappears, and nothing remains? You see, it is both. And this is an impossibility for our minds. I think that I have said in other years that our mind is made in such a way that it appears that we receive everything from outside,

because we see that all of our impressions come from outside of ourselves. Even our thoughts seem to come from somewhere outside of ourselves. There are always two things: the thought and I, the feeling and I, what I perceive and I. But, in deep meditation this duality does not exist. The most shocking experience is when you first reach the super-conscious state, and you are in this tremendous bliss, in absolute light. You are ... absorbed ... into a state where you are almighty, and alone. My greatest shock was that I did not find any God there.

I thought that I was not interested in Christianity, but I found that I was so conditioned, and so imprinted by the Christian religion that I thought that there had to be a God somewhere or other. I did not even know that I wanted that. I did not know that this expectation was in my unconscious. And I saw that there was nothing, only myself, and that I was everything. I was the smallest of the small, the most humble of the humble, the tiniest possible grain; everything was I. You see, our minds can never grasp this. It is terrible. Just as it is terrible for our minds when I say, "The Nothingness," or "The Void". How can one love the void? How can the void answer? How can this void give you feedback? But you know that you are loved, that you are accepted just as you are, just as He or She or That has created you. You see, I can only speak in paradoxes. There are opposites on every side. And I know quite well as I speak to you that this is impossible to understand. My heart is sad because I know that you can only understand, perhaps a small part of what I am saying. Until you have had the experience, you will not be able to understand it. And once you have had the experience, my words will not be necessary, we would only need to look at each other, and we would both know what we had experienced. Then, like a flash, we would both understand.

I am speaking, to quote Plato, "Like one blind person leading another." I myself know very little, because this experience only came to me in October, 1985. So it is quite new, and quite wild. So perhaps we will look at all of this together at some point. We still have two hours. That is good. So, I will try to speak about this Kundalini experience. I find it so interesting. Every one of us has had Kundalini experiences, only many of us do not recognize them.

I have said that the physical manifestation of this spiritual creative energy is sexual energy, and that this is only a third of the power of Kundalini. Sexuality is an energy that leads to something else. And in what way? When you love another person, somehow in a mysterious way, this person represents the void for you, the highest that you are able to be in love with. I hope that that is clear ... Yes, I see that it is not quite clear, but I cannot express it any better. And what I do manage to say can mislead you. When you are in love with another person, that person will represent the highest for you in that moment. And the secret is that it is the highest. In this world, when we love in this world, we practice being able to love the King of Love. And so it is very important that we love each other. That is why love was created. It is very, very important.

So. I have said that sexual energy is an energy that leads on to something else. It becomes the turning point from which we transcend the biological development and reach the post-biological stage of our development. As the most subtle physical instinct, and the most physical of the creative spiritual instincts or impulses, sexuality puts at our disposal the physical form of our creative possibilities: reproduction and the continuation of humanity. Of course, this function of reproduction is the most important function from the biological standpoint. And another important function of the sexual energy is that it completes our physical development, rounds us off, spurs us on, and renews us. As I have said, it makes us feel younger and more energetic. We are not as tired. You see, you have all noticed these things in yourselves, so you can verify for yourselves that what I am saying is completely correct. I am speaking for myself, but I am also speaking for every one of you.

Above all, this sexual energy is a self renewing energy. It constantly renews itself, and is always available for as long as we love. But love can turn sour, and then this energy becomes less available to us. It works in circular patterns, just as everything does. Psychologically, it is very interesting that everything moves in cycles, in closed circles. That, of course, is very symbolic. The entire creation is a closed circle. Love is a closed circle. And the power of Kundalini is also a closed circle. All psychological and psychic experiences exist eternally somewhere, and are always closed circles.

So this sexual energy moves in cycles, and brings our energy and our attention back to this world and to our bodies. This Shakti ensures that we never forget that we are dependent on both the world and on our bodies. You see, when we are in love, simply put, we begin to love our bodies. We find ourselves more interesting. And of course, we try to make ourselves more attractive to the beloved. Of course, God is both 'He' and 'She'. And the feminine aspect of God is extremely beautiful, and always mysterious and always frightening. And because the woman represents that aspect of God in the psyche of man, men are afraid of us women. And how!

I have been getting acupuncture because my health has not been very good. I have had a difficult time. I go to a Chinese woman in London, and she told me that according to the Chinese calendar, this is the year of the tiger. And if a girl is born in a year of the tiger, no mother would want her son to marry that girl. And so, if a girl is born in this year, she will either be drowned or left in the wilderness; somehow she will die. And they do that to spare her that she would not be able to marry, and that she would be rejected by society. They simply kill the infant. Imagine! And I asked this woman, "Even now?" And she looked at me and said, "Not in the cities, but in the villages." So that still happens now. And when 'A' drove me home, in London, and I told her about that, and she said, "Then the Chinese are afraid of women." And I said, "Not only the Chinese!" (*Everyone, including Mrs. Tweedie, chuckles.*) You only need to read Saint Paul. He too was very afraid of women. Men do not have to be afraid of us. Women can be so loving, but men do not believe us, so what can we do? They are all doubting Thomases.

So I repeat that sexual energy, this Shakti energy, ensures that we never forget our connection to the world and to our bodies and our dependence on both of these. And there is something else that is interesting. All of the wise, and all of the prophets and Yogis say that this world is an illusion, and that the body is unimportant. And philosophically that is true, if you look at it from God's point of view, from the standpoint of the highest philosophy. But we live in this illusion, and we do have this body. So for us it is a reality. We are so identified with our bodies that when I say, "I have a headache," I feel this pain as if my head were very much a part of me. Of course, the Yogis say that your 'I' cannot have a headache, only your body can have a headache. But headaches – migraines for example – can be really quite unbearable. How can I say that it is an illusion?

Now, Kundalini is an energy that medicine knows nothing about; and that we too know nothing about, even after we have begun to have experiences. That was my experience. One is completely confused. You do not know where to begin with it, or how it will end. Now, Kundalini is the subtle twin of sexuality, but the larger twin. It is twice as large, and it works for the opposite goal: it leads us to God. It orients itself to the realm of the inner intelligence: to the Self, and not to the body. And the task of Kundalini is to release us from the binds of the body and the world. You see. One side binds us to the world, and the other part releases us from these bindings and points our attention to our real goal: the spirit.

And both of these energies, the sexual Shakti and Kundalini, unfold in us at the same time. That is very interesting. Sexuality does not unfold first, and the other later. They unfold at the same time, only we are not aware of it. We know about the sexual unfoldment, but the other part is somehow hidden and works in our unconscious. They form a kind of double spiral, a double helix, and are dependent on one another. Still, they serve opposite goals in opposite directions.

The D.N.A. molecule is also in the form of a double helix. And that is the source molecule from which we were created. The two spirals work in opposite directions, and together. And Kundalini is also like that. I was fascinated when I saw the way light in the body moves up the spine in a spiral, over the crown chakra and then again downwards. Now the blood circulation ends in the skin, but this light circulates out through the skin and then back into the physical body again, and then through a chakra and again out through the skin. I do not have a blackboard here, but if I did, I could show you exactly how I saw it. That was fascinating for me. It is a circulation that goes out, beyond the skin, and then returns back in through the skin and to the next chakra. The upwards moving spiral and the downwards moving spiral form a double helix, just as in the D.N.A. molecule. It is very interesting to see, and of course, one does not see that with one's eyes. I think you see it in another way, because it is in the

fourth dimension. But if you have not seen it, you will not be able to understand what I am saying. You see, I am helpless in trying to explain this to you.

So Kundalini and sexual Shakti form a kind of double spiral, a double helix. And each part of this double spiral is dependent on the other, and supports the other, but with goals in opposite directions: in the body, in this world, and beyond this world, each according to its nature. They work through connections, and when this cooperative work functions, we live in an optimal state in both the inner and outer worlds. And that is the beginning of our problems. Because, when we really begin to meditate, we encounter many psychological problems; there are both inner and outer problems. And to reconcile these is terribly difficult. One cannot really do it completely. And one becomes very confused. And the Sufis say that this is a perfectly normal part of a spiritual journey. You can find this in the mystical poem, "Conference of the Birds," by the great Sufi, Farrudin Attar, where the birds go through valley after valley. They go through the valley of love, the valley of confusion, and so forth.

Nature has, in its economic way, so arranged things that sexual energy – our physical Shakti – is the basis for our subtle Kundalini Shakti. Just as our subtle system needs a physical system to manifest itself – for example, the prana body needs the physical body to be able to manifest itself – so does Kundalini need a corresponding physical structure. The subtle system also has its own body. It has developed its own body, and if you meditate, this subtle body develops more and more, and then it may become capable of separating itself from the physical body. Now, I think that many of you have had this experience: that we have a subtle body, and that we can free this subtle body from our physical body. But now I want to add something to this: how this is connected to cosmic power.

First, God creates a soul, or radiates a soul. God, or the Creator, can be compared to a spiritual sun. And every soul is a ray of this spiritual sun. And the relationship of this ray with the sun is that the sun cannot do other than to radiate, and the ray cannot exist without its sun. And that is our relationship to this something that we can call 'God'. When the soul first touches this world, it touches the first plane of manifestation, and this is the plane of the angels. Now. To be able to function on a certain plane or level, one must have a body that functions on that level. So the soul takes an angelic body. And every one of us, long ago, were angels; and already there, sexuality had begun.

There are angels of power and angels of beauty, and one day the angels of power become men, and the angels of beauty become women. This is now Sufi metaphysics. I have not experienced this in meditation, and so I personally do not know anything about it. I am simply quoting Sufi metaphysics. But this soul was not created to remain an angel. The will of God is that this soul should become a person. And how does that happen? One dies on the level of the angels, and is born on a lower level. There are spirits of mind, and they are called, in Arabic and in Persian, 'Jinns'. Now, for the soul, this level is much more interesting than the level of the angels. Art is there. Music is there. Everything that one loves in life, everything that has beauty and greatness for us is to be found on this level: colors, painting, music, everything. And the soul – that will one day become a person – remains on this level much longer than on the level of the angels. And it is on this level that connections between people are formed.

You see, we humans do not only know each other from this level here in life; we do not only build relationships here. We can also create relationships on other levels, and the Jinn plane is where we can do that. It is possible that some of us have fallen in love with someone and been with them, and fought with them, and fallen out of love, all on another plane. Perhaps our love has not only gone sour here. Perhaps it already went sour before – somewhere else. And we have to learn to avoid having it go sour, perhaps to have love that is eternal. Who knows.

Then, when the time on this plane of the Jinns, which seems so beautiful to humans, comes to an end, free will comes into manifestation, and then the soul looks for the right parents so that it can have the experiences that it needs on this, the physical plane. It is then that the free will of the higher self decides if I am to be a house-wife, or a doctor. That I will be a man or a woman was already fixed on a higher plane. This is all very mysterious. And then we are born to the right parents, and we forget everything and live here in the world.

I always smile when I see how a mother is happy as her child grows and gains weight, because the mother never thinks that the child makes this crude flesh from its own immortal eternal substance. The child comes from heaven, and if you look into the eyes of a very small infant, there is a special heavenly look. They still remember. I think that many children still remember things that we have long since forgotten. Children are always so beautiful.

So I have said that our body has a corresponding subtle body. Now. Under ideal conditions, which means, with the right connections and guidance by a teacher or a master, the chakras unfold in order, in sequence, from the base of the spine to the crown chakra, all according to the way that the brain continues to develop after physical maturity has been achieved. The chakras are so ordered that they can develop, one after the other, in three and a half to four year steps, just as the physical development proceeded at a similar pace. (*This comes from Yoga philosophy, and is not explained in Mrs. Tweedie's lectures.*) The order of the chakras, of these psychic centers, and the power of Kundalini which rises through the chakras, together build the plan of our post-biological development. The chakras are connected to each other in a kind of chain, just as they are in the physical stage of development. Theoretically it is as follows: when a person has reached the full potential of one stage of development, the collected energy breaks through to the next chakra, to the next stage of development. And usually that happens in meditation.

Just as in the development of the physical structure, there are connections to both the previous and following stages, so every chakra spurs on the one below it, while preparing for the opening of the one following. And so, one chakra after another opens. But in reality, and above all when the awakening of Kundalini occurs later in life – which is usually the case – these openings occur rather chaotically. And it is quite possible that all of the centers may work at the same time. I have seen that happen with some of the people in my group. It can really happen helter-skelter, and then psychological blocks can occur, and sometimes – I had one woman who was taken to a psychiatric hospital, and this woman was completely normal. There was nothing really wrong with her. It was just a problem with Kundalini. She is again completely OK. Such a state seldom lasts more than a few months. But a few months is quite enough to completely confuse someone. Now. Do you have anything to say? Is this too esoteric for you?

(Question: I have heard that Kundalini energy has many colors. Could you say something about them?)

Yes, there are colors. The main color is blue-white, but there are also delicate colors within that. But I personally do not believe that it is very important. It is light. And light can have many colors or just one color. I have usually seen it in blue-white light. But I think that we are all different. So perhaps people will see that too differently. The color of Kundalini energy, and the color of the magnetic field that surrounds the human body is quite certainly blue-white – like a blue-white neon light, or a bluish ultra-violet light – that is the main color. Then there are other colors, but they are very, very delicate. The colors that one sees on different planes are sometimes very ... astonishing. What especially surprised me is that a green-orange color exists. Now. If there is green, there cannot be orange, and if there is orange there cannot be green. If you mix orange and green pigments, you get brown. But green-orange exists, and one can see it. Of course, I have no explanation for it.

You see, really I am very ignorant. I do not know anything. My God! There are so many things to know in the world. My teacher – our teacher – said, “Brahma Vidya is without end,” Brahma Vidya – the highest knowledge of Brahma, of God – “is without end. A thousand years is not enough to grasp it.” And a human life is only a moment in eternity. And if we are not able to realize ourselves in this life, then we have to wait for another life. But to reach realization, we must have a physical body, because Kundalini can only exist in a physical body, and without Kundalini there can be no realization. Now, as I mentioned before, animals have sexuality. Does that mean that they also have Kundalini?

People have told me that animals do not have Kundalini, and that when they die, then nothing remains. But I do not believe that. I think that all animals that are tortured, that are tortured by humans,

animals that are killed in the forests, or killed on farms, or animals that we kill with our terrible experiments: all of these animals go to their respective animal-heavens. There is a heaven for cats, and a heaven for dogs, where they can be happy and together with one another. I really believe that. You do not have to believe it. But I do not think that God, in His grace, in His compassion, would allow that these animals do not get anything for their suffering. Some of the animals are so wonderful. They have feelings.

We Sufis say that everything is God. Everything. Every atom has its light. And there is nothing other in the world, only this One Being, that one can call "God". And animals are also a part of this Being. So do animals have Kundalini, or not? They have sexuality, and so do plants and stones. Could it be that only humans have Kundalini? Somehow, that does not seem quite right to me, but I think that we do not know enough, and that is the truth. Hopefully, over the next hundred years, we will continue to learn, and perhaps there will be great human beings, prophets, who know more than we do, to help us. Or perhaps we ourselves will come to know this. (*There is a ripple of amusement in the group.*) We can have great hopes, and that is lovely.

So. I have said that when Kundalini awakens later in life, and not parallel with the awakening of the sexual energy, then it can be quite chaotic. It happened that way for me, and I have seen that in others. Kundalini is the subtle energy in us that corresponds to our physical body. And it is the same intelligent drive – I think that I have used this word 'intelligent' in my book, and I have thought about it further. You see, when I first saw this power in my own body, I saw it as a web of subtle fibers and I saw that this power had its own intelligence. And since I personally saw it, I can say that it is true. And if something was not quite OK in my body, this power, this energy, went to that part in order to heal it. The Tibetans have a practice that you can use to heal yourself, where you direct this energy or prana to where it is needed.

Just as the beginning of the physical Shakti is formed by the mother – it is already shaped in the mother – so can Kundalini only develop further when it has received a certain degree of stimulation, and afterwards is accordingly guided. And for that, a teacher in the form of a living person is necessary, one who himself was able to develop his own Kundalini under the guidance of an experienced teacher. If this energy is awakened without the proper guidance, which can sometimes happen; if there is a lack of proper supportive practices or a role model one can follow, then this energy can have a very destructive effect. It is said in the Gnostic scriptures, "When that which is in you is brought out, it will redeem you; but if it is not brought out, it can destroy you." That is why one says that Kundalini can be very dangerous: if this energy is not properly directed it can become stuck in you and can cause damage. That is why Sufis say that a teacher is very necessary. And if Kundalini awakens, as it were, by accident, then it can be very frightening. I have seen an example of that.

When I was at the Swami Shivananda Ashram, we used to do Hatha Yoga practices in a small blue temple on a hill in the jungle. We would do them at seven in the morning while it was still cool. And one day, a man arrived who looked completely crazy. And the Yogi who was guiding us stood up immediately and went to this man, and took him off to a private corner and spoke with him for a long time. It was very clear that this man was completely crazy, and it was rather cold; we were sitting around in our leotards and had to wait over an hour for our teacher, and we were cold. Then the Yogi returned, and I said, "Yogiji, why did you waste so much time with this man? He is crazy, and we were waiting for you." He said, "Oh no! That was very important. The man encountered Kundalini, and he was completely unprepared. He was quite high up on a ladder, painting the outside of his house, when the ladder collapsed." There are white ants in India that eat the inside of wooden objects and leave only a paper thin outer layer.

So the poor man fell down and landed on his backside, and awakened his Kundalini. And he really went crazy. He had been dancing naked in the street. Here in the West, he would have been locked up in a mental hospital, but of course, in India no one really notices such things, certainly not in Rishikesh where there are very many crazy people. But he had been waltzing around completely naked. And the Yogi said, "I gave him some exercises and he will be completely healed in six weeks." And that is what happened. Later, through an interpreter, I asked this man how he had felt. He said, "There was always

fire around me, and I was always dancing in fire, just like Shiva.” He was naked because he was hot, the poor man. But the Yogi was able to heal him with these practices, and he was fine after that.

If this power is not directed, or when it is directed by someone who himself did not have competent guidance, then it can cause a great deal of trouble. Without a stimulating role model, this energy works without direction.

You see, one needs a physical role-model. The Sufis say that you need a teacher in a physical body. Without an appropriate role-model, the circulation of stimulus and reaction – like the positive and negative currents in electricity – remains incomplete, and the energy brings the nervous system of the body into a state of severe imbalance. Just as with every later development, our post-biological development is completely dependent on a role-model. The known formula is still valid: inner plan plus outer model results in a smoothly functioning process. You see? I think that is clear. Do you have anything to ask? ... I am afraid that no one is saying anything today. I hope that I am not speaking over your heads.

(Question: *Inaudible*)

No. I do not know. I am able to help in cases of Kundalini that are connected with the Sufi Tradition. But you have asked about another path that is either part of the path of Lya Yoga or Kundalini Yoga, and I do not know about them. There certainly are teachers who do know about these paths, but I do not. On our path, the Kundalini awakens gently, and completely by itself. And we only feel it when it has reached the heart chakra. But I can help in some cases, if I get an order – we now have two or three men in our group who are on something of the Path of Power. It is really simply part of the Sufi path in which power is included. And in such cases I can help, because I get orders from my teacher as to what I should do. But if someone comes to me with problems from another tradition, then I cannot help them. Ah! I just remembered: even our teacher could not help them.

The woman through whom I met my teacher was first with a Hatha Yoga teacher, and her Kundalini really damaged her, and our teacher said, “I cannot help you. Only the person who awakened your Kundalini can help you.” And this Yogi in Kashmir did not have the power to help her. It was a very uncomfortable phenomenon. She would suddenly cry out.

Now imagine: she is an academically accomplished woman who was a Sanscrit scholar at the Sorbonne. And in the middle of a sentence there would be, as if a burst of a cry or a laugh, and then she could continue. Imagine! It was not very dignified. And that came from Kundalini. And Guruji said that he could not help her. No. Actually, he said that he was not permitted to help her. The one who awakened it had to do it: this Swami in Kashmir. And this Swami could not do it. The Kundalini energy somehow went to where it should not have gone. But that could never happen on a Sufi path. This happened through a path that uses very different methods. In the Sufi path, this power is awakened very slowly, and it happens automatically.

You see, the power of the teacher is always there, is always working in us. We must only allow it to work. If we are open to this power, if we are surrendered to it, then this power will work automatically in us.

Guruji said, “Spiritual life is a gift. And one does not have to make any effort for a gift. It simply comes to you.” The effort comes in because you have to become worthy of this gift; that you must make your chalice pure, so that grace can flow into it ... into you. You see, I see it more and more, in our group and in other people that I work with, that we really have very little to do. We only need to want truth like a drowning man wants air: this terrible need for air. Imagine how much you would want air if you were dying for the lack of it! One cannot really even imagine it. Only those who have nearly drowned could describe how it felt. Of course, no one wants the truth that badly, but if you did, you would realize it immediately, instantly! And that would be because you would create such a karma, such a need, such a cause, that the effect would appear immediately. It is so logical. So the only

qualification for a spiritual path – for every spiritual path, not only the Sufi path – is to want the truth. And God is the truth.

But I say ‘God’ as if that were outside of me. God does not exist. It is a Nothingness, and this Nothingness is the truth, absolute knowledge, and absolute bliss. And the moment that you are with the Beloved, you are nothing, you disappear, and only the Beloved remains, only the Beloved exists. You are the absolute knowledge, and you are the absolute bliss, but you do not exist, you are not there. Only the absolute knowledge and absolute bliss exists. And this is impossible for the mind to understand, but it is so clear. If you have only experienced it once, that is enough.

(Question: *inaudible.*)

Yes, when this truth of the nothingness appears, the mind tries to block it out in one way or another. I have found that in the beginning, when you experience these moments of truth – you see, while it is happening, the mind is not there; but later you are able to remember it a little, and it is then that the mind tries to interfere. The mind creates fantasy after fantasy until you are completely confused, and you cannot tell what your original experience was at all. But the next time you have a similar experience it will be a little more clear. But to really see it clearly, you need years. I have been at this ‘business’ for twenty-five years, and I cannot say that I understand 100%. I can say that I know ‘something’, and that is all. I think that a thousand years would not be enough. My teacher was right. So we have to return again and again, and have more and more experiences. And some of us do not want to return again. We want to stay with the teacher, and the teacher said that he would not come back, that he would go to another plane. The physical plane is not the only plane that exists in the universe.

(Question: Mrs. Tweedie, you have said that the greatest suffering on the physical plane is to be in love, that the deepest grief is caused by a broken heart. Why does love always seem to come to an end?)

Yes. That is important. You are correct. You see, there is a song in Persian that was translated for me, “The most terrible thing carries the name of love, Love can give you the greatest bliss, or cause you the greatest pain when it ends.” When two people love one another, there is always one who loves more, and one less. That is always true, and you should observe it. And the one who loves less will usually be the one more ready to end the relationship. And why must love have an end? It is because we spread ourselves out over the other person too much. We do not give the other person their freedom. We love, but we demand too much. One thinks that one cannot love without demanding, without setting conditions. How could you love without setting conditions? Can you tell me? One can do it. In the motto of our group, there is a line, “To love without leaving traces.” That is it. It is the most difficult thing in the world. It means to leave the one you love so free that no matter how disloyal they are, it does not give you pain. If it gives you pain, then you do not leave the other person free. Look at that. Think about that.

We spread ourselves onto others like butter. (*There is a ripple of laughter.*) We love someone, so we want to hold them. We women are especially good at putting men into prison. That is why they are afraid of us. We imprison them psychologically, and then they run away. Of course, men also try to imprison the women, but I have seen that it is easier for a woman to do that. It is our nature to want to hold the man. I do not know why it should be that way, but it is.

That is why love goes sour and disappears: because we demand too much. We set too many conditions. Do not set conditions; leave people free. I know of relationships between two people that are ideal. They really leave each other free. But that is very difficult. It takes a great deal of intelligence, and great love. If you really love, then nothing that the other person does will bother you, even if they walk on your heart with spiked boots. And that, of course, is surrender. That is why our teacher said, “We must love one another, because this love will teach us how to surrender.” Love is surrender. One thinks about the beloved, one lives only for the beloved. You make yourself beautiful for the one you love. Only the other person exists. But then you want to bind them, and then (*Mrs. Tweedie imitates someone who is very n-n-n-nervous.*) they get nervous, and run away. And then we cry, sometimes for

our entire life. Yes. I know someone who, even after twenty years, is still quite shattered. It can be more painful than death.

Now I want to say a few words about fear and sex. I spoke about this with the Chinese woman who gives me acupuncture. She said that Chinese science says that the kidneys regulate fear in the body, and they also regulate the sexual impulse. So the Chinese say that fear and sex are very closely connected. Look. The most terrible thing that one can do to a woman is to rape her – perhaps somewhere in a dark alley. And the most terrible crimes are connected with sex and fear. In London, we have recently had a few cases, a wave of incidents where terrible things have been done to children, and many children have disappeared. They have been found dead, and sometimes terribly mutilated. And when you read about the men who do these things, you always see that they are people who are full of fear. They are so afraid of life, and they do these terrible things. Fear and sex are very closely connected. And we should go deeply into ourselves, and analyze ourselves honestly. I have done that with myself since I spoke with this woman, and I found that my greatest fear is connected with the sexual drive. One says that rape is more terrible than death. It must be terrible. And for a man, too, sex and fear are very closely connected. That comes from the Chinese wisdom, and I found that interesting. I pass that on to you as I found it, as an interesting idea.

(End of Part 1)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Bern Seminar of 1986: Part 2 of 4

The Foundations of Mysticism

Based on a Series of Lectures
given in Bern, Switzerland
In March of 1986

(The afternoon session begins...)

The sound system is not yet turned on, my friends. The one who controls the sound system has disappeared, so we will have to wait. ... Aha. Now it is working again. Thank you. That is what happens with friends, sometimes they all disappear, and then one doesn't have any friends anymore. *(Mrs. Tweedie has a very hearty and happy laugh.)* But such things happen. Your friends disappear, and you are left alone.

Now, I think that I will continue. There are still some things I want to read to you. And then over the following days we will do exactly what we do in our group in London. We will meditate, and we will sit together and speak with one another informally. There are no rules. We do what we want. If people have questions, they can ask them, and if people have dreams we can discuss them together. We even have a dream specialist with us, so we are rather fortunate. So I will bring my lecture to an end, and then I would like to answer some questions. I feel that I have had far too few questions this morning. Ah. I see that my friend – the one who takes care of the sound system – has not abandoned me, so everything is OK.

Now, one day I said to my teacher, "I thought that the love of God would be like a thunderstorm, like a stroke of lightning, like a clap of thunder, like the burning bush that Moses saw." But it is not like that. Look. We are loved, just as we are, just as He created us; completely, with all of our faults. It is a close, an intimate relationship. Think of the beautiful little book by Brother Lawrence, "The Practice of the Presence of God." He peeled potatoes with Jesus, went shopping with Jesus, and cooked in the monastery kitchen with Jesus. God becomes a living reality for you. A truth. You cry out, with and in God. That is the best way that I can express it. So, I said to my teacher, "I cannot understand why it is so tender to experience this love of God, and not so powerful as I had imagined that it would be." And he only smiled. It is the most tender thing that you can imagine. But now I want to tell you about something that just happened to me.

When I was at the peace conference in Amsterdam – some of you were also there – I was rather ill. I had a terrible case of the flu. I had fever and felt really terrible, but I tried to act so that no one would notice. I do not think that anyone noticed, or at least not many did. But it was a very evil, poisonous flu. I developed a deafness that has since passed, and I really lost my sense of smell, and that has not yet returned. Since that time I cannot smell things very well. And now, my teacher comes to me as a smell, as a fragrance, from somewhere, quite unexpectedly. It can be when I am at home or on the street, and I have no explanation for it. At first, I had no idea what it was, and then I began to analyze myself, "I am not able to smell anything, so what could this be? It is not the smell of flowers; it

is not something chemical, but there is ... something.” And then, one day – it was like a message – I said, “Aha! It is my teacher.” And there was a big smile within me, in my heart. And I knew that it was my teacher. And to me the most interesting part was that he came to me as a fragrance just when I could not smell anything. It is a greeting ... from somewhere. I think that afterwards someone in London said that, according to the tradition, great beings sometimes do come to us as a fragrance, and that each saint has his own special fragrance. Some have the perfume of roses or of some other flowers. But this was not the smell of a flower. But this is just an aside; it has nothing to do with my lecture.

Now I would like to speak to you about mysticism. Sufis are mystics, and one does not really know what a mystic is. The words ‘mystic’ and ‘mysticism’ have no meaning. I say that these words do not have any meaning because mysticism is an inner experience. And to know something about an inner experience, logically, one must actually have the experience. If I try to tell someone who never in his life had a headache that I have a headache, he will not understand what I could mean. And the reason for this is that, really, one cannot describe these things. One cannot express them in words, and it is exactly because it is so indescribable that it is so valuable. No knowledge is so rewarding, no science is so precious as that which originates in living experience.

Inner experiences do not change; they are one and the same for every person; it is only outer experiences that are subject to change. The further we progress on the spiritual path, the more similar our experiences are to others at the same stage of development. You see, the higher spiritual experiences are incredibly similar, but we see all of this through our auras, through the coloring of our own auras. That means that the way we experience these things is colored by our feelings. And since we are all different, our experiences will appear different to each of us. But fundamentally – I have seen this with myself and with others – they are the same experiences that simply look different on the surface. In the depths they are the same.

One should not dismiss one’s fantasies, one’s imagination. Imagination can be used as a ladder that the mystic is able to climb. And beyond that, there would be no art, no literature, and no music if it were not for imagination. These are all the products of imagination. And just as imagination can create outer beauty in the form of poetry, so it can create beauty from higher and greater values when it is turned inwards. Imagination can be a great help in doing Yogic exercises, and can lead to real experiences. “First we fashion God, then God fashions us,” says the mystic. You see, it depends on your belief – and this is quite simple – you can only recognize something you believe in. How could you experience or realize or even recognize God if you did not believe in Him? It is completely impossible. So first, we have to create God. And then God will create us, and by that I mean that He will then draw us to Him, call us to Him. Is that clear ... or not? Yes? You have all understood. Good.

In a searching soul, the possibility for the in-flowing of mystical knowledge comes automatically. It comes completely automatically. If a person really seeks, if he really longs, then the teacher or master can ... turn on this wisdom very easily. The disciple, through his longing, compels the teacher to give him something, to cause something to flow to him. And this in-flowing is the grace of God. It does not belong to the teacher and it does not belong to the disciple. Something happens; something ‘is done’. As Gurujī often said when people said to him that he had done this or that, or when he caused a miracle to happen, “No, no. I do not do it. That is not me. It is simply done.” And here is the explanation for that. It is simply done by the grace of God. And believe me: spiritual life is completely without effort. It is a level of being. We are That, and we have longing, and when we have this longing, our hearts are open and something can flow into our hearts from another level. Really, believe me, it is absolutely and completely simple. But to say that it is simple, you must also know how much effort it might cost some of you. And then you would probably not believe that it is simple. I also did not believe it.

So, this gentleman would like to have a pause now, but we will not have one quite yet. He wants a pause because he has to do some magic here while we are away. (*He has to do something with the sound system.*) He is a magician, only incognito.

Now, the foundation of mysticism is to be found in the following quotation from the Bible. “To those who seek the kingdom of heaven, all things will be given.” The search of the mystic is for exactly this

kingdom, for God; and in the search for God, he finds himself. The mystic teaches communication with the self, and enables the self to communicate with life. But how does one communicate with one's own self? Through self-analysis. If one thinks about it constantly, about how often you are wrong, about how bad, how depraved or dumb you are, there would be no end to your worries or your discontent. And the longer you continued with that, the more you would find the spirits of ignorance and evil within yourself. Perhaps you would find only these faults in yourself for your entire life, and not be able to move beyond them. But the mystic does just that, and looks still deeper into himself, to find within him that which molds his existence. To find what lives and what dies in him; what, in his being, is limited, and what is beyond limitation. These are great ideas, and they are not mine: to see what is limited in us, and that within us that is beyond limitation.

As I said earlier, we do not love ourselves enough. You see, we find too many faults in ourselves. Forget your faults. And if we have faults, say to Him, "Forgive me. You have created me in this way. Make me better." It is so simple, and every time you do that, you come nearer and nearer to your own self, and nearer and nearer to God. One must learn to live in the presence of God. And really, spiritual life is just that. It is the simplest way, and everyone can do it. One does not even have to meditate. Then the entire day is a meditation. I cook with Him; I go shopping with Him. I do everything with God, exactly as Brother Lawrence described it in his wonderful little book. And you know, this book helped me a great deal when I needed it many years ago.

So, one must see what is limited in us, and that within us that is beyond limitation. As the mystic meditates on this, he learns to come into contact with his own self; and when he meditates further, he also learns to contact others on different levels of being. He gradually removes the barriers that lie between people, between the 'I' and the 'you'.

Of the religion and morals of the mystic, one can say the following: his only morality and religion is love. And he has only one goal in his religion, namely to allow God to become a reality within him. And that is what I am always saying. That is why the God of the mystic is a greater God than that which the millions have, these millions who can only imagine that somewhere there is a God. For the mystic, God is an immensely living reality. And how can one make God a reality? How can we come to where we are able to make something real that is not real? But it is real. And it is so simple to make something that is real into our reality. It is only that this reality is not yet real to us, and so we must make it real, we must realize it. But to find the good, we must first look at what is evil, and compare them. Once we have seen them both – good and evil – then both will be clear to us. Evil will show us what good is. In order to discover reality, we must collect our experiences of unreality. And that is not very difficult; it is very easy.

In our everyday language, we use the word, 'false'. False is that which is not real. Everything that is subject to change and destruction, even though it appears to be something stable and predictable, is never as it pretends to be. What is changeable is not reality. The entire existence that is subjected to change and death is not the truth. It cannot be the truth. But we can only grasp that after we know something of reality. And this morning I said that there is no illusion. So I am again speaking in paradoxes. Now, is there a reality or not? Is all of this world illusion or not? While we are immersed in this illusion, then it is our reality. But. We must discriminate between these two. This reality that passes is not the real reality. And this is what is difficult for our minds to understand. But one can do it; the mind can come to understand it. But to do that, one must practice it. And of course, we practice it in meditation, but also when we read books that help explain it to us.

And now, I would like to read you a charming American article about 'the wild God'. I think that you will enjoy it. It comes from a magazine article written by a Professor James Bugental.

He says, "Seek a wild God. People have said that God is dead, and that may be true. But I believe that the God that is dead is the God that we have locked in a cage: the zoo God. We think that we can hold the zoo God in this way because we need Him, because we want security. We try to hold Him through our definitions, through our interpretations, through our inventions that we call 'The Laws of

God'. This is the God that we try to tame with such exotic concepts, the God in our intellectual zoo. This God will not help you. This God is dead.

"But! The wild God, the God that is not to be caught by our wills or our minds, the God that cannot be tamed, is just as living and free as ever. He moves with the wind, He – He or She – sings in the silence in the desert, and nourishes us in the sun. Because the wild God comes to us unforeseen and unforeseeable. The wild God is more than the God of evolution; the wild God also breathes revolution. The zoo God can never catch us by surprise. We needed Him when it was comfortable for us, and above all, we need a zoo God when we are children. This zoo God cannot disturb our comfortable daily lives. He himself was locked up, and He seemed to make do, unto death, with very little nourishment. (*There is a long wave of quiet laughter, about this image of such a poor helpless God.*)

"I name this wild God, 'The God behind God's back', because the wild God is the mysterious God, the mystery of the mystics. And 'mysterious' is a word that is used far too little in psychological texts or in papers on poetry. We deny the mysterious; we claim that it only exists in the heads of children, writers and mystics. And we lead ourselves around by the nose, and make ourselves blind when we believe that. Knowledge unfolds from the mysterious, is contained by the mysterious. The mysterious holds infinite knowledge. When knowledge grows, the mysterious also grows. All scientists know that, more or less. 'Mysterium' is latent meaning; always waiting to be discovered by us. And there is always more than we know. Always more and more." (*Mrs. Tweedie interjects:*) I read somewhere that a scientist said, "We scientists can only go so far, and beyond that we cannot go." And that 'beyond' is probably God. The wild God.

This article is titled "Seek a wild God" and is from the March 1985 issue of an American psychotherapy magazine, "The A.H.P. Perspective" printed in Berkeley California.

"I ask myself why we psychotherapists are so easily lured, in these emotional and chaotic times, to the secret agreement that is never even stated explicitly: that there is an answer to every one of life's problems; that one can give a meaningful answer to every symbol and to every dream, and that the mental control of goals and ideals is part of a psychologically healthy life.

"Of course, psychotherapists must come to know and understand a great deal, but they must also have humility. Let me be direct: we can never know enough. As much and as fast as we learn, we also learn that there is always more to learn. When we claim to clients that we know what they need, that means that we deny the mysterious, and in doing that we betray the client. Every therapy that goes deeply must help the clients to face the inner and outer mysteries of their lives, and to confront these mysteries. The destructive effect of the therapist who does not recognize the mysterious is that the world-view transmitted to the client, implicitly and explicitly, suggests that everything that is important for the client, can, in the end, be understood and controlled. So expectations are created about the therapist that will certainly be disappointed. But the client is inclined to blame himself for this disappointment. He says, 'It is my fault'. And this development can lead to self-criticism, to depression and to the alienation from the client's own strengths and talents.

"The therapist who recognizes and respects the omnipresence of the mysterious, should not flee into fatalism or fuzzy mysticism. The opening to what might be possible can also be a powerful encouragement to again deal with existing situations, to venture into new situations, and to explore the unknown with innocent perception. Only the pessimist finds the empty white screen to be senseless. Whoever esteems the mysterious, recognizes the opportunity to dare to choose a new way: the way of the wild God.

"A psychotherapy that provides real nourishment for the spirit and soul must be the search for the wild God, the God of mystery, the God behind God's back. And if we want to find the wild God, then we must go out into the world, out into dangers and possibilities. We must go without a map and without a compass, without enough food or protection, without anything. And because we seek the wild God, we can be caught by Him. Oh yes. We can be caught by Him! And then it is the mystery that embraces us,

and not we who encompass it. We can never encompass it.” So the real mystic goes into life, goes into the market place.

I have already said that, for the last few months – I can even say that I have been in love. And here is the answer, here is the reason. I even know the day that it happened. It was a Sunday, just after the marriage of A. and R.. I was alone at home. And I understood that I am in the market place. Until this happened, the high mystical states and my discipline in my search for God had brought me further and further from life. I thought that life was not for me. But suddenly, the wild God threw me into life. And now it seems to me that am in love with life, and that I understand people much better on a level that I had never understood before. And that I am, at the same time, closer to the will of God. And I feel as if I am in love. And that is all.

So. That was a quote from James F. T. Bugental’s ‘Seek a Wild God’.

(Note: The comments from the audience were essentially inaudible on the recording, and have only been included when it was possible to hear or reasonably infer enough of their content.)

Now I have some questions that I would like you to answer: Is there a personal God?

(Comment: No. I do not believe that.) *(There are many inaudible comments from the audience.)*

But when I have spoken about Him or about God, isn’t that a personal God? And can’t you feel that as a personal God? (Comment: ...) So you see, if we see Him as a personal God, then He is personal. If you do not see Him in that way, then He is not a personal God. But if you try to walk with God, if you live with God the entire day, and speak with Him, it seems that He must become a personal God for you. (Comment: Yes and no.) You see, we all have our perspectives, and we are all right. I find that very interesting, and I very much enjoy such questions, because when I ask these questions, I get a different answer from each person. And every one of these answers is correct. Because He is personal for you, and also impersonal.

The experience of God, of the Beloved, is very personal. To love, one must have a beloved, and the relationship with the beloved is the most personal relationship you can imagine. The mystical experience of what can be called God is an experience of voidness: there is nothing there. And, at the same time, it is a very erotic experience. It is only that the feeling is in one’s heart. So it is an erotic experience in the heart. And the entire body takes part in this experience. Every cell of the body is happy in its own right. It is as if every cell were happy, and that is an unbelievable feeling. The body vibrates; it is like having champagne bubbles in one’s blood. Everything is happy within you. But what are you united with? With nothing. And this nothing is you. You disappear into the nothing. But for the mind the experience of this nothingness is a terrible experience, it is like death. You can imagine the fear you would have that you will simply disappear and be nothing. One has no idea that it is the greatest bliss.

What is the best spiritual exercise for each and every one of us? There could be hundreds of answers. Any ideas?

(Answer: To do nothing. To simply surrender, and allow things to happen.)

(Answer: To remain open) Yes, that is essentially the same.

(Answer: To wash oneself a great deal, especially showers.)

How lovely. Yes, just today I asked someone why people sing in the shower. They don’t sing when they are in the bath. I have never heard of anyone singing in a bath. *(There is a lot of opposition. Many people say that they do sing in the bath!)* So, you do sing in the bath. But someone explained why people sing in the shower from an esoteric standpoint. *(There is a lot of laughter.)* It was that the running water takes all of the impure energy out of your magnetic field, it cleans your magnetic field and

the person becomes happy, and he sings! (*Now, to one man:*) You probably sing very beautifully in the shower. Are you married? (Response: No.) That is a shame, because then I could have asked your wife if it was true. (*Mrs. Tweedie too laughs.*)

How can one recognize God? Well, that is quite a question.

(Answer: In everything.) OK, but how do you recognize Him in everything? I think that it is only when you believe that everything is That. But that is intellectual.

(Answer: With one's heart.) Yes, that can be. (*Now, very softly and gently:*) There is a moment of love, as I have said: it is like a fragrance that comes to you and only just touches your heart. And something in you knows that it is That, for you alone; it is a greeting from somewhere ... from someone. And for you, this someone may be God, or your teacher, or a beloved man or woman who may be far away. It is all the same. There is no difference. Are there any other ideas? No. I think that all of you are happy with that answer.

(Answer: ...) He is the spider and the kitten and the wild God, and He is you in your own despair and in your laughter. In the Koran it is said, "I am nearer to thee than your jugular vein." It is only that we do not recognize it. You see, when we are in despair and depressed, God does not exist for us. We cannot pray, we are alone and powerless. We hang over an abyss.

(Comment:) Yes, that is true: one sees that the greatest suffering and the greatest happiness are one and the same. We have all read how someone wins a hundred thousand dollars in a lottery, and suddenly dies from a heart attack. He must have been so very happy! (*Mrs. Tweedie has a good laugh, while everyone else is somewhat confused.*) People can die from happiness. But one can also die from pain.

Do you know what loneliness is? Loneliness can be very different for different people. When are we, each of us, the most lonely?

(Answer: When we do not feel any love. When we cannot get or give any love.) So that is when this woman is the loneliest.

(Answer: When one is by himself.) Really? I cannot understand why one would be lonely just because you are with yourself. (*This continues but too softly to be understandable.*)

(Answer: It seems that there is a positive loneliness: the aloneness that you feel when you love everything.) But how can that be considered to be loneliness? (A: ...) Ah, you mean that being alone is not necessarily loneliness; yes.

(Answer: To not be understood by people.) Yes, for many people that is the loneliest moment. But I think that it depends on the character of the person.

(Answer: Sometimes loneliness is there and I have to bear it, and then it ends by itself. It seems that one cannot quite control it. Being alone can be completely independent of whether one is with other people or not. For me it is somehow connected with depression, and at such times I try to go out into nature.) Aha, I think that you are not quite connected with life. I think that is the answer in your case. And yes, that can be very lonely.

And are you (*To one particular person.*) often lonely? (...) You should come to London more often. Everyone loves you there, and they all ask about you. So come when you can. Will you come to see us in Frankfurt? I will be there soon, and I was told that it will be very interesting. It is supposed to be quite an affair. (*Everyone laughs and Mrs. Tweedie asks what she had said that was so funny. She used the word affair, which in German only means either a fling or a scandal.*) Why are you laughing? Did I say something bad? (*More laughter.*) Sometimes my German limps a little, so you will have to excuse me.

Now! When are you the loneliest?

(Answer: Sometimes when I meditate I feel completely alone and I do not know why.) That is interesting. Could you say why? (*He tries but he cannot!*) Well, I would have liked to understand, because while you are meditating you should not feel lonely; it should be quite the opposite. Ah! He scratched his head and cannot answer!

(Answer: When I can no longer feel the connection to my own heart.) Yes, that is probably the problem if one experiences this in meditation, but he could not express it. Yes, that is it. It is also that way with me. When I cannot feel this connection with my heart, then I am alone. And for me that is a terrible loneliness. Usually I get up and make myself a cup of coffee. (*Everyone laughs. Isn't it tea? At her meetings in England, we always drank tea.*) Sometimes that helps. Not always. And then I feel full of sin because I should not drink coffee. Then I lay down and go to sleep and the next day this feeling has passed. Thank you. Of course. If you have no connection with your heart, then there is no one there. There is nothing.

(Another suggestion: Perhaps it is like you have said in London, There is the Highest – but one is caught behind a glass wall.) Yes. That is it. (...) Yes, we each see these things according to how we are made. For women, the accent is always on the feelings, and for men it is more connected with the mind and the intellect. I think that here too we are encountering that. And you? When are you the loneliest?

(Answer: Sometimes I feel full of longing.) And that is when you are the loneliest? (A: Yes.) And what do you long for? (A: It's like the longing of a child for his mother, for his home.) Ahaaa. That is lovely. To long for one's real home. Yes. All of us here are going home; all of us are going to our real home. And the longing for that home can be so very great. You see, love has two sides, the masculine side and the feminine side. The masculine side is love, and the feminine side is longing. And Yoga belongs to the feminine side of love. We sit here and wait for Thee. We do our practices so that You will come to us. That is the feminine love. "I am waiting for you." And we women are always waiting. We wait for our men, for our children, we wait with lunch when they do not come on time, and we wait in the evening. Half of our life passes in waiting. Isn't that true? Of course, men also wait for us ... (*Now laughing,*) because we women are never on time! We women are never on time, and the poor men must always wait. There is a song that goes, "Why are you keeping me waiting, Charmaine; my Charmaine." I cannot sing it, ... but then ... I cannot sing at all.

Now, does anyone have a special loneliness? Yes?

(Question: You said that at one stage in the process of incarnating as a human, we were angels. Does that mean that every angel becomes a human?)

No, not every angel becomes a human. On the level of the angels, there are angels that are angels and remain angels, and there are angels that come from a ray of God on its way to manifestation. The first plane of manifestation is the angelic plane; that is the first plane where the ray can manifest itself. Then it must have a body in order to manifest itself, and so it becomes an angel. You must have the body that corresponds to each level, or else you cannot function on that plane. But it is not intended that the soul remains as an angel. And so, after a time, the soul will die on the level of the angels and will be born on a lower level. And that level, the level of the Jinns, is where karmas appear. That is where the self chooses the parents in a family where it will have the experiences that it needs in this life. Perhaps you need the experience of being a housewife, or a doctor or a fisherman.

So a soul will never remain as an angel. In the mind of God, a soul is always intended to become a human. But angels are angels, and remain as angels. Angels are another kind of being that have evolved parallel to human evolution. The animals have evolved parallel to human evolution, and so have the Jinns and forest spirits. These are the different lines of manifestation. We were all once angels, but there are beings who have always been angels, and will always remain as angels. And it is much easier to be an angel, because they obey God and do not have any conflicts. At least that is what

is said. But really, who knows? (*Everyone laughs at her candor.*) I do not think that anyone really knows. Perhaps angels have angelic conflicts. (*Mrs. Tweedie tries to invent a kind of German expression for it, and everyone laughs, at the idea and at her construction!*) Oh Tweedie! I think you should learn some German!

(Question: Is Kundalini the Holy Ghost?) No. Kundalini is a power that is only in the human body. I do not think that it is connected with the Holy Ghost. But really I do not know. I do not know a great deal about the Holy Ghost, so I cannot be very helpful in this. Perhaps someone else can help him, someone who understands Christianity better than I do.

(Comment: I think Muktananda wrote that, from the description of some of the experiences of the Holy Ghost, it could be similar to Kundalini experiences.)

Yes, that is the answer, and she grew up in a very strong Christian tradition, so she knows. (*There is some skeptical laughter.*) Yes! She really does.

(Contribution: It is said in Christianity that when the Holy Ghost descends, that He makes people drunk, and they make crazy movements with their bodies, which is similar to what happened when Swami Muktananda awakened Shakti in people.)

So here is the answer. And another question: what about Jesus? Who is Jesus for you?

(Contribution: For me Jesus is an aspect of God, just as every human is an aspect of God. And we need symbols for the initiation or for the last part of our redemption, we need role models. Whether he actually lived or not is not at all important for me. But he symbolizes that there is a way to proceed, and in Christianity it is this human being called Jesus, an aspect of God or the son of God, who comes into the world, who is the role model for this path of initiation that leads to redemption. There is the symbolism of Easter, where Jesus is crucified on Good Friday, and reaches salvation on Easter Sunday. Whether he is a human or not, it represents an initiation for salvation.)

Are you satisfied with this answer? (Comment: ...) But you see, Brother Lawrence went for walks with Jesus. (Contribution: ...) (*There is a lot of laughter*) Then you could take both. How charming. Perhaps all three! Then they could all go walking together: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost ... and Brother Lawrence. And, of course, four is the number of perfection. So they would be completely perfect. Thank you for your question. That was really lovely.

But you see, because Jesus was a person – one says that he was a human being – he is somehow much nearer to us than an abstract idea of a God. One can really imagine going for a walk with him, and peeling potatoes with him. It is much easier to imagine. As the mystics say, “First we have to create God, and then God can create us.” (*Now speaking to one person.*) And what is the loneliest thing for you?

(Answer: For me loneliness is wonderful.) Loneliness is always a positive feeling for you? (A: Yes.) I think that it can be both a positive and negative feeling. It can be very painful. But for you it is not. (A: I never feel abandoned.) Yes. I think that you have put your finger on the problem. People feel that they have been abandoned, and then loneliness is very difficult to bear. But if one is only alone, then that can be good or bad, but never so unbearable. Thank you. That was a very beautiful answer. (*Mrs. Tweedie again picks someone out.*) Now you. What is the loneliest thing for you?

(Answer:) When you are separated? Do you mean physically or psychologically? (A: ...) And why should you be separated from others? (A: ...) Aha, she always felt different from others, and feels lonely because of that.

So now, friends, we will have our pause.

(*A pause begins ... and ends.*)

I think that we will continue with these questions and answers. It always seems to work well, and I find that it brings the best out of people, and we get such beautiful answers. Like someone who answered, "How can we experience reality?" with, "In a moment." That was lovely. That was really good.

How does one arrive at the point when one's thoughts are all aimed at one point?

(A: ...) Yes. There are different techniques, and the one that is appropriate depends on the temperament, abilities and beliefs of the practitioner. But the key to achieving this is desirelessness. Consistent practices, such as are usually prescribed and practiced, do help, but if you only do them by themselves, you will not achieve any permanent result. It is only when the thoughts are free from all desires that the mind focuses itself automatically and forever on one point. Someone who tries to focus on one thing, with the idea of achieving a goal in the sense that he is the doer, can never really become one with the object of his thoughts. He remains as a separate being that acts or enjoys. "Whatever grows in the barren soil of the 'I' must always return to the ground of its nature." So one must be desireless. Then we will be able to reach this state. As long as there are desires, you can concentrate or meditate, but you will not come very far. But you see, desirelessness is a very difficult state to reach. One is always desiring something. (Comment: ...) Yes, it is a contradiction, because you must desire to reach this state. But I think that one does need this desire to concentrate, even as you chase the other desires away. The difficulty is that we do not only desire this state of desirelessness or concentration or meditation, or what we should be desiring. But that a difficult state to achieve. That is why it is easier to live with God. I think that if you are always in His presence, as Brother Lawrence was with Jesus, then your mind becomes accustomed to thinking about Him the entire day. And then we become desireless. I do not know that for certain, but I believe it is true. But it is very difficult to actually do.

But one thing that I do know is that if you really want to learn something – yet another desire – somehow these thousands of other desires begin to fall away from you. One wants less and less. And that happens to every one of us. I have heard many people say that. They become quite indifferent to many things in life. One after another, things lose their interest for them. And one becomes more and more pointed in one direction, and not just a little here and a little there. Can everyone hear in the back? (Yes) Good, then everything is working as it should.

(Question ...) Aha. If God is the Void, where is His will? And what is God, after all? – Now we try to struggle with something that is unanswerable – God is this part of the creation that you represent, God is you. (Q: Is God's will also my will?) Yes, but not completely. (*There is a murmur of confusion.*) The Creator is also somehow limited. He is only infinite somewhere. When He descends into manifestation, He is limited. He fulfills Himself in you and in me and in everyone. That is really true.

(Question: ...) My dear, you cannot grasp that with your mind. That is one of those things where the mind is useless. There is nothing you can do about it. That is something you will never understand. No one has ever been able to grasp it. Greater people than we have not been able to do it. It is the Void and it is not the Void. As is said in the Vedantas, "It is That and it is not That." It is like a dance, (*Now in a slightly dancing melodic joke: like a tango.*) 'It is that, and it is not that, it is this, and it is not this'. One cannot explain it.

Now, perhaps you can ask me some questions.

(Question: Are there guardian angels?)

Yes, yes and ten times yes. And I will say more. Every one of us has someone on the other side who helps us. That is a fact. In Christianity one calls it a guardian angel. It can be an angel, but it can also be an ancestor that you loved very much. I have two people in the group who have an ancestor helping them. In one case it is a grandfather, and in the other case it is someone from the family, but we are not sure who it is. We always have someone helping us from the other side. And you can also have a teacher on the other side. Only I personally would not trust that. I am a very prosaic woman, I

am someone who keeps her feet on the ground, and so I would not rely on such a connection. I would think that it was an illusion. But I know wonderful people who have their teachers on the other side, and they get wonderful teachings.

When I returned to England after my teacher's death, a friend who is clairvoyant told me that I had been offered teachings from the other side, and I refused. And I believe that. It would be in my character to do that. And because of that I had to meet a teacher in flesh and blood.

(Question: ... I saw three beings ...)

Yes. What did these beings look like? (Q: ...) Were they men or women? (Q: I could not see. *inaudible*.) Yes, that is quite possible. I believe you. And the colors you described are correct. We belong to the Golden Sufis, so the orange would be quite correct. That is the color of my teacher: golden-yellow. And light green is the best color: it is the color of realization. They were probably our spiritual ancestors, who are always helping us. It is a line of succession. We do not have any kind of initiation, and the succession is from teacher to disciple, but it is never written down and it is never spoken. So we do not only have our teacher, but all of those who went before him on this line.

(Question: Is life predetermined? Or free?) Both. Life is predetermined in the sense that you carry old karmas, but you can also change these karmas.

(Q: You mean that we can take our destiny into our own hands?) Yes, you have many possibilities to try that. That is 100% correct: we take our destiny into our own hands. And even those who do horoscopes say that it is very difficult to do a horoscope for someone who is really on the path. Then they have to draw a special esoteric horoscope. It is quite different from the one that they usually draw, because then the person is taking his destiny in his own hands.

(Question: For me I would say that animals experience free will in what we call instincts, and a Master sees that which we think is our free will as something not very advanced.)

And so forth. (*There is a ripple of amusement.*) Yes, I can accept what you are saying. I think this idea is a very good one. Yes, animals do have instincts, and for them, that is probably their free will, and we have our ideas about what free will is for us.

(Contribution: Yes, and now the time is over!) (*Everyone, of course, laughs.*) Yes, the time went very quickly, and I thank all of you for the way we all worked together. I liked this session of questions a great deal. It was always very interesting for me.

And now we will begin our meditation. Please find a way to sit very comfortably, and relax.

(The meditation begins ... and becomes very still and deep ... and continues until,)

(Very very softly and gently, as if from far, far away.) God bless you, and peace be with you and thank you. That was very beautiful. We created a field of power that we can be quite proud of. So. We will see each other in the morning.

(The day's session ends.)

(End of Part 2)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Bern Seminar of 1986: Part 3 of 4

Standing Naked before Yourself

Based on a Series of Lectures
given in Bern, Switzerland
In March of 1986

(The session of the next day begins...)

We are here on the physical plane – the body and the mind are both on the physical plane. They are both made out of the materials of the earth, out of physical matter. Our soul, of course, is a ray of God. And here is the difficulty for humans: that we are half angel and half animal. Now. The teacher, the Sufi teacher – I cannot say anything about other teachers because I will only speak about what I personally know – does not work on the physical plane. The most important part of our training is that we meet in the night. All of the people in my group know that, and all Sufis know that.

Every human is free in the night. The body sleeps, and a part of the mind sleeps with the body and creates dreams. The other part of the mind – the higher part of the mind, the higher mind – goes away with the soul. The soul really leaves, and this higher mind goes with it, and it wanders according to the wishes of the soul. Now. We have a mantra that we say before we go to sleep, and this mantra leads us to the teacher. And so every night we are together with the teacher. Now, you might ask, “What is the point?” In fact, it is very important that we are together in this way.

And why do you have to say this mantra I spoke about ? *(This was before the whole of her group was doing a mantra all of the time.)* Why do you need to do this in order to join the teacher in the night? It is because the human has free will. No teacher is allowed to force a disciple. No real teacher would ever do that. That is black magic. But! If you, from your own free will as a human being say, “Tonight I want to go to my teacher,” and you say this little mantra, then you will go to be with him.

And we – all of us, all of those who belong to Gururji, everyone who follows his path – are together in the night. At first, we do not remember it, but when you awaken in the morning, you will have the sense that you have been somewhere, and that it was beautiful. And you will have an inner peace the whole day. And there are already many people in my group who are able to remember these meetings quite well. ‘M’. came to me one day and told me that I had told her, in a dream, this and this and this, and that I had scolded her for something that she had done. And I listened to her, and then asked her, “Was there anything else?” and she said, “No, I do not remember anything else.” And then I said, “Yes there was. There was also this and this and this.” And she said, “Oh! Yes, you are right.” But she hadn’t remembered it at first. So we are really together in the night. But it is only much later that one is able to remember these things. M. has already been with me for fourteen years. But really fourteen years is not so very long.

You see, Yoga, or spiritual life, goes on for your entire life. It is not only one or two days, or one or two years. Of course, everyone must begin ... or not; but once you do begin, it lasts your entire life. I

have been on this path for twenty-five years, and I can say to you that I feel that I know very very little. But that is not important. It is beautiful, and it is worth it. There is nothing in life that is worth more. Believe me. I am now old, and I have never been more happy, and I say that to you in all sincerity.

Now. I hope that you will be interested in what I have to say to you today. I cannot tell you any very esoteric things, because these things are only spoken of in private, between teacher and disciple, and not in public. In my group in London, I say a great deal that I cannot say here. But nevertheless, I hope that you will find it interesting. The place must be right, the people must be the right ones, and the time must be right.

Yesterday, someone told me that he had married when he was still very young, and that everything had gone wrong and he had not understood why; he had only been able to laugh about it. First, the priest came to the church too late – a bad omen for a wedding – then the Viennese Choir boys were supposed to sing, but the organ stopped working. It groaned once and wouldn't make another sound. So the choir couldn't sing. And in the moment when they were supposed to say 'Yes', a black cat came into the church and walked down the carpet in the center aisle of the church. Of course, the people who understood what was going on must have thought, "Oh, these are terrible omens!" And the marriage was a disaster; it only lasted a year and a half. The time was not right, and the people were not right. The woman's family were Viennese aristocrats and he was only a gardener. And it was the Viennese aristocrats who had arranged the wedding. It was all completely false. And he was too young, and so forth. The woman was not the right one for him anyway. The right time, the right people and the right place. Probably Vienna was not the right place for him either.

But people – all of us – are full of pride and arrogance. We say, "My family, my education, my academic degrees, my certificates, my personality, my experience," etcetera. What can we do with all of this? These things are so useless, and do not help us at all. We have to free ourselves from all of these things; we have to get undressed inwardly, to stand naked before the truth. We are born naked and we will die naked, and we must stand naked before our teacher. Once I made an interesting Freudian slip.

J., a woman from my group in London, gave my book to a French woman, and this woman read it in one night, (*The unabridged edition had not yet been published.*) and then she read it again, and she was very impressed by it, and said that she really must come to visit me. And she came. She was a very elegant and good-looking woman and was wearing a beautiful fur coat. So she came to my flat for the first time, and entered the room where a few other members of the group were sitting. And she said to me, "Are you Mrs. Tweedie?" And I said, "Yes. Take off your clothes and have a seat." She looked at me, and someone behind me whispered, "Take off your shoes." So I said, "Oh, pardon me, I meant take off your shoes." But you see, what I had said was really right. Later, she told J., "Mrs. Tweedie said that I should get undressed; of course she meant that I should take off my shoes, but she was so right! She could not have said anything better. That is exactly what I should do. I have to get undressed and stand naked before myself, so that I can tell myself the truth."

You see, we lie to ourselves the whole time. We say, so often, that we do something for this or that reason, and it is not true at all. If I go to the depths of it, then I see that what I believe to be my reasons are not my reasons at all. I think that I know why I want to help someone, but when I go deeply inside myself, I see, "Oh no! It is only vanity; it is only so that I would be able to tell so many people how I had helped this person." I would be just like a Pharisee. It would be terrible. And the problem is that we are completely unconscious of these other motives, and we act out of our unconscious, completely automatically. And it is exactly here that the work of the Sufi teacher begins: to show people the truth about themselves. But, of course, for the disciple, it causes pain and suffering. My book is full of examples of how my teacher dealt with these conflicts and difficulties in me. You see, a real teacher will bring you to a point where you have to face the absolute truth about yourself. Earlier, I used the term, 'self analysis'. Meditation will bring you to the point where you do not only see yourself as others see you. Others do not see you completely either. Others see you a little: they see what you show them.

A Sufi teacher will never behave as you would expect a Sufi teacher to behave. And again, that does not happen intentionally on the part of the teacher. I am not a Sufi teacher; I am a disciple, and I hope to remain one always, but these things happen to me too.

We Sufis have a very good method for getting rid of people. If someone does not fit with our tradition, or if they come out of curiosity, or if they do not behave properly, then I will say something or tell a story that I feel that they will particularly hate. And then they will never come again. (*There is a ripple of laughter.*)

One woman, who really did not fit with my group at all – she was an English Aristocrat who was very, well, upper upper – left the group, saying that I only told indecent jokes. I think that I never told an indecent joke, but I told jokes that irritated her a bit. ... They were all jokes about the Aristocracy, (*Everyone laughs.*) or the stupidities of people, and there was always a Duke or a Count that was especially stupid. Many such jokes exist. And she never came again, and that was good. She was really not interested in spiritual life at all. She was there out of curiosity, to see something new and interesting. She can look somewhere else for that. Our group is not there for that sort of thing.

The Sufi teacher may even sing or dance! I dance too, but only when I am alone, in the night. I think that it would be rather strange if I danced here. But sometimes I dance in the night, when I am so happy that my heart overflows with love. And then one day I saw my reflection in the big mirror in the hall, and since then I always close the door so that I cannot see it. (*Mrs. Tweedie and everyone have a good laugh.*) The mirror is not quite in the best place. One should not be able to see all of oneself! After you have reached a certain age, it is better not to see everything.

One day Guruji said to us, “The problem is that people begin to teach before they have overcome their egos.” If you are ambitious, then you will try to please other people, and you will want money, and so forth. I find that this desire for money creates a huge problem. One sees this especially in America where spiritual life is very expensive. Teachers demand a great deal of money there, and as soon as a teacher is dependent on money, he cannot be free. He begins to try to please people and to flatter them. And he certainly will not say anything critical if he sees a problem or a fault, because the disciple would stop paying him the high fees that are usually charged. One cannot teach in that way. The teacher must be completely free. Spiritual life must be completely free. If you go to a real teacher, it should not cost anything. The teaching must be as free as the sun, and the sun shines equally on a Saint and a compost heap.

I have a good example that is not connected with a teacher, but that fits perfectly with our theme. I.'s husband drove here from Germany, and it is very difficult to find a place to park here in the center of Bern. He looked for a long time until he saw a military vehicle parked somewhere. And he thought that if this other vehicle was parked there, that it would be OK for him to park behind it, and so he did. And of course, he got a ticket. He called the police, and they asked him if he lived in Bern or if he was just passing through. He told them that he was on holiday for a few days. “Ah”, said the policeman, “If you are not from here, you do not have to pay.” Then you only get a warning, so he did not have to pay the fine. You see, the police are really being very clever. If a stranger is offended, then the next time he might decide to go to Tirol, (*A beautiful mountainous area of Austria.*) and not to Switzerland. It is similar with a teacher. If the teacher treats the disciple badly, then the disciple will take his business elsewhere; he would go to another teacher.

A Sufi teacher teaches only through his being – through his own being. He gives an example for life, an example of ‘living fully in the present’, as Ibn ‘Arabi called it. One teaches by example. One simply is. These teachers do not try to convince people to do this or that; they simply are. And they live in such a way that when other people look at their lives, they say, “Yes, that is the kind of life that I too want to lead.” And you see, that is not easy: to live so transparently and so well, that no one can find a fault in your actions. People will always find fault with everything. So one cannot make everyone happy in any case. That is why the Sufi teacher does not worry about what people think. He lives according to his own conscience.

If I know that I have nothing to hide, then I am able to live quite openly. But I cannot try to earn money from my teaching, and I cannot be greedy. I must always be honest and sincere. If I eat meat, then I tell people that I do, and that I am not a vegetarian. Or if I am a vegetarian, then I will say that. And if the people say, "Oh, vegetarians have such narrow views. They do not understand that meat is also necessary for life." Then you can say, "Well, that is my own ignorance." And you are not bothered by what they say. One must have an inner state in which you are really not bothered at all about what people say about you. And that is not easy.

Every one of us thinks, "Oh. What would people think about me? So I must behave and act the way they think I should." No. Instead, ask your own conscience, "Is God happy with me?" In my own case, I find this very easy to do. My teacher was such a wonderful example for me that I always ask myself, "Would Guruji be happy with my action or my decision?" And if the answer is "Yes," then I do it. And every other point of view is of no importance to me. As I said yesterday, we need an example, a role-model, for spiritual life. We need an ideal, a living, human ideal. And that is why Sufis say that a teacher is necessary: someone who can be an ideal for you. Do you have any comments or questions about this?

(Question: How can one recognize a real teacher?)

Oho! The sixty-four-thousand-dollar question. (*Everyone Laughs*) How can I answer that? There are so many pseudo-teachers, and every one says that he alone knows the truth – I say 'he' because I find it too tedious to always say 'he' or 'she' – and such teachers always fit the role: they are thin and holy looking. If he is fat and laughs a great deal, then he cannot be a teacher. (*There is a ripple of laughter.*) Yes. Such teachers are dogmatic and they will tell you that they are the real teacher, and that all of the others are fakes and worthless.

You see, there are no rules. It is a question of trial and error. I can tell you what happened to me personally. When I came into Guruji's presence for the first time, I suddenly felt the presence of a great man, of a great being. Something in me stood up and saluted. I knew that it was he that I had been looking for, and none other. I knew that that was the end of my journey; that I had arrived. But that is a feeling, a powerful feeling, and not an idea. And, of course, it was correct.

But I cannot answer your question. You will make mistakes, you may go to false teachers, but you will also learn something in that way. And if such things happen, that means that it was your Karma to have such experiences; that you have to learn something from these experiences, and that you yourself have to discover who your teacher is. I can only say that he will be completely different from the way you imagine he will be. He will probably not be thin or holy looking, and he will probably tell you impossible things.

One thing is sure. If you have sexual feelings towards your teacher, then he is not your teacher. That is completely out. That is one of the signs. One says that many teachers sleep with their disciples, especially male teachers. The temptations are large, because women are beautiful, and you see, one is dealing with such a power. I have experienced it myself; this power can lead you into such temptation. And for a man, it is much more difficult than for a woman. For us women it is much easier, because this power works in another way in us. For a man, to withstand this temptation when he is full of this power is really very difficult. One is in wonder at how different men and women are, and how wonderful they both are. But if you have these kind of feelings, and you believe that the teacher is in some way hinting or saying things that you feel are leading to a sexual encounter – perhaps that he implied that such an encounter would be helpful for you – then you can be sure that it is wrong. You can believe me or not. But one day you will see that I am telling you the truth. Sex with a teacher never leads to anything positive. Of course, you can sleep with whomever you want – anyone! – But! Not with a teacher. (*There is some laughter.*)

I am not saying that sex is bad. Sex is wonderful. What God has created cannot be bad. Every form of love, including sexual love, belongs to creation, and every kind of love has its place. But it is absolutely and completely impossible, absolutely wrong, to have sex with a teacher. Recently I have

heard that there are teachers who abuse this. One hears of terrible things that have happened, for example, in the ashrams of Rajneesh. And of course, he himself has been chased out of India and out of America, and no other country wants him. And there are people who still believe in him and think that he is so wonderful, and so he can afford fourteen Rolls Royces. Someone came to my group from Rajneesh and said, "Yes, that is a test for us: that the teacher does impossible things ..." just as I have been telling you a teacher does, "And he does them intentionally." I do not know, but something does not seem right to me. A teacher will do things that do not seem right, but not so very 'not right'. (*There is a wave of laughter.*) There is a difference.

So that is all I can say in answer to your question. I cannot say any more. I know that this answer is not very satisfying, because it would be lovely to get an answer that would let you know what you need to do. And here I have left you hanging in the air.

If someone is a teacher, and you see quite clearly that he behaves in such a way as he certainly should not but you see, here is the difficulty. Because, for example, there are people who believe that if someone is fat then he cannot be a real teacher. And if you believe that, then a fat person cannot be a teacher for you, and that is not very helpful. So you see, it is impossible to give a clear answer to this question of recognizing a Guru. It depends on your own conditioning. If you come to a teacher and see that he has fourteen Rolls Royces, and you find that you love him anyway, then, OK; he is your teacher.

A woman once wrote me a really beautiful letter, and included a photograph of herself. She was a beautiful and charming and gentle woman. She wrote that she is a disciple of Rajneesh, and that she loves him a great deal. She knew that he had been thrown out of America, and had been accused of many things, but that all of it was unjust. She was clear that, for her, he was a wonderful and beautiful man and that she loved him. For her, he was her only love. OK. Go ahead if you are happy. Some people are satisfied with very little. But we are all made in God's image, and so for us, only the best is good enough. Only the very best: Golden tooth brushes! Only the very best. ... Something just occurred to me:

Have you ever noticed that we are never satisfied? If we have something, we want more of it. If we have a car, then we want a better one. If we have a Toyota, then we want a Mercedes; if we have a Mercedes, then we want a Rolls Royce; we want the best washing machine, the best house. And why? Because we are made in His image. We want the highest ideal. It is only that we confuse the ideal with these other things, and so we throw away what is ideal and wait for something to come to us from outside ourselves: the best, the biggest, the most beautiful. And this is the proof that we are made in his image, that we always want only the very best. It is only that we confuse one value for another, and so we are poor. We are like children. We want a better toy, a bigger toy, without understanding that we are throwing out our completion, our perfection. I have said something very important to you, something that just occurred to me. I have given you the proof that you were made in God's image: that you always want the best and the biggest. But! It is only that you should not want the best and biggest from outside of yourself. It must come from within you. And in a similar way, only the best and greatest teacher is good enough for you. And the best and the greatest religion. But which religion is the best and greatest for you is none of my business. That is your problem. Yes?

(Question: You said earlier that people are either born mystics or not; that one cannot become a mystic. How then can the rest of us come to God?)

You see, mysticism is not the only way to God. There are also other ways. I am a mystic and our path is mysticism. But you can be a great Yogi or a great saint. For example, I do not believe that the Prophet Mohammed was a mystic. I do not think that Jesus was a mystic. Christianity is a great religion, it is only the priests that have spoiled it. (*Mrs. Tweedie becomes playfully strident.*) I am against bureaucracy and against priests. And neither bureaucrats nor priests like me very much either. If I have to fill out a form, I have terrible problems, and I never do it properly. And the tax office always has big problems with me. I have to come back twenty times. Bureaucrats – I hope there are no bureaucrats here – are my enemies ... along with priests. So you see, we do not have to be mystics to

go to God. Mysticism is the path that I have been speaking about, but that does not mean that you have to be a mystic to come to God or to become perfect. Perfection has many *(She looks for the right word.)* aspects. My mind gets worse and worse. *(Now laughing.)* It is senility, so don't believe anything that I say. It is all nonsense! Yes. Are you satisfied with my answer? OK? Good.

(Comment: I think that Jesus was a mystic.)

Ah. You have another idea. Please tell us why, because I believe that he was not a mystic. Do you have a reason to believe he was? (C: No.) I think that Jesus was Jesus, and that was all, and that is good enough. He was simply himself. If you want to consider him to be a mystic, then do it. But I think that he was one of the greatest Gurus. You see, since I was with an Indian Yogi and have returned to Europe, and had to give lectures, I have seen that I could agree with every word that Jesus said. It is exactly the same as my teacher taught me. For me, Jesus was one of the greatest Gurus. But I cannot accept ... please! accept this with a grain of salt, but for me. ... Ah! Excuse me. But I was not allowed to say that to you. It disappeared from my mind. My thought was completely cut off. OK? I wanted to say something, and I cannot. So, we stay with my first comment: Jesus was Jesus, and that was all. You see, I wanted to say something esoteric to you, and it just disappeared from my mind. And for me that is a sign that I should not say it in public. OK. Yes?

So. We now have two minutes. God bless you. We will remain in silence for these two minutes, in our silent meditation.

(The stillness begins ... and ends.)

God bless you.

(The session ends.)

(End of Part 3)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Bern Seminar of 1986: Part 4 of 4

Sexual Energy

Based on a Series of Lectures
given in Bern, Switzerland
In March of 1986

(The next session begins.)

So. We had a question from before, and I want to begin with that. I said that on a spiritual path we must transform our sexual energy so that it helps us to reach God or the Truth. And the question is: Why should we transform our sexual energy? Yesterday we spoke about sexual energy, and that it is necessary in this life for human relationships, and for life; that sexual energy gives us the power to live, it makes us younger, and helps our bodies to renew themselves. And when we are in love – which is also connected with this energy – the human feels richer and the world becomes like a fairy tale. But every spiritual teacher says that this energy must be transformed in order to progress on the spiritual path. Now. Is that correct? If every teacher says that, perhaps it is really true. One could make a mistake, but all? And every Yogi, every book, every Guru – traditions that have existed for thousands of years – all say that. So could it be that they are all wrong? This is an open question. It is a 'free for all'.

(Comment: Yes, it is because the coarser energy is refined, or sublimated into other energy, which is then available to the higher functions.) Thank you for a wonderful answer.

Now, I would like to say, quite simply, and from a practical point of view, that one part of this energy is used as sexual energy, and about two-thirds of it helps us on the spiritual path. Now, if you are able to transform the sexual part of this energy, then all of this energy will help us on the path, and so we progress more quickly. It is quite simple and practical, and that is the real reason. And I am speaking from personal experience in this. After the sexual energy is transformed, then the whole of the Kundalini energy is used to bring us towards God. There comes a time when the sexual energy – well, it is probably still there because it cannot be anywhere else, but I think that then the real desire is somewhere else. But I do not think that sexual energy disappears.

In fact I know a case where a man who had already unified his Kundalini energies suddenly decided to marry – he was still rather young – and he had to bring his Kundalini energy down again. So one can do that, but it is difficult. Once sexual energy is gone, it is gone. But that part of the sexual energy that has been transformed into the higher form of energy can again be brought down into sexual energy, but I do not know if it manifests itself in the same form after it is brought down again. I knew this man, but not very well. I think that he was happily married, but he did not have any children. Perhaps he simply did not want any children, but really, I do not know enough about this, so I cannot say much about it. I do know that this energy can be brought down again, but I was told, by someone else who was a Yogi, that it is rather difficult and takes a long time to do. And I do not know any more than that.

So this gentleman gave us a wonderful philosophical answer, and from the practical side, I said that when one uses one's entire energy on the spiritual path, one is able to progress faster. Then there are no sexual desires – they gradually fade away. I have three men in my group: one is sixty years old, and with the consent of his wife, he wants to transform his sexual energy completely, and for the last two years he has been doing an exercise that I gave him. In such cases, I never ask any questions. I wait to see if the man says anything, and if he does not, then everything is OK and he does not need any help. And he said to me, "Mrs. Tweedie, everything is OK. I have absolutely no desire, and I have a beautiful wife." So, it has gone very well for two years. But please! He is sixty. With the others who are younger, well ... they work at it. (*Mrs. Tweedie laughs.*) I cannot say any more than that. And my heart is so full of compassion for them. This is a difficult area for men, much more so than for us women. I will not explain the whole story of how this works in us women, it is somehow not necessary. But I know that it is rather difficult for men. One needs a great deal of will power; one needs a really powerful desire to progress on the spiritual path, because this energy is powerful and women are beautiful. And so I always have a special tenderness for men who make an effort in this way.

(Comment:)

Yes, this wonderful energy, sexual energy, can find its expression in creativity. Energy, like electricity or magnetism, can certainly express itself in more than one way: in art or music, for example. I have heard that great artists, great musicians and craftsmen – like Beethoven – do not use their sexual energy, as such, at all, that all of this energy goes into their art. It is manifested, or transforms itself into art. But I have not personally experienced that, so I do not know how it is done. Thank you for your contribution. And he did that completely by himself? (C: ...) Ah. With his will. That is very very wonderful. I know how wonderful that is because I know how difficult it is. I met many Yogis in India who fought and fought with their sexuality.

Guruji had a disciple who was, at that time, already no longer young, perhaps a bit over fifty. And on the top of his head, just above the crown chakra, his skull had the shape of a sort of dome. It was not as large as one sees in statues of the Buddha. The statues of the Buddha show an enlarged chakra at the crown of the head – it looks as if the Buddha were wearing a small cap. This representation is to indicate that this chakra is large. Now. This man really had a skull that was shaped in that way. And he was bald so one could see it quite clearly. One day he spoke with Guruji in Hindi, and then he had to leave. And after he left, Guruji told me, "Yes, yes. He is Brahmacharayan." That means that he had already transformed his sexual energy many years before. Guruji continued, "One must respect these people a great deal. It is very very difficult. He has been Brahmacharayan for the last thirty years. Did you notice the shape of the crown of his head? When all of the power of a human goes to this chakra, then the bones take the shape of a dome." I had never known that, and I found it very interesting. Guruji continued, "I am not that way. I am married. With us Sufis, this energy works in another way." But if one is Brahmacharayan, one develops this dome. The crown of the head really changes. So, that is an example that I personally know of, and I have told it to you because it fits so well to our theme.

And this man that you spoke about, how old is he? (Q: ...) And what does the crown of his head look like? I mean that sincerely. (Q: I never noticed.) Look next time; perhaps you will notice that the crown of his head is a little higher. It should be that way, because this energy is so strong that it bends the bones themselves, and then one sees this dome effect. And if that is not already that way, then in some years it will be. That is quite certain, because I have seen many Yogis who had such a crown in India. And it was lovely to have heard this from Guruji because now I really know why it is so. And now you too know why. If you see a man who one of these domes, you should give him a great deal of respect. (*There is a short wave of laughter.*) He had to make a lot of effort to achieve what he has achieved.

(Questions: I began using the mantra, "Om" on my own. Can I share that with others?)

Yes. As much as you like. It is only if the mantra 'Om' were to be given to you by a Guru, and if it were magnetized with the teacher's own magnetism that it would be your mantra. Then you could no longer tell it to others. But if you have found this mantra yourself, then what you do with it is up to you.

And really, every name of God is good. Someone once told me, "I love Jesus so much." And I told her, "Please! The name 'Jesus' is just as good as any other mantra." It is only that the Sufis use the names of God that are also qualities of God: 'Al Akbar', The Great; or 'Al Rachim', The Most Compassionate; and so forth. But you can use any name of God you like. You can even use a line of a poem that inspires you. Or a melody. That can also work.

I tell people to whom I cannot give a mantra, "Look. Find something that inspires you, and use that as your own mantra, and then, after you have done it for a long time, you will automatically magnetize it with your own power, with your own magnetism, with your own aura. And then it will work, not quite as well as a Guru mantra, but good enough for a start." And it really can work quite well.

I know of one person who used the first line of a song. She loved this song so much, and she sang it while she did her housework. Other people think that she sings a little, and that it was her own funny habit to sing while she did her vacuuming. They might think, "Well, we sing in the bath, and she sings while she is vacuuming. Each to his own." But words like 'Om' belong to everyone. But if that were to be given to you as a Guru Mantra, then it would be only for you. Then you could no longer share it with others. You would have to find another mantra to share.

Now, Gururji said, "When the teacher guides you, he does not do it to please you. He only does his job, and he cannot live without doing his duty." So you do not have to thank the teacher at all. Of course, one does thank him, because you get such wonderful experiences. Your heart sometimes feels so wonderful. I remember a time

My teacher forbid me to touch his feet. In India it is normal to touch the feet of one's teacher, but my teacher was a Sufi, and Sufis do not do that. But Hindus do. He told me, "The Hindus come to me and touch my feet, but you are a European so you do not need to do that. It is not necessary." But I did it three times. One time I had such a wonderful mystical experience. It was not of this world. I remember that he was sitting alone in the garden, and I went to him in complete silence, touched his feet, and left. My heart was so full of gratitude that I hardly realized that I had done it. And another time it was also after a great mystical experience; and the third time, I fell unconscious as I touched his feet. I fell unconscious, and that in itself was a very great experience. I was only unconscious for a second; then I stood up and was very embarrassed. I thought, "What a performance!" But really, I could not help myself.

Saint Paul was said to have been an epileptic because he sometimes went unconscious. I think that Saint Paul was not an epileptic, but a mystic. After mystical experiences it is very easy to fall unconscious, because something happens to the brain. And all of those who do our meditation know that after meditating, it is quite easy to fall down. Something happens to the balance-center in the ear. I have seen that even Gururji was often quite unstable on his feet after a meditation, as if he were drunk. That is why one says the Sufis are drunk.

I remember one morning at seven o'clock, while I was on my way to Gururji's, that I really acted drunk. From where I was living I had to cross a street, a public square, and a bazaar to reach my teacher. And I went through the bazaar in a kind of zigzag, just like a drunk. I saw one of the shopkeepers looking at me very strangely. He probably thought, "This European woman is already drunk at seven in the morning!" And I really was drunk, but not from alcohol. I told Gururji about it, and he laughed quite merrily and said, "Doesn't everyone say that we are the drunken Sufis?" It is one of the side effects of meditating that you look drunk sometimes. It is just like with medicines. They can really work wonders, but they all have side effects.

Now a human being in which Kundalini energy flows freely can no longer be called exclusively human. I knew such a being, and after you have seen such a being, and know what they look like; you come to recognize them. The Dali Lama is also one of these beings. And some of the people who are with the Dali Lama are also at this level, but not all. In fact, many of them are not developed at all in this way. But the human being is weak and spiritual life is long and difficult; one needs many many years to be able to have this energy flow in the right channels.

Now, to another theme. Many people come to me who are completely broken. Often they are women who were sexually seduced by a teacher, and in such cases there can be very serious psychological problems. After such an experience, the human being can be so broken; they can really be destroyed. These poor women went with all faith, with all their heart. And they believed that if the teacher wanted to sleep with them that it would be wonderful, and that he would take them to God. And the teacher sleeps with one woman a few times, and then sleeps with another one. Some teachers do such things. You see, they have so much power that they do not know what they are doing, and they become very confused.

There were three such women in my group. Now, only one is still with me and she is no longer young. Of the other two, one married and the other died from cancer. But especially in one case, it was a tragedy, and I could only help a little. The woman was so shattered. So for God's sakes, especially for the women, look two times, three times, ten times! to whom you go. And I am speaking to you from the very bottom of my heart. Be careful, and only trust someone who follows the very highest ideals, a person to whom your heart says, "Yes." But I do not mean the physical heart that might have sexual desires. Ask your higher heart, your soul; and that is very difficult because our egos bewitch us.

Gurus have a lot of power, and they have power over women. Yes. Men have a lot of power over us. I was very lucky to have had a man as a teacher who was, for me, like a god. And if the teacher is not like a god for the disciple, then you will not make any progress. Of course, teachers are also human! Guruji said to me, "As a human being, I am not perfect. I make mistakes because I work through my human brain, and we are all human. It is only in the highest states of meditation that I cannot make mistakes. It is only when I am functioning as a Master on the highest level that I am infallible." So, of course, as a human being he could make mistakes. And that is how it was. In the beginning I looked for his faults and mistakes with my critical mind, and there were almost none, and those that I found were not serious. But I made these little things big, and I had doubts about him. I thought that he was a cheat and a trickster.

But even in psychology, it is much better when you hate your analyst in the beginning than when the negative transference comes later. Sometimes it comes in the beginning, and that is much better, because then it can be transformed into a kind of sympathy or even into love, and that can lead to a lifelong friendship. If, however, it begins as a loving relationship, and later you begin to hate the analyst, then the analysis takes much much longer and is much more difficult, and can even end to the disadvantage of the analyzant. In my case, I had the doubts in the beginning, and then I saw who he was and everything went well. And really, the Sufi training is very similar to analysis. It is an analysis that goes deeper than analysis, and leads us all the way to our goal. And now I want questions! Yes?

(Question: When a Guru seduced or abuses one of his disciples, doesn't he too suffer?)

Aach! Of course, but for the Guru who does these things, at the time, he does not care. Of course he injures himself too. He will never be able to progress. But for a man, this can be such a strong desire that he forgets everything. And if that is the case then the Guru becomes very human. Then he is not a spiritual person at all, but just an ordinary man. Well, I do not like this word 'ordinary', I mean 'not spiritual'. You see, I understand and I have pity on how these men feel. I understand deeply and completely how they feel, even these priests and monks who do such things. I know how terrible this energy is, because my teacher led me through the path of Tiaga, which is a path of complete renunciation. And I had to somehow experience things that a woman does not normally experience.

There is a level in meditation on which you can identify with another person, and I know quite precisely how a man feels. But that knowledge did not come through my physical body. I know that from being able to identify with the man on another level. And when I was first shown that – that is something that is shown to you. Higher beings show it to you. You cannot do it alone – I was very struck, and also shocked. Men have a very strong power, but this power can completely bewitch the man, and when one sees the moment when he is bewitched, one must forgive him many of his actions.

What a man has to do to oppose this power is sometimes beyond human. And I say that very sincerely. In us women this sexual energy functions in a completely different way.

Everyone gets the training that he needs for the work he has to do. And I received a training that was appropriate for the work that I am now doing. You see, I would never get an order to work in a leper colony. I do not have the qualifications for that work; and with my character, I could not do it. I would find it very tedious. But I have a good metaphysical mind, and so I do this work. You see, when you are on a spiritual path, you will be asked to do the work that you are able to do, so you will already have the character that enables you to do this work. Are you happy with that answer? Yes? Good.

(Question: ...)

Yes, that is a very interesting question. I have said that in the East, women do not call each other by name, and that the man must consider the woman to be a goddess, and the woman must consider the man to be a god. And now this woman has asked how it is when they sleep together. Does not one break this special relationship? No! Then they sleep with a god or a goddess. (*Everyone is delighted with the answer, and laughs!*) And that is very beautiful. It is said that people did just that in olden times. You find it in Greek Mythology and in many other traditions. And why not? It is very beautiful to sleep with a god or a goddess.

In ancient Egypt there were temple prostitutes. Well. We call them prostitutes, but they were not viewed that way by the Egyptians. They were high priestesses, and it was a great honor to sleep with them. And these priestesses did not get any money for what they did, rather the temple got the money. This was something that we, here in the West, cannot begin to understand: that it was an incredible honor for the man, and the woman was honored as if she were a goddess. And the women were very beautiful. Imagine what it could be like for a man to be with such a woman, a woman who was probably very special in her own right. And he gave money to the temple. We call them temple prostitutes, but they were not. It is only because our culture is so different that we say that. Anyway, it is quite nice to sleep with a god or goddess. Try it! (*Everyone laughs a truly lighthearted laugh.*) It is certainly better than with a mere mortal.

And now something different. I was just given permission to say this to you. This does not concern Sufism. It is Tantra Yoga. When you are with your husband or wife, sexually, imagine – there has to be a certain attunement of the spirit for this to work – imagine that there is not a woman with you, but rather The Void, The Void of the Great Beloved. And you do not sleep with a woman; there is no one with you at all, only this nothingness. That is the Great Tantra. You see, Tantra Yoga is very wonderful and very pure when you look at it in this way. It is only when you use it as a pretext, “I am a Tantra Yogi and so I change women every day,” that it becomes low. But that is not Tantra; that is simply promiscuity. Yes. One misuses sexuality. ... And the women can do this practice too; when you sleep with a man, imagine that what you feel is not your husband or lover, it is He, the Great Beloved, in all of His greatness and in all of His light. And it is The Void, because the Great Beloved does not exist. The Great Beloved is Nothing.

The great mystical experiences are with an emptiness; you experience union with this emptiness, and this emptiness is the greatest bliss. Our minds think that this ‘Nothingness’ is something terrible. It is (*She shudders ...*) like death. But that is not true. It is absolute fulfillment. So try to do this, as an experiment. It is worth it.

All of those, and I am one of them, who have had mystical experiences of unity with ... something that one cannot name, know that that is the greatest and most beautiful experience one can have, and that no union with a human being is as beautiful. I was married, and of course, I know how beautiful that can be, but this is much more beautiful. But even a normal sexual relationship with a man or a woman can make you so high that it is almost a mystical experience, and that is what one strives for in Tantra Yoga.

And you see, these men who practice Tantra, who meditate a great deal, and have so much power, are able to experience sex just as I have described it: as a very high state. But they use women to achieve that, and they do not teach the women anything. Perhaps there are some men who do teach the women how one uses sex to achieve these states, but I know of a few women who were with such men, and they were not taught anything; they were only used. If a Tantrist has a woman with him and takes her with him into these higher states, if he makes sure that she too has mystical experiences, then OK; but then he must stay with one woman, and not have different ones all of the time. If he does it with different women, then he is not a Tantrist, then he is a ... No. I will not say it; you know what I am saying.

You know, as the years pass, I come to understand more and more. What my teacher planted in my heart, in another language, somehow continues to grow. So there are really no time limits. I think that I will continue to learn until I die. I will always be a student, and that is all I want to be. I have no ambition to be any more than that. But these developments are gradual.

A sudden enlightenment occurs only very rarely, and even then there will have been a long preparation. The conversion of Saint Paul on his way to Damascus is an excellent example of this, where Jesus appeared to him and he became blind. I have given many lectures about Saint Paul. I admire him very much, and I have read a great deal about him. He persecuted many Christians and sentenced them to death, because he was a Pharisee and was given the job to throw Christians to the lions. The first person that he condemned was Saint Stephen. Saint Stephen was very young and handsome and came from a wealthy family, and he prayed to be nailed to the cross with his head downwards. And that was the first time that Saint Paul hesitated and thought about what he was doing: that a man from an Aristocratic family, so richly dressed, died in such a way: with such humility. And the soldiers fought over his clothes. All of the clothing of the people who were killed became the property of the soldiers who killed them.

And Saint Paul saw the difference between how these Christians died, and how the common criminals died, and that was the first time he had something to think about. But exactly because he began to think about it, because he began to have doubts about what he was doing, he began to hate the Christians even more, and so he condemned more and more of them to death. Really, he was very confused. He was confused for years, and could not understand something in himself. Then, one day, while he was taking some Christians to Rome to condemn them there, while he was still on the road to Damascus, Jesus appeared to him. But from here you know the story, so I do not have to repeat it. Jesus said, "Oh Saul! Why do you persecute me?" And then, of course, Saul became Paul, and he began his great work. There is nothing more beautiful than his letter to the Corinthians about love – it is number thirteen in Corinthians – where he describes how love should be. I do not think that anyone has ever written more beautifully about love, and none higher than that.

And Paul was beaten; he had three ribs broken, and he was thrown in prison. He was tortured, and finally he was killed. He was a great man, but he was very ugly. He was bow-legged and had a long nose. I studied him quite thoroughly. He was bow-legged, his eye-brows grew together, he had tiny eyes and a huge nose. He was a very ugly man. And! He had a bad temperament. He was very temperamental, very angry. He was, altogether, an unusual person. But his students said that he was as beautiful as an angel. You see what love can do? His students loved him, so they saw this incredibly ugly man as beautiful. They didn't see his bow-leggedness or his huge nose, and they didn't mind his terrible temperament.

(Question: Do you accept disciples?) I do not have any disciples, we are all God's disciples. (Q: ...) Why don't you start your own meditation group? You can manage to do that. We have meditation groups in Hamburg, in Australia, in Paris. And in each of those groups we are all together. Just have a simple meditation group where people have the opportunity to be together in silence and to meditate; that is all that is necessary. And do not say, "Oh, I do not think that I am ready to do something like that." Why not? You only need to give people the opportunity to go into themselves. And that is all. What I do is only to make my flat available to people, and to give them the opportunity to come to me, and that is all. And in the moment that you begin, you will receive the grace of God, and by that grace

you will know what to say and what to do in order to help people. That is all. Think about it. Everyone can have a meditation group. Why not?

Now. Sufis understand with their hearts. “Hammer your head into your heart,” according to a Sufi saying. And what happens? We Sufis activate the heart chakra.

Ten minutes ago a woman came to me and said that she felt ill, that since she came here a few days ago, she has a terrible thumping in her heart, and that she felt this hammering in her entire body. I told her not to be afraid, that there was nothing to worry about; that the energy that is here with us will activate her heart. And if the heart beats very strongly, then of course, one can feel it in the entire body. Even if you have a fever you will feel your heartbeat in your entire body when it beats hard. So please, do not be afraid if you feel an unusual heart beat. It is not caused by anything physical. I have a funny story about that.

A year and a half ago two Americans came to me, and every time that they came to the group, one of them felt a terribly strong heartbeat. So she went to a very expensive heart specialist in London. She thought that she had suddenly developed heart disease. But the doctor didn't find anything at all wrong with her. The doctor told her that it was not a physical problem, “Your heart is perfectly OK. There is nothing to worry about.” She came back to our group and continued to have these terrible heart beats, but it did not bother her any more since the doctor – the best in London – had told her that it was not a physical problem, that her heart was completely healthy. Finally she decided that it was a Yogic state, (*Everyone laughs.*) and then she was quite happy about it. Her heart would hammer away, and she was happy. I did not say anything. If it helped her to think that it was a Yogic state, then OK. Everything that helps us is useful.

The beauty with a group like ours is that there is no competition. You cannot say, as one can in other groups, that someone does his Yoga asanas so wonderfully and so is greater or more than you are. Here, everyone works on his own heart. That is the meditation that we do in our group – the same one that I have described to you – and no one knows the heart of the other, so there really cannot be any jealousy. No one knows the inner state of another person; no one knows the level of the other. Each one works on himself, and that is good.

A few years ago, a young man brought his mother to us. I think that I told this story here last year, but I will tell it again. His mother had cancer and he brought her to me to ask if I knew a healer. I did know a healer, and I gave him the address, but they were not very happy with this healer. Well, the mother died, so he had not been able to do much. But one time, during his visit to our group, this young man sat at the table in my kitchen, and by chance there were only men sitting at the table, and they spoke together for a time. And after a while he said, “It is strange. When I sit with other men around a table, there will always be someone who thinks, ‘I am better than you’. And there is always a bit of showing off. But here that does not happen. Why?” And one man, who has been with us a long time, explained it. He said, “Here, one does not need to brag. We do not know what the other person does, we only know what we ourselves do, and that is all.” But this young man had noticed that he was there with these other men, and no one was trying to make himself more important than his neighbor. I found that very lovely. I was not there at the time, but someone told me about it.

So. Everyone in my group is on the path of Dhyana. And this meditation that I told you about is a part of the path of Dhyana.

Now, doubt and suspicion are the greatest obstacles on the path. If we do not trust the teacher, we will not be able to learn anything. But in order to progress, one must also trust people. And one must trust life.

I have a policeman in my group. His wife came to me first when she was pregnant. And then, one day a man in a black leather jacket arrived who was a little aggressive. He came earlier than the group meets, and so I was alone. And I felt that he was full of mistrust. But I invited him in. And he said that he was interested in spiritual life, so I explained meditation to him and led him into the meditation room

and closed the door. And he meditated for a quarter of an hour, or at least I thought he had. Later I heard that he was a policeman who had come to see where his wife was going. Of course, that is quite natural and legitimate. He knew that his young wife went to a group, and he had no idea what kind of group it was. Perhaps people were using drugs there; he had no idea. Anything could have been possible. But, he came a few times, and his wife came for a long time. Then she had a child and it was difficult to come, and then she had a second child and now she does not come any more.

But what was so difficult about this man was that he was so distrustful: with everyone and everything. I think that police have a very difficult life. They can no longer trust people. He was always distrustful. His heart was closed and as cold as a stone. He was young and tall and handsome, and his wife was beautiful; she was really very charming. Ah. I do not know. He had married well. She is the daughter of an engineer who worked for an oil company in Arabia, so they were quite rich. So he had married money ... and love. Yes, they love each other very much. But he had such distrust. I knew that I could not do anything for him, so I did not even try. When the heart is so closed, one cannot do anything.

In one of the books of Inayat Khan he says, "There are hearts and there are hearts. Some hearts are like stones, some hearts are like feathers, some hearts are like straw and burn to nothing in an instant, and some hearts are like a hot coal under the ashes and burn slowly and for ever and ever. And only these last hearts will come to know God." That comes from "The Sufi Message" by Hazrat Inayat Khan.

I do not think that these books have been translated into German, or at least Germans tell me that they have not found them in Germany. They are good books – good Sufi books. And they should have been translated into German because the publisher is in Geneva. (Someone asks her about "The Call of the Dervish" which was written by Vilayat Khan, the son of Inayat Khan.) I do not know that book. But I wrote a review of, I think, three of the books by Inayat Khan – I think it was volume eight, eleven and twelve – for the Theosophical Society. They are very good books, but especially volume one. If you can read English, please get it. It is a wonderful book about Sufi metaphysics.

In Volume 1, Inayat Khan says everything that one can say about Sufi metaphysics. He speaks about reincarnation, about Karma, about everything. And the other books are all expansions on these themes. But really volume one is enough. It is out of print now in London. They say that there will be another printing, but it has not yet appeared. Several people in my group in London have tried to buy it, but one can only find it second-hand. The second volume is about music and sound and is also very good. Volume three is about children and education and is also good. Really, all of his books are good. One of them is about religion ... Yes? (*Someone says that these books do exist in German, but someone else adds that the new publications only include parts of the original books.*) That is a shame, but if you can read English, then please, these are good books about Sufism.

Now. I have already emphasized that a teacher will never behave in the way we expect him to, if he is a real teacher. And because he can know what we are thinking, he knows what we expect of him. There is a story that once a man wanted to become a disciple of Naqshbandi, and went to visit him at his home. And he saw that Naqshbandi and all of his disciples were sitting in the court-yard in deep meditation. And he thought, "That is wonderful. That is the School for me!" And he sat down with all of the others and meditated. But he was a businessman and he soon had to leave.

Two weeks later he returned and saw that in the very same court-yard, all of the Sufis were dancing wildly and drunkenly, and behaving strangely, and then they were served a dinner where they ate hugely and drank wine. He became completely outraged, and went up to Naqshbandi and said, "Master! What is going on here? When I first came to you, you were all in deep meditation, and that was wonderful. And this time everyone is dancing and drunk. What is going on?" And the Great Naqshbandi said, "Ah, you have come expecting us to be very holy, and so I have shown you that holiness is not only composed of sitting and meditation. You can also be holy when you drink wine." And the poor man never came again. (*Everyone appreciates the story and laughs.*) This is supposed to be a true story. There are many stories about Naqshbandi. Here is another one.

Naqshbandi was a potter, and of course, he had students to whom he taught pottery. And one day the Master had to go somewhere for the day, and he gave his students instructions that each one of them should make, let us say, thirty black pots with the word 'Allah' written in white on each of them. And he left, and all of his students went into the workshop and began to make their pots as beautifully as possible so that the teacher would be pleased with them. Only one student, the Master's favorite, Aziz, did not say anything and did not do anything, but went to his cell, closed the door, and cried out 'Allah' the whole day. The others looked at what he was doing and said, "Look what a lazy man this is! The teacher told us to make these pots, and he only does this. We will tell the Master what has happened when he returns: that his favorite student did nothing the whole day."

Later when the teacher returned, he asked the students if they had all made the pots as he had instructed. And the disciples said, "Oh yes. We have all done that, but Aziz has only been calling out 'Allah' the whole day. He never even came out of his cell." So Naqshbandi called out, "Aziz," and Aziz replied, "Yes Master." "Have you made your pots?" "Yes Master." And all of the other students were very happy, because they thought, "Now we will show our teacher what a liar this Aziz is." They were all very jealous because Aziz was Naqshbandi's favorite. Then the Master said, "Aziz, come out." And Aziz came out. "Come. Show me your pots." And they all went into the workshop together, and on the table of Aziz there were thirty black pots with 'Allah' written on each one. It was a miracle. He had called Allah's name the entire day, and Allah had made the pots. That is very much in the tradition of Sufi miracles.

(Question:...)

Yes. Kabir says that. Kabir said that if the teacher and God stood together, and someone asked him, "Which one is more important for you? The teacher or God?" he would say that the teacher is more important, because it is the teacher who brings you to God. But that is the way Kabir sees it. One says that Kabir is a Sufi, but we Sufis believe that the teacher is like a boat that helps us to cross a river. And that is all. Kabir did say that, but I would not. Yes, I did use that quotation, but that is not the belief of this Sufi school.

(Comment: ...)

The woman said that when you imagine someone to be in a fixed category, you can no longer perceive them as they are. That may be true, but it is not very comfortable that way. You may be able to live that way, but for others it may not be possible. You see, usually people have the habit of shoving people into a category, into a single, predictable system. It is easier to deal with people in that way. And it is more secure. It is very threatening to accept a person who does not have a clear system of patterns. My teacher, for example, sometimes did not sleep at all. Sometimes he meditated for days at a time, and sometimes he did not meditate at all. Sometimes he was home, sometimes not. When I went to him each day, I could never be sure what would happen. That is quite clear in the unabridged version of my book that will soon come out. His unpredictability was terribly confusing. We, his disciples, never knew where we were.

It is so comfortable to know how to behave with another person, to know what the other person's reaction will be, be it a teacher or a husband or a wife. In this case, you are with someone and you have no idea what sort of reactions you might get. So perhaps the woman who made this comment can deal with a situation like that, but not everyone can. It can be very difficult. It was for me, and so I understand the problem. I also have people in my group in London that I cannot fit into fixed patterns. But my mind always tries to do it. It is really much more comfortable.

I have several people who are quite free, who are very unusual. There is one man from Switzerland who is very difficult to pin down. He never has many problems, but as soon as he feels that I come a bit closer to him, he disappears. Suddenly, no one is there. He disappears, as if into quicksand. He sits there with a stony face, and I cannot do anything. I find that very interesting, because that has never happened to me with anyone before. You know who I mean. Try to come

nearer to him, and you will see: he is suddenly gone. Suddenly, no one is there. I can say that about him because it is not really something terrible. I just find it an interesting part of a character. He is Swiss, and a very nice man. I think that he comes from a race of mountain people. *(Everyone enjoys the idea of a race of mountain people, and laughs.)* and mountain people are like that. They just disappear ... behind the mountain. And two of the women of my group are also quite unusual. I do not know what kind of category I could put them in, and it is not important. I take people as they are. We manage to be with one another, but I do not find it very easy. I think that having a pattern to define someone is much easier.

(Comment continues: ...)

Aha. Yes, it is like the zoo God that can be trained like a dog or a cat. The zoo God is a trained god, and that is very comfortable. We can put him in his cage, and let him in and out. And you find that that is a terrible thing to do. (C. ...) Yes, you are correct. Then the richness of being human is lost. You can have no real relationship with such a God. But as I have said, it is not that way with every person. The whole world has made God into a zoo God through the religions. It is really more comfortable to categorize and pigeonhole people and gods and everything. Much easier. So thank you. That was a very interesting contribution.

So, we will now have twenty minutes of meditation. I will not explain the meditation this time. You already know how to do it, and now you have to do it completely alone: to go deeply into yourself, and to remain in stillness.

(The meditation begins)

(And the lecture part of Mrs. Tweedie's visit to Bern ends.)

(End of Part 4)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Bern 1988

Yantras & Other Themes

**Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Bern, Switzerland
in December 1988**

As some of you know, I was in America in the summer two years. I do not think I will return there. Well, perhaps I must return because of this book, I do not know, but I hope I will not have to return. I do not want to go there again. The audiences there, the people there, did not appeal to me. They are terribly superficial. I have people here in Switzerland, people in London, and people in Germany, who are really sincere, people who really make efforts, who really progress. And of course, I help such people. But in America they are like butterflies; it is like television: a little here, a little there; sensation after sensation; so much money, instant enlightenment! My God! (*Everyone laughs, both at what Mrs. Tweedie has been saying, and at how animated she has become over the theme.*) And it is true. I had huge audiences: five hundred people, eight hundred people, more! But it was all ... there was no point to it. But here in Switzerland, in Germany and in London it is, I must say, a different cup of tea. (*Mrs. Tweedie says 'a different cup of tea' in English, and everyone chuckles.*) Yes, you've all understood what I mean. I do not have to translate it.

Now, I want to explain what a Yantra is. A Yantra is a symbol. It can be a star, perhaps a five or six pointed star, or it can be a cross; whatever the teacher thinks is important for the moment. Or it can be a prayer. I have a special prayer. But now we are in modern times, so we do not need to dip the Yantra into wax the way Guruji did, the way it used to be done. But the paper must be folded in a certain way, and I put it into a plastic bag and seal it tightly so that water cannot get into it, and then, for a child it is fastened around the neck, and for an adult it is worn under the right or left arm, according to whether they are man or woman. Now. How does one prepare a Yantra?

A Yantra is really a kind of magic that is made with the power of God. But that word 'made' is not quite right. Ah! It is charged with the power of God. You see, we work with the power of God, and that is why we cannot take any money for what we do. If I have learned to do something, if I have worked for something, and for things that I myself have paid money for, I am permitted to take money. If I am doctor or a Homeopath and so forth, I can take money for that. But what I have been given, the power of God, is a gift, and you should not take money for a gift. A Sufi cannot do it. And a Yantra is really made with magic. But it is not an ordinary magic. It is somehow ... it has the concentration of the power of God in it. And of course, it always works. Only in my case, I never give it unless my teacher orders me to do it. I do that only when I get an order from Guruji. And why? Because I always have the feeling that I am not a teacher; that I am still only his disciple. I do belong, somewhere, but I do not yet have enough wisdom to know what I should do. And then there is something else that is important.

I want to remain with my teacher. I do not want to return to this world, and for that, I must not create any new Karmas. I do not want any Karmas to call me back to this earth, I want to stay with my teacher. And if I do make a mistake, then I will create a bad karma and I will have to return. It is much

better to wait for an order. And so I do absolutely nothing without an order, really nothing. You see, it has nothing to do with me.

A very lovely American woman, who is in my group and now lives in London, told us a story. She had a friend, a teenage girl, who studied violin. And this girl had a teacher, also a woman, who had looked for a violin for her. And after the teacher had found her a violin, she gave it to her and said, "Here is the violin and here is the bow, now step aside." You see? That is 'only' music. Think about it. Here it is the same; I too step aside. Here is the order of the teacher, and I step aside. If I, Tweedie, try to do something better, then that is ego. But if I only wait to follow what I am told, and I do only that, then that is enough and it will always be right. And here lies the source of Almightyness. Then one is Almighty, because one works, not as a person, but as That. And this is also the key to Yogic contentment and bliss. Who am I to complain, if He, the Beloved, or She, the Beloved – for the Beloved is both He and She – wills that I be in unpleasant circumstances? Who am I to complain? There is a part in this book where my teacher says, "Always give thanks. Always give thanks, even for unpleasant things." Everyone, everything in life teaches you. That is an important teaching. ... Please forgive me. My German is not very elegant, and if you do not understand me, please tell me. Now. Are there any questions?

(Question: How can one be sure that you are really following the right inner voice?)

Ah! That is the sixty-four-thousand-dollar question! (*Everyone laughs.*) Mahatma Gandhi said that he was guided by God, that he heard the voice of God. Hitler also said that. So one day, when Mahatma Gandhi was speaking in public, someone said to him, "You say that you are led by God, but Hitler also said that." "Ah!" said Mahatma Gandhi, "Look carefully. If you see that I do evil, then how can it be God? But if you see that what I do is good, then perhaps it is God. You can decide for yourself what you see."

And this is the answer. In the beginning, you believe that it is the voice of God. You see, the goal of every Yoga is to live a guided life. And guided from what or by whom? By your own inner self, your soul, by the light of God that is within you. But we all have our egos. Look. When I say that I must do this and that, is that the voice of God or the voice of my ego? Well? It is very difficult to know. I know that it is difficult because I have been through it. You make mistake after mistake, but! Here is the miracle: opportunities will always be given to you to correct your mistakes. You must only have enough humility to say to the other person, "Yes, I have made a mistake. Let us begin again from the beginning. What I did before was wrong." In the beginning the ego does not like that at all, but later it doesn't mind. Then, when you make a mistake, you have no difficulty in facing it; but later you do not make mistakes, because the ego is no longer present. You step aside. "Here is the violin, and here is the bow," and then there is only the music.

In the beginning you will make mistakes, but – and this is a wonderful teaching – in every situation in life, ask your heart. But be sure to ask your heart, not your head. The Sufis say, "Hammer your head into your heart." Someone sent me a hammer in London (*There is some cautious laughter ...*) but I have never needed it. (*slightly relieved laughter ...*) So you can try this as an experiment; I think that you will find it very interesting. I do something – perhaps I give some money to some poor people – and I think I know that it is for such and such a reason. Then I look deeper and ask myself again if that is really the reason. And I continue to do that, always trying to look deeper and deeper, and then suddenly I see that the reason was quite different, perhaps vanity that I can say to my friends that I have given so much as charity, or that I have helped this or that person. This is only an example, and there are millions of different examples. All of you should try this. That is a way that a human can develop himself: to begin to listen to the inner voice. Try to begin to listen to this voice. One needs quiet and stillness, and one needs honesty. You should never deceive yourself. You may deceive others, but you should never deceive yourself. Of course, you can deceive yourself, but very soon you will see what you have done, and then you can have huge inner conflicts.

Now I would like to say something, personally, to the person who asked me this question: try to do this as an exercise, as an assignment. Before you begin to do something – begin with the small thing of

life, things that are not important – ask yourself why you are doing them. Of course, if you make a mistake with small things then it is not so bad. If you make a mistake with larger things, then that can be more ... expensive, either financially or emotionally or in other ways that affect your life. I suggest that for you, personally. What is your first name? (Q: Jaya.) Aha. That is the earth Goddess, Gaya. (Q: No, Jaya, Jay Devi.) Ah. That is something different. But that is not your real name, the name you were baptized with. (Q: No, I was given that name by my Master.) Yes, but that is not important; what is the name your parents gave you? (Q: Uta.)

You see, the name that our parents have given us always comes from the higher self. When Guruji told us that the name always comes from the higher self, I found it strange, because in my own family and in other families I had often heard how people fight over what a child is to be named. The mother-in-law says one thing and the father says another, and the whole family gets involved in a big angry fight over what to name the child. So I asked Guruji, “Are you sure? Even if the family quarrels about it?” And he said, “Never mind, they can fight as much as they want, but at the end of it all, someone will suddenly say, ‘That is the name’, and that name will remain. And that is the higher self who decides.” And you will see that the name that the parents have given us will always have a meaning. Every name has a meaning. For example, Irina comes from Ireneus, which means ‘peace’ in Greek. And, of course, the name that this woman just told me also has a great meaning. Every name has a meaning. But it is only the name that your parents have given you that has this meaning for you.

I find that it is not right – please forgive me, but that is my belief – I must be honest about this, and I feel that it is not right for a teacher to give a disciple a name. It is simply not correct. Forgive me, but I must say what I believe. It is only the name that your parents have given you that is the right name for you. Everything else is just a child's game; it is interesting for the ego (*There is a wave of quiet laughter.*) to have a lovely Indian name. It is something different, and then I am different; I can think, ‘Now I am a different person.’ Again, please forgive me, but that is what I believe. You do not need to say ‘yes’ to what I am saying. You see, this is only my opinion. You may have another opinion; after all, we are all human, and I do not know that I am right. Yes, please.

(Question: How does that apply to the family name, for example when a woman marries.)

First, it is not in every civilization that the woman takes on the name of the man. That is the current tradition and is not important. It is the baptism name that is important – well, that is just in Christianity – Jewish or Hindu people do not have ‘baptism’ names. It is the name that the parents gave you, in that moment when you needed a name. Someone ... somewhere ... knew that that was the name for you. And what is your name? (Woman: Monica.) Monica! (*Here everyone laughs at hearing just a simple, normal, German name, and of course, at Mrs. Tweedie's happy response.*) That is a lovely name. Monica is charming; it is very feminine, and very beautiful.

(Question: What about when someone has three names?)

Ah yes, that is also part of a tradition. I do not think that it is very important, but I think that it can be very comfortable because one can choose which name to use. I knew someone who was named ‘Jessica’, and well, she did not like it very much. But this woman's name was Jessica Maria ... and something else. Now she calls herself ‘Maria’. And she is quite entitled to do that; it is her name and it is in her documents. And I think that her higher self gave her these several names. In England, our Princes and Princesses have such long names that the poor people probably forget them. They probably have to have a long document just to keep track all of the names. I find that rather stupid. One name is enough. My name is Irina Tamara, but I have forgotten the ‘Tamara’. Now I am only ‘Irina’. I do not know what Tamara means, but it probably came from the south of Russia. My father came from the south, and it is a Caucasian name. Someone in the family said, “It must also be Tamara!” So OK. (*Everyone has a very good laugh at Mrs. Tweedie's telling.*) But none of this is important. One name is good enough.

I think that the best is to be without a name! Without a label. For example, Sufism or Christianity and so forth are all just unnecessary labels. After all, these words can have many different meanings,

and for each person they mean something else. For example, if I say 'God', there will be an idea about what God is in every head here, what God means for each one of you. And it will be different for every one of us. So we all pray to different Gods. (*Mrs. Tweedie laughs ...*) Every one of our Gods is different! We are all so different from one another. No one was ever the way you are. Inayat Khan, in one of his beautiful books said, "Life is a symphony, and we are each small notes in that symphony. And if our note were not there, the symphony would not be the same." So we are needed; we are all needed.

Ah. We only have ten minutes more before we end today, and I have only read a page and a half of my notes. You see, sometimes I give a lecture – for example, I will give one in Hamburg, and I have written twenty pages of notes for it, but I do not think that I will ever read more than two or three of these pages. (*Everyone laughs at her predicament.*) But there is always so much to say! There are so many new ideas; there is always so much in the air! One only has to reach out with one's hand and it is there. I don't really have to read at all! We have everything within us. We are all quite wonderful. And we are all beautiful. There are no ugly people.

Ah hello! You are the gentleman who wrote to say you were coming to visit us in London. (Man: Yes.) You will come soon, won't you? (Man: Yes, I will come in the first week of January.) Yes, I think that the first week in January is OK. (*Then turning to 'I':*) That is OK, isn't it? (I.: Yes it is.) You see, I will be away so much in the next time. I will be in London very little. I will be away from London two weeks out of every month. I am traveling around so much now. (*Now, in laughing complaint:*) And that is all because of this book! (*Everyone laughs at her happy inconvenience.*) But it is such a lovely book. You see, I thought that my American book would be a lovely one, and it was done quite well. But the German translation was really done with love.

Now. Somewhere in the Upanishads, it says, "First you create God, then God creates you." What does this sentence mean? First one must believe in God. If you do not believe in God then you cannot think of Him, and then He does not exist for you. And then, if you believe in God and you do your mantra, somehow it enters your unconscious, into your blood; and when you awaken in the morning, your heart already beats the name of God. Then you are always in the presence of God. So first you create God with your faith; and then God creates you. That means, He takes you into Himself, and everything within you: your blood, your flesh, your thoughts: everything belongs to God. You see, there comes the time when you completely surrender, when the human belongs completely to God, deeply and completely and without conditions.

Gurujī said, "This state, in which the heart sings for God, can last for many years." It is such a wonderful feeling. It is a kind of being in love. One is in love, and one sings the name of the Beloved. Or one has a feeling for the Beloved, and one doesn't really think of anything else. And you know, I must say that this feeling is still with me. I have done this work for twenty-nine years now, since 1961. Or is that not right? No, it is twenty-seven years. I cannot even do arithmetic anymore. I am going completely senile. I'm geriatric, you see? (*Everyone chuckles.*) When one gets old, one can no longer do arithmetic, the mind does not work very well; it is a second childhood. (*Everyone laughs very skeptically. Mrs. Tweedie does not seem to fit the description!*)

(*And the day's meeting ends.*)

(*The next meeting convenes.*)

Greetings! (*Mrs. Tweedie tries to use the Swiss way of greeting, but doesn't get it quite right, and everyone enjoys a warm and hearty laugh – including Mrs. Tweedie.*) Yes. I am trying to learn. I am quite willing to learn. That was supposed to be exactly in the Bern accent. So. There is a little sun today, and that is good. And it is Sunday, and God is in the heavens and everything is good in the world. Yesterday we did not get very far. (*She had actually spent much of the previous day reading from "Daughter of Fire," which was omitted from the translation.*) You see, that is why this book is so fascinating for me to read. As soon as I begin, memories come up for me. Memories of the heat, and the air, and how my teacher looked, the atmosphere when I was there, and of course, the longing. And

this longing has always remained. People who come to me and begin to meditate always complain that they have such a powerful longing. And they ask me, "Will it pass?" Unfortunately it will not. Longing is the feminine side of love, and that will remain forever. "I am waiting for you, I want you." That remains forever and ever. And the longer, the more deeply we are on the path, the more this longing grows. So for me, when I read from this book ...

You see, I have decided that I will not give any more lectures. No. I have one that I have to give in Hamburg, but after that, I will only read from this book. I find that it is better for me. I get a special inspiration; there is something special that comes through to me, a spark. And I think that the audience gets more, because I always say more than what is in the book. As I have said before, I had to leave a great deal out of the book. You can imagine, for more than five years – for almost five and a half years – I would write two or three pages every day. You can imagine how much material there was. There could have been three books, but that was not at all necessary. There was a great deal that was interesting for me, but not for anyone else. And so I had to leave out a great deal. And you know, that was a terribly difficult work, because for me everything was important, so what could I leave out? I thought, "I should leave that out ... but that is important! And I should leave that out, but that too is important." And I sat there, sometimes for days at a time, and I did not know what to leave in and what to leave out. In the end I managed, but it was a very difficult job.

I spoke with a writer a few weeks ago, and she said that her greatest problem in writing was in deciding what to leave out. And I said, "You have all of my sympathy. I understand. That is the biggest job, and the most painful job. Because the writing was born out of your soul, and it is so important to you, but for the reader it may not be important at all." So one has to change one's perspective, and look at it from the standpoint of the reader. And that is not easy. But somehow I managed to do it. But that is why, from now on, I will always read. It is more emotional for me, it is deeper, and I am able to give more: my memories – memories that never have been written down, and never will be written down.

Now as I said, yesterday we did not get very far. So. We will continue and see what happens. And please, we will have a half-hour meditation. We are very democratic here. We do whatever people want. (*There is a ripple of amusement.*) For me two hours would also be good, but it would be difficult the way we have to sit here. It would not be very comfortable. One could not sit for two hours without moving on these chairs.

Yesterday I forgot to mention that Guruji once told me, "You will come with me, even after I am dead." And I said, "But in the books, it is said that when we are dead, we remain on the same level, until we enter our next life; and that we can only reach another level, we can only progress, while we are in a human body." And he said, "No. That is usually true, but once you are enlightened, if you have already reached self-realization, then you still continue to progress after death. And you will come with me." Now that is a wonderful promise. So a Saint goes on, automatically, with the Master. The Master goes on, and (*Now laughing at the image ...*) simply drags the other one along behind him, just the way you might pull a child along. You can imagine it in just that way. So the Saint no longer returns to this world. He remains with the Master.

The first step is to merge with the Master; the second is to merge with the Prophet Mohammed; and the third step is to merge with God. But the first step is the most difficult. And why? Because it is for the first step that you must grapple with the ego, must fight with the ego. Once you have merged with the Master, it is not so very difficult. But that step is very difficult. And he told us, not only once, but many times, that it is the most difficult thing in the world while you are doing it, but the easiest thing in the world after you have done it. Then you no longer have anything to do. You are merged. Then He watches out for you. You no longer have any personal will, only the will of God. So, the most important thing is that, one day, you become so merged with God that your will is the will of the Beloved. Then you have no more troubles. After that, whatever happens to you is the will of God, and you will always, always be content.

If the Beloved does something to you, perhaps he offends you, or gives you some pain or suffering, you will always forgive Him. One does not even have to excuse God, for one is so

surrendered. I have so often heard, when someone dies, how the husband or wife who is still alive will say, "Ah for God's sake, why did this have to happen to me!? Why me?" If you are completely surrendered, then you no longer ask that. Then you will think, "You have chosen that this should happen to me. I am here. I am content with what has happened because it is Your will. Even if it gives me such incredible pain that I can almost not bear it." Such people are, as Guruji explained, Saints.

Guruji also spoke to me about surrender. He told me that the body, the physical body must be surrendered. Now look. I am a woman, and he a man, and I was alone in a strange land, and he kept saying to me, "You must surrender physically." I was very confused. I was at my wits end, and was very afraid. Every woman here will understand that.

It was only much much later that he said – I do not remember if I asked him, or if he simply told it to me – but he said, "The mind is the master of the body; when the mind is surrendered, then the body is surrendered." Look how simple it was. But I know, and I have read in books, that in other lines of Sufism, one must actually surrender with the physical body. Now just how they do that I do not know. I have not experienced it, but in these traditions, one must actually surrender with the physical body. Perhaps one does it by serving the Master in some way, because in many schools – for example in Vedanta and also in Tibetan Buddhism – one must serve the Master as a servant for years. You would clean the Master's shoes and cook for him and so forth. I think that that is what they mean. In Tantra one does that sexually, but that is only in Tantra Yoga.

One day, we had a long talk with my teacher, and he said, "In Sufism, sexual surrender is not common. That is only found in Tantra Yoga." But I do not know. I have seen so much, and have become acquainted with so many people that I no longer have any expectations and I make no judgments. I know that in Tantra Yoga this is sometimes done, but in most traditions this physical surrender is usually done by serving the Master: one surrenders in physical discomforts. One is the servant, and one must sleep on the floor at the door of the Master, and one must serve him. That is what physical surrender would be in Sufism.

I find it so interesting when Guruji speaks. Please pay attention to the parts in my book where I quote him. You must somehow turn your mind around and learn to think from another perspective. I want to draw your attention to this. Perhaps you have read this book, but you have not noticed this. Try to read it from the standpoint that whatever he says, he tries again and again to somehow train our minds to think from another perspective, from another side. And why is that useful? When I am with people – and after all of these years, this happens to me automatically – and someone asks me something, then I give him the answer that I am able to give. But when someone else asks me something similar, I may give quite a different answer. And why? Because I can turn my mind around and see the situation, first from the standpoint of one person; then I again turn my mind so I can see it from the standpoint of this other person. The question may be quite the same, but these people may be on very different levels of development. So from the standpoint of one person, the truth is this way; while for the other person it is completely different. On the level of the mind, there is no absolute truth.

You see, I am already old. How much longer can I live? A few years more? In March I had a heart attack here in Bern, and since then, I see that my health is not the same. I have to take other medicines, and I have to take more medicines. I have to take a diuretic in order to get water out of my body. My heart no longer has the power to help the kidneys to rid the body of excess water. One sees that the body gets weaker and weaker. How long can I be with you? But the book will remain, and the book will teach you. And if you live in the way my teacher taught us to live – not just the way I live, not just the way I followed the training you see, it is not good to identify with me, with the author, when you read this book, because that was my personal training. Your training would be completely different. But in a way, if you do exactly what I am now telling you to do, then it will also become your training. And that is the most wonderful, the most magical aspect of this book. And that will remain forever.

This book will endure for years and years. It is a classic. It will go on for years, just by itself. The publisher has nothing to do with it. Suddenly people will want more copies, and they will ask for them,

and more will be printed. Perhaps there will not be so very many printed, but it will always be there, quietly beneath the surface. And that is because it is a special teaching for each one of us, as long as we are able to read between the lines. And as long as I am alive, I will try, as much as possible, to repeat and repeat to you: the most important thing is – and this is the central thread of Sufism, the Ariadne thread that leads you to your goal – to think from another direction, from another perspective. Do not think as you do, but think from the other side, from the side of the other person. So you think your own thoughts, and then you also think the thoughts of the other person. And in this way, your understanding is doubled, or tripled, or quadrupled, or even increased a hundred-fold. You will see how the other person understood something in quite another way from the way you understood it. You see, our spirits, our minds can be the mind of the Absolute, but it can also be the mind of a little chicken, of a sparrow – no, not a scare-crow, a sparrow – a little bird. *(Well, actually there is a different word play in German, but everyone laughs.)*

You see, these great teachers are different from us. I had the luck – of course there is no such thing as luck – it was, of course, my Karma to meet such a great being. They are really different from us. And there are many very great beings that I have met in the world. One of them is Dr. Engels in New York. He is ... he is magical. He is eighty-six years old and he was recently operated on for cancer. We all hope that he will get well, but one can never know with cancer. There are so many different kinds. Some can be cured and others cannot. So we hope. He is a very unusual human being, and I think that he is a Master. I personally am convinced of it. When he came to us in London, several years ago, he gave a seminar in my flat. It was a seminar about the Great Earth Goddess, 'Gaya'. He had a personal experience with the Goddess.

And I have a lovely story from my group in London on this theme. We Sufis tell a great many stories; that is one of the traditions. There is a young American woman who comes to the group. She has an apartment in New York City, but she is able to come to our group regularly because she also works in Paris, in the fashion business. Look at what goes on in the world! You probably would not imagine that someone in the fashion business would be interested in spiritual life at all. But she comes to our meditation and she had a boyfriend, and she had an apartment in New York ... and her boyfriend. *(Everyone is laughing ...)* And Llewellyn and A. ... Why are you laughing? *(There is more laughter.)* What have I said? (Someone volunteers: That she has an apartment and a boy friend.) Yes, she has an apartment and a boy-friend and a snake. *(That is too much for everyone, and the laughter crescendos.)* It is a boa constrictor. *(There is more laughter. People are not convinced.)* And when Llewellyn and A. were in New York, they slept in the same room as the boa constrictor. *(The laughter continues ...)* The boa constrictor is three meters long and lives in a large aquarium. I asked Llewellyn and A., "You spent the whole night next to a boa constrictor?" And, of course, they said, "Yes." "Did it snore?" I asked. "No," they said, "It was very, very still. It seems to sleep all of the time." Well, of course, this is all just an aside.

And one day, this woman's boy friend, who also lives in New York but who also visits us sometimes in London, had a dream. And this was his dream. He had a new job. And for that, he needed a new T-shirt – I hope you know what a T-shirt is – in American T-shirts are status symbols. There is always something fantastic written on them. I had a 'body-guard' when I was in America, and he had a T-shirt that said, "I am a King of Nothing, I am the King of all Kings." And below that was a picture of a wreath of flowers, and within that was written, "Personal Body Guard of Mrs. Tweedie." *(Everyone is very amused, at the T-shirt and at this idea of a body-guard.)* So that was our status symbol – we were in America!

So this man dreamed that he got a new job and that he had to get a new T-shirt. And he suddenly saw a T-shirt, and on this T-shirt there were the names of all of the famous women in the world, from the beginning of time! Look at that! And he went around proudly with this T-shirt: every name was there! And then he went to his new job, and there was a very feminist woman, a very masculine woman, and she looked at him and said, "Very good, very good, but the name, 'Samu' is missing." Now he had no idea who 'Samu' was. Every name was there, except that of Samu. Good. Then he was told to go into a certain room, which he would know by a certain number on the door, and was told that he would work in that department, and that someone there would tell him just what to do.

So he went through the corridors and found the room, and there was an Oriental woman there, a Japanese woman, and she looked at his T-shirt and said, "Yes, that is good, but Samu is not there." *(There is a ripple of laughter – the plot thickens.)* And then he woke up. But he had no idea at all of who this Samu could be. But Llewellyn and A. were supposed to be arriving soon in New York. They were coming on holiday. And he thought, "Ah Llewellyn knows everything. He will be able to tell me who Samu is." So Llewellyn arrived and when this man asked him about Samu, he did the most natural thing: he asked to see the Encyclopedia Britannica. *(Everyone chuckles at Llewellyn's omniscience.)* It was only common sense. And in the encyclopedia it said, "Samu ... Samu Rahmat: the Babylonian Goddess of the earth; symbolizes fertility, ecology, earth; and also war: life and death. She is an incarnation of Isis." And Isis is one of the very greatest of all of the Babylonian Goddesses.

Now. Here is a perfectly normal young American man, educated at a university, and not particularly spiritual – perhaps a little – and he gets such a message in a dream: that he should work for Samu. And really, even before he had this dream, he had a feeling that the work he was doing in a bank was really not for him. He felt that he should do something for ecology, that he should work for the green ... *(Mrs. Tweedie tries to remember the name of an organization.)* ... for this green something or other, that everyone ... *(Everyone laughs. Of course, there is Greenpeace, but in all of Europe there are political parties called "The Greens", which are parties oriented to the politics that support a more balanced use of earth resources, so it is not yet clear what Mrs. Tweedie means.)* that he should join them and do something for the earth. I do not know what it is called. In England they call themselves the Greens. Everyone laughed, so you must all know what I mean.

But you see: what a message! And for a young man who had no idea what dreams can tell us. So he came to us, and told this story to our group in London. And after the meditation I had a feeling about it, and I said to him, "You know, you should probably take this dream quite seriously. When one gets such a dream 'out of the blue', as the English say, then that is a question of life and death. You had better do something about it. If the Goddess has called you, then you should really work for her. And he said, "Yes, I already understood that. I have applied for a job that is connected with ecology." I think it was connected with science and the earth.

Don't you find that story interesting? And it is true. It only happened a few weeks ago. And there are plenty of witnesses; about one hundred people heard about it. Samu Rahmat. And, of course, in Greek her name is also Gaya, the Earth Goddess. Doctor Engels spoke about Gaya. He had a personal myth, a personal experience with the Goddess. So there are great people in this world who somehow are connected with the Goddess, such as Doctor Engels, and this young man who suddenly received a message – an important message. This young man will now change direction, and will do something that he never imagined he would do. And it all came from a dream. We humans are led; we are guided.

(There is a pause for tea, and then the group reconvenes.)

You know, there was a time, when Hanka first began to enter Dhyana, that she could not do it while she was sitting. She had problems with her back, and could only relax enough when she was lying down. But then, just a few days after she came with me to Gurujī, suddenly, she went deep into Dhyana, and on a very uncomfortable wooden chair. And when one of Gurujī's disciples remarked about it, Gurujī said, slowly and very very quietly, "When faith is there, anything can be done."

So I say to you – and there are some people here today, and this is the message for you: for this certain few of you who are here today – *(She says this slowly and with great emphasis.)* when faith is there, anything can be done. Please. Always remember that. But one must have faith. You know the story in the New Testament when the Apostles went fishing, and were unable to catch any fish, and then there was a storm, and they became afraid. And then they saw Jesus coming to them on the waves. Peter saw Jesus, and his heart flew to him, and he said, "Oh Lord, let me come to you." And Jesus said, "Come." And Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the waves. And suddenly, Peter looked down and became afraid, and then he began to sink. And Jesus took him by the hand and

said, “Oh ye of little faith, why do you fear.” And now I am telling you that this is a special message for three or four people who are here today: if you have faith, everything can be done. Everything! The teacher can do anything. When there is faith, everything can be done.

... .. You know, when people return from Dhyana, the eyes are quite special. When you return from Dhyana, the feeling is that you have been as far away as the stars, and one comes nearer and nearer and nearer to the Earth, and then ‘plunk’, one is here once again. And then the eyes are quite special. I know that when the people in my group in London meditate – and we already have very many people who experience real Dhyana – when they open their eyes, it is as if they were born at just this moment. With Hanka it was also that way. That was the first time that she could experience it sitting, and after that she never had a problem. She could sit or lie. For me personally, lying is better. Up until five years ago, I could sit with crossed legs, but I cannot do that any longer. I think that I have arthritis in my hip. It does not give me any pain, but I can no longer sit with crossed legs. And that is already a sign that I am becoming old. *(While this is clearly what she meant, she uses the wrong verb-form and actually says “And that is already a sign that I will get old” and there is a long wave of quiet laughter.)*

There is a Sufi saying that says, “You lose what you are unable to give away.” It is only when you give it away that it belongs to you. What a paradox! (Now to ‘I’.) I do not have a watch, so you will have to tell me when the time is up. (I.: Yes, you have two minutes.) Two minutes? Yes, I had the feeling that we should start our meditation. OK. I will bring this to an end. I will read to the end of the paragraph. No! We are at the end of a paragraph. So, then everything is over for today. It is a shame, but if I were with you for months it would probably get rather boring. But please. Please! Do not forget that if you have faith, anything can be done. And when you read Gururji’s words, try to think from another perspective: reversed, as it were. And if you are speaking with another person, try to be in the position of this other person; then your world view will change a great deal. And that is important. But the most important is your faith.

So! Cheers! *(Everyone laughs and begins to get ready for the meditation.)* Yes, now we will meditate for a half hour. And I can use my watch to time it. An English half hour is exactly the same as a German half hour. *(Everyone laughs.)* Oops. I mean a Swiss half hour!

So. We will meditate for a half hour. God bless all of you. All of you who are sitting here now, and the whole world. And may God’s blessings be with us always. And thank you C., for your help.

(From a light-hearted chaos, the room settles quickly ... and the meditation deepens, ... and deepens ... and deepens)

(And the weekend seminar ends.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Zurich Seminar of 1989

The Impossible Emptiness

Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Zurich, Switzerland
In March of 1989

So. First, I would like to speak to you about merging with the teacher. You see, in my book, I wrote that one can learn to reach the teacher, to merge into him, with practice. But that was naive of me. Merging is not something that one can practice. At the time I thought that one could do that, but really it comes by itself. Of course, now, after twenty-eight years, I know many things better. Everyone would learn something in that time. For God's sake, we do make progress and grow. It would be sad if we stayed in one place. But my book is a diary, and so it must be written as it was for me then.

But now I can say to you that you cannot practice merging. It happens by itself when you mature to it, when you ripen to it, just a small child has to grow up before it can learn higher mathematics. This is exactly the same. So one does not need to practice, one simply matures. And that is why our teacher said that one does not need to make any efforts on the spiritual path. One only needs to walk on. But that is already difficult enough.

But you see, in the process whereby the disciple learns to merge, it is first the Master who merges with the disciple. And over time, the disciple must learn how to – how can I express this? – to absorb, perhaps to digest this process. There is a Sufi poem that Guruji translated for us that says, “The mystery of spiritual life is, and in this it is so unusual, that first God – the Beloved – merges into the soul, into man; and then man – the lover – merges into God.” You see, that is something very different from how one imagines it to be; and really, different from what all of the scriptures say. And it is quite true; we only have to be prepared. We have to become an empty cup, an empty chalice. Only then can this power, this energy, flow into us. It is not we who flow into it. It is just the opposite of what you would expect. I find that very interesting, and I do not think that I have ever come across this in books. So, the disciple has to learn how to go into a deep state to reach the teacher, but the teacher – the spirit of the teacher – is already there, in the soul of the disciple. And the disciple is completely unaware of this presence of the teacher. Only gradually, as the years pass, does he come to know it.

One time Guruji said to me, “The time will come when trust and love are the same for you.” If we look at ourselves closely, we see that love without trust is no love at all. If you have ever loved someone in your life, then you understand that if you do not really trust a person, you do not love them. If one loves, one trusts automatically. That is really very important. And when the higher trust comes, the love for ... something that one cannot explain, then that is trust without understanding, or faith.

In the religions, one says that one must trust God, one must have faith in God, even if you do not understand. I remember that I always rebelled against that. I wanted to understand. I could not trust God without understanding why I should trust Him. Now I understand why one needs to do that, but not with my mind. I understand that with my heart. And that seems again like a paradox, like a

contradiction: understanding without basis or foundation. One simply understands, but not from the mind. Only the heart understands; only the heart knows.

(Mrs Tweedie reads from her book:)

Vinoba writes, in "Talks on the Gita," "The destruction of the body cannot be something to grieve over. The Spirit is indestructible. It is an unbroken, ever-flowing stream. Many bodies settle on it for a while and then disappear. The self is impatient to pervade the world. It wants to encompass all of creation."

You know, I often listen to the B.B.C. World Service. It is a radio program with news from the entire world, and these programs are very objective and interesting. And when one listens to these programs in the deep stillness of the night, one sees how mysteriously the finger of God works in the world. I find it fascinating.

So, The spirit wants to pervade the world. It wants to encompass creation, but we shut it up in a cell. We are not at all conscious of this higher self. From morning to evening we think about our bodies. Day and night we worry about how fat or thin our bodies have become. One could think that there is no other joy in the world; but even animals experience pleasure of the senses." ... We should try to find other pleasures.

I remember my time in the Himalayas; how I lived calmly in my little room, and how I went shopping in the village. There was not a great deal to eat. It had not rained for three years there. All I had to eat was hot radishes and milk and sometimes tomatoes, and sometimes a little flour so that I could make chapatis. And I remembered how it was when my teacher was still alive. And I remembered a quotation of his.

Guruji had said, "The time will come when Faith and Love are one. And then even Love will stay behind and only One will remain, and later even this will go, and nothing will remain." And what is this One that will remain? It is That. And even That, which has no name, is also left behind, and only Nothing will remain. That means that the person is absorbed into the nothingness. One cannot say much about this level, for we have no words for it. But anyway, that is the problem that every mystic has. Mysticism is something so mysterious.

And what, after all, is a mystic? A mystic is one who lives in two worlds: this world, and another world, a world that exists 'somewhere'. And that is a very uncomfortable state of existence. Sometimes people speak to a mystic, and the mystic hears something else. That happens to many people, not only to me. I now have many people in my group who have experienced that. And that happens to many of you too. It happens sometimes, and perhaps even quite often. And what is it that actually happens? The spirit crosses the threshold that leads beyond this world, and works on another plane, and then you will not hear what is happening here, but rather only something from 'there'. And that can be very uncomfortable if, for example, you have to cross a street, or if you need to do something practical. But that is life. We have this physical body that is very dense, and a mind that is also very dense.

A mystic sees everything as the will of God. Guruji said, "If you want to commit suicide, tell me how you are going to do it? If He does not want it, how will you do it?" And he added that he had been, not only once, but very often in such a state.

In fact the teacher drives you to such despair that you no longer want to live. There were two times when I wanted to kill myself. I wanted to throw myself into the Ganga. It is described quite well in my book. Guruji himself said that he came to that point many times with his own teacher. The teacher of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Rama Krishna, also tried to commit suicide. His beloved goddess – *(She loses the thread of her sentence, and gets help.)* Thank you. Sometimes when I speak about Guruji, I go off into another state, and do not understand anything of what is going on here. And that is usually a sign for me. So Sri Rama Krishna prayed that Kali appear to him; he was so in love with her – this is described in "The Gospel of Rama Krishna," which is a wonderful book.

Sri Rama Krishna loved Kali very deeply as the Great Mother. The Great Mother must first destroy in order to create. I do not know if you have ever seen a picture of Kali. She is one of the principle wives of Shiva, the destroyer, and she looks terrifying. She is blue, and her tongue hangs out, and she wears a necklace of human skulls. And Sri Rama Krishna was so full of love for the goddess Kali that he could not endure it. He desperately wanted to see her. But she would never appear to him. Then he went into the forest, and shouted and threatened to kill himself, until she finally appeared to him in such a terrifying form, and with such love, that he was unconscious for three days. People were ready to bury him. But he came back to consciousness just in time, and he was satisfied that Kali had appeared to him at least once.

So you see, even the great teachers have to go through enormous difficulties to achieve their states. We imagine spiritual life to be so easy. We think that it is a nice 'kick', or that you can be taken to God by someone, that someone can help you. You must know: no one can help you! Unfortunately I must say this to you: you have to do it alone. You have to make efforts and then, when your cup is completely empty, something can flow into you. But only when you are completely empty. And to be completely empty means that you have to surrender completely. It must be a merging. It is only when your cup is empty that something can flow into it. If there is no ego in your cup, then something else can enter it, and that something else is That. You can call it God if you like. I call it The Void.

One night while I was meditating, I saw writing on the wall of my room, in burning letters. It said, "I believe in the impossible emptiness." Now, this was an experience, and when I only relate it, it will not have much meaning for you, but I had actually experienced an impossible emptiness in that meditation. It was such an emptiness that neither my mind nor my heart nor any part of me could grasp it. It was something absolutely impossible. It was the emptiness of the emptiness: a black hole. And then I saw these fiery letters standing in front of me on my white wall. So "I believe in the impossible emptiness." And I knew, and I know, that this impossible emptiness is the greatest bliss.

What I am now telling you now may make you afraid. But it is only the mind that becomes afraid. The mind cannot reach these levels. The mind is like a child who tries to reach for a book on a shelf too high for it. We all know that feeling. The poor mind is in just that position in this situation. And it is only in deep meditation – I do not like this word, 'Samadhi'; it is used so often that it no longer has any meaning. I mean in a high state – that you are able to grasp these things, things that are completely inaccessible to your mind. This is not possible to understand until you have experienced it.

You know, the day before yesterday, just before I came to Zurich, I was in a deep state and suddenly I found myself saying to everyone, "Life begins at eighty." (*There is some chuckling, but Mrs. Tweedie is quite serious.*) You see, I have never in my life – I swear to you – been so much in love. And with what? But so deep, and so infinitely in love; and I feel just like when I was sixteen, when I first fell in love. I am in love with That. One is so lively, so dynamic. Yes, the body is sometimes tired, or unwilling, and it is certainly old; but what is the body? The body is not important.

You see, my friends, we are eternal. We are not only almighty; we are not only great. We have received our human dignity from Him, who created us in His own image. I am speaking to you now from my heart, and I have the feeling of eternity in me. And here, now, there is a Presence with us; someone is here with us.

Someone is among us that we cannot see. You see, God is like a power-house, but you need a transformer. This power of God is too great for us, but the Saints are able to bear some of this power and to pass some of it on to us. They act as transformers for this power of God so that we are able to bear what we receive.

And now we will have one half hour of meditation. Yes, this is a good point to end.

So, fill your hearts with love, with stillness, with the greatness of His nature – with our own greatness: with our humility, our surrender, and our love – our love for everything and for everyone.

(The meditation deepens ...)

(And the evening ends.)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Hamburg 1988

The Saint and the Wali

**Based on a Series of Lectures given
in Hamburg, Germany
On the 14th and 15th of January, 1989**

Guruji said, "The Prophet is the Master of the Time, but the Wali is the Master of the people of a certain time."

Later he said that a prophet is a sage, but he always held a prophet to be a law-giver. A prophet is someone who gives laws, and who influences the history of the world, like Mohammed, Jesus, Buddha, and other great beings. But the Saint is very humble. He said that when a prophet makes a mistake, he must return to this world, but when a Saint makes a mistake, he does not have to return. And why? Because a Saint, a Wali – it can only be translated as 'saint'. A saint in the Christian sense is something quite different. Here a Saint, a Wali, is a Friend of God; he is one who is in friendship with God. He belongs to God, and no longer has any free will. The laws of this world do not apply to a Wali; but he must never offend the laws of God. The law of God is everything for him, and he no longer has to obey people. Guruji once said, "I have already surrendered somewhere. I am completely free." And that happens to every Sufi who is completely surrendered to God. Once you are completely surrendered, then you belong to God. Then He takes you to Him, and He will forgive everything. And so, since the person no longer has any will of his own, yes, he may make a mistake; but then he says in his heart, "I belong to you. I belong to you completely. You love me for my own sake. Please forget my error." And God will forget it.

In the high state of a Wali – but also when anyone is in deep meditation – God, or the Beloved as the Sufis call Him, is not an abstract concept or idea. He is a living reality; a vibrating living reality that is here in this world, among us, everywhere. One cannot look at anything without seeing the Beloved. One can no longer look into human eyes without seeing Him. You see Him in pain and in joy: in everything. In our smallness, in our limitations.

So that is the difference between the Friend of God – the Wali – and a prophet. Again, one can only translate 'Wali' as 'Saint', we have no other word for it. But it is really not the same idea as a saint as we, in the West, understand it. Wali is really a Friend; he is absolutely and completely a Friend of God. He belongs to the Friend. You see, we speak of surrender as if it is something very special and unusual. But even if we have a good friend, to a certain degree, we are surrendered to that person. We try to make this person happy. When we are with them, we limit ourselves, and this limitation is already a degree of surrender. And when we love That, which we could perhaps call 'God', we are also surrendered.

Guruji also said that we should pray for the dead, and then they will pray for us. And that then the nearness to God will become deeper and deeper and nearer and nearer. You see, people have no idea that we always have someone on the other side, someone in the beyond who helps us. It may be an

ancestor or a teacher. In Christianity, one speaks of a guardian angel. And what is a guardian angel? It is a spirit, a being who has some sort of Karmic link with us. Now, this is very important and I do not think that you will find it in any books. This was a part of the training we got from Guruji. A guardian angel is a spirit that has a Karmic link with you, with your soul. This link may have been formed through love or duty, or perhaps it is a debt that must be paid. Every debt in every life must eventually be paid. As long as we still have the smallest debt, we cannot enter eternity.

So we will always find someone that we loved, or someone who loved us. We may not remember them at all. It may be someone from another life. Or perhaps it is a grandmother or a mother: one of our own relatives. I know someone whose grandfather helps him constantly, and he even knows it. He will say, "My grandfather was here last night, and told me this and this and that." It is so clear for him. But of course, not everyone can do that. Probably there had been such a strong connection between them when they were alive that the man still knows when his grandfather is near him. But that is rather unusual. So we should pray at night, and for the dead, and then the nearness to God will become greater and greater.

You know, when Guruji first died, I wanted to never forget this face, but over time I forgot it. It was no longer necessary to hold this memory. You see, once you have a link with the teacher, after he is dead, it is with something very different from the body he once had. Yes, that was his body, but now it is not at all important. Now, for me, my teacher is a being that has almost no human form at all. He is pure energy, and terrible to look at.

So I no longer have to remember his face. I do have a photograph of him, but even that does not have much meaning for me. It was only his body for a time. His photograph was never very important for me. That was not him. (*Mrs. Tweedie is almost whispering, and is speaking very very slowly.*) His energy, his smile, his step ... and his power. And his tenderness with his grandchildren. You know, big and strong men have a special quality of tenderness. And that is especially touching in such a man. One expects tenderness from a woman – that is natural; but when it comes from someone who is big and strong and masculine ...

When I lived in Italy with my first husband, we had a friend who was a famous Italian boxer. I do not remember his name anymore. He was very tall, perhaps six foot, and he was very famous: he was the best. But you should have seen him play with children – not with his own children. He had none of his own. He was not married – but there was such tenderness from him. I remember standing nearby and watching him. It was touching to watch, and it was the same with Guruji. Of course, this tenderness was never directed to me. It was usually directed to children or to other people. Usually he only scolded and criticized me ... thank God. Today I can thank him for that. That was very important for me.

So. Now we will have twenty minutes of meditation.

(People prepare for the meditation.)

I will read an important quotation from the Ramanyana for you. Think about it for a few moments, and then do our Sufi meditation. Feel as much love as possible in your heart, and immerse every other thought in that love. But first I will read this quotation for you. I find it very moving.

"In order to be worthy of Your love, I must be perfect. Completely perfect. And I am not. So I will bow before you, I will fall to your feet, I will surrender to you completely, and you will love me for my self." I will surrender to you, and you will love me for myself.

(The meditation begins ...

... and ends in deepest stillness.)

(Mrs. Tweedie says, in a voice that is barely audible, as if from very far away:) Now, I think that there are some people who would like to ask questions ... and I will try to answer them. (People are just coming back from a very intense meditation.) Yes, it is difficult to begin.

(Question: You really had no sense that your teacher would die?)

No, none at all. Of course he knew, but he veiled that from us. He created a special veil, a special Maya around himself, so none of his disciples knew that he was going to die. No one.

(Question: I have a rather practical question. Small beetles come into my kitchen, but only when I am there.)

But when you are not there, then you cannot know if they come or not. (Everyone bursts into a wave of laughter.)

(Question continues: I do not live alone, so I know that these beetles only show up when I am there. When my room-mate is alone in the kitchen, these beetles do not come. And I always ask myself what I should do with them. Should I kill them?)

Look. If they only turn up when you are there ... how could you simply kill them? (There is a great deal of laughter, and even applause!) There must be an attraction for them. (There is more laughter.) Of course, I have no idea what this attraction could be. But if you do not want these beetles to be there, I would say to these beetles, "I like you very much, and I understand that you like me a great deal, but please! Not so many!" (Everyone is entranced by Mrs. Tweedie's answer and her manner. There is a great deal of laughter, and even Mrs. Tweedie begins to laugh too hard to continue.) I personally would not kill them. I would ask them to leave. You know, that really helps ... if you speak to them from your heart. Of course, you do not speak to them with words. In India there are men who come from certain families – this skill is inherited – who can speak with flies.

When, for example, people have a wedding, and plan to have a great deal of food – well, in India it is very hot and there are an unbelievable number of flies – they hire one of these men and these men speak to the flies and tell them to go away. And the flies actually leave. As long as this man is there, there will not be any flies, but as soon as he leaves, they come back. It takes a special energy. I do not know if you personally have this kind of energy, but you can certainly try it. What do these beetles look like?

(Question continues: They are very small, and they have six legs.)

So. They are small, six-legged beetles. (Everyone is laughing. The entire audience is in uproar with laughter.) And probably all six legs are different. Are they black? (Question continues: Yes.) Small black beetles. Does anyone here (Mrs. Tweedie is only partially able to overcome her laughter.) know anything about beetles? We need a beetle specialist. Is there a beetle specialist in the house? No? No one. So we cannot help her. But I personally would not kill them.

(And the recording ends ... in laughter!)

The Lectures of Irina Tweedie

Munich, April 1989

Merging with the Teacher **Based on a Series of Lectures given** **in Munich, Germany** **in April, 1989**

It is lovely to see so many people. Can all of you see me? I think that I can see all of you. And is the sound OK? (*Yes.*) Good, then you can all hear me.

Now, I would like to speak to you about something that I myself only came to understand last week, after twenty-eight years. You see, when you are with a great teacher, he plants a seed in your heart, and this seed begins to sprout and grow, and the human begins to develop. And slowly, you begin to be able to understand things that you could not understand before. But in order to allow that process, the teacher has to take something away from the disciple: the obstacles – the veils that cover the higher self. And then, over time, something happens.

I remember one day during a festival, during Bandhara, when everyone was sitting in a large tent, and Guruji was speaking in Hindi. At that time, I could not yet understand any Hindi, but sometimes I heard words like Atman, and Karma, so I knew he was speaking about interesting things. And I could not understand any of it. I sat there like a cucumber, completely inert, until eleven o'clock that night. Then I couldn't take any more so I stood up and bowed to him in parting. And he looked at me smilingly and said, "Yes, yes. Your heart is heavy because you have not understood anything. It is not important. I have planted a seed in your heart, and that will grow." I had no idea what he meant, and simply went home and cried. And you see, it is only now, after twenty-eight years, that these things begin to develop in me, and I am already at the end of my life. I am already eighty-two! How much longer can I live? But something is given to us, and something is taken away. It is a process, and I hope that I can say at least something about this process to you.

I said that I would tell you something I only recently came to understand after twenty-eight years. About a week ago, after I had meditated – you see, when you come out of meditation, there is a moment – I cannot say of illumination – but a moment of brightness, when the mind is completely clear. You have brought something back from ... somewhere that is not of this world, something from the realm of God. And in this moment I thought, "What have I been doing here in London for so many years, and by so much traveling around and speaking to people?" Then it suddenly occurred to me: it was what Guruji had always said, between the lines and clear, and just as a Swami, too, told me after Guruji died.

I went to the Sha-han-sha Ashram in North India before I returned to London. And there was a Swamiji there who could not speak any English. I had to speak with him through an interpreter. Now when I was in England, I often traveled to give lectures for the Theosophical Society, and I would spend each night in a different house of a Theosophian or a Theosophical family for the two weeks or so of my tours. And sometimes I could not eat the food that they prepared for me. It was good food and well prepared, but I could not eat it. I could not digest it. It made me ill. Now, there was a young woman at

this Ashram in India, a school-teacher named Usha, and I asked her to ask the Swamiji about it, which she did. The Swami replied quite simply, "You have to make the woman who prepared this food like yourself." I smiled and said, "Usha, please say to the Swami, 'But I only stay for twenty-four hours, it is simply too brief a time to do such a thing. To make a person like yourself takes years and years'." Then he said, "Oh, I see. But then do it in this way: when the food is brought to you, and you know that you really cannot eat it, in order to not offend your host you have to accept it."

You see, for a Sufi it is strictly forbidden to offend anyone. If I come into someone's home and they have prepared a meal especially for me, and I refuse to eat it, that is not very nice. I cannot simply say, "I cannot eat this." And so we eat whatever is given to us. And I even knew of someone who did just that and died. So this Swami told me to do the following: you hold your hands over the plate with your fingers together so that the that the energy flows freely through them, and you send a small prayer to your soul, to your Atman, that the food will not harm you. And then it is OK. And this really works. After I returned to London, I tried it, and it always helped. And you too can do this. If you are on the path, and you come to a place where you think that the food may not be very clean, or if somehow your body does not want it – this has nothing to do with the taste, or whether you like it or not; this is connected with the energy of the food – then you too can do this. The others will simply think that it is a prayer. You close your eyes for a moment, and offer the food to your soul, and your soul will make sure that you are not injured.

But what the Swami first told me is the secret! It is what I do in London, just as my teacher did with me, and what every one of you will perhaps do, or maybe already do if you teach. You must make people like you yourself are. Now when I say that I make people like I am, I do not mean an old woman with my habits, with my faults, with my ideas and limitations. No. There is something in me that is the same as is in all of you. And that is my connection to That. And all I have to do is push the secret button within your heart, to ring the secret bell that is in your heart, so that you know where you come from, who you are, and where you are going, with the full dignity of a human being.

At first, I was astonished at what the Swami told me, but then I remembered that my teacher had already mentioned it. And now I have been doing that for years. How is it that I did not understand that it is exactly this which is the merging? It is so simple. And so difficult.

I have already said that God is a simple essence. I compare God to an amoeba. It is a good comparison. Everyone knows what an amoeba is. It is one of the simplest of all life-forms. When an amoeba wants to move, it pushes a part of itself out, and that becomes a foot, and then it moves. When it wants to eat, it opens something up and eats. And if it doesn't need anything, then it returns to being a shapeless mass. It is a tiny thing that one can only see in a very good microscope. And God is like that. A simple essence. That is why Jesus said, "Be like little children:" completely simple.

The more simple you are, the better. But unfortunately that doesn't appeal to us. We have this wonderful mind that is divine. Our mind is a part of the mind of God, and is very complicated, and the more complicated the better. The more doubts we have the better, the more questions the better. But questions, my friends, do not help you. The answers do not help you. The only thing that you need is to open something within yourself and take something in, like the amoebas. Or to make yourself feet so you can crawl, and that is all.

Now! What happens when you are merged with the teacher? If you think of this energy of the teacher as being like electricity, then you could imagine that you become a carrier, a wire. Or you could speak of being a channel. One becomes a mouthpiece of the teacher. You see, the Great Ones who are somewhere beyond, who are united with God, need us. Teilhard de Chardin said – and he was almost excommunicated for this statement – "God realizes Himself in man." God needs us! Here, and now. This Great Being needs us – these tiny pieces of the universe – so that He or She or It is able to manifest here. You see how simple it is? But living in this merged way is not an easy life, because then you have to unite this life: ordinary daily life, with something within you that is the highest you are capable of.

So, somehow automatically, through this conditioning, through this process in which we are programmed – just as a computer is programmed – to a mystical tradition, you reach, without effort, a state where this Great Being is able to make use of you, because your being and the greater being are really One. And that is really everything, and I can stop here, because really, there is nothing more to say

But of course, I have to give you something more of an explanation. This process became visible to me so suddenly that it was like an illumination. It was like the instant enlightenment that they expected from me in America – the American audience is special. They all want instant enlightenment, but since that has never happened with me, I was not very popular – so, this process is a process of maturation, just the way things mature in nature. And this process takes time.

This maturing process will be a slow process for all of you. You need patience. You have to polish yourself a little bit every day, as if with sandpaper, the way you might polish a piece of furniture before it is lacquered, or before French polish is applied. It is the same process. And my entire book is about this process. And really, this process precedes the training. My training only began when I was alone in the Himalayas, and when I first saw my teacher in meditation. I had thought that he had betrayed me. And I thought that he had not given me anything. And then he died. I simply felt completely betrayed. And of course, that is the same process you go through when you go through analysis and the analyst goes on holiday. You become very angry. You feel that the analyst has no right to go on holiday. You feel, “He has abandoned me, now, just when I need him!” That happens to everyone who goes through analysis.

So my teacher just died off and gave me nothing. The real training only began when I suddenly saw my teacher in meditation. And that was such a shock. My entire being was so shocked and startled to find myself before him. He did not have any sort of human form. He was only an energy. But I knew it was him.

You see, we think that we can imagine that there are other levels, that there is an astral level on which one can travel, and so forth. But really, there, in the beyond, everything is so completely different from the way things are here that we cannot begin to imagine it. And one needs to learn that too. Every human is free in the night, and every human wanders around in the night, well, the spirit wanders – actually it is the part of the spirit that belongs to the higher self. The body, of course, sleeps. But everything there is so different from here that the mind cannot grasp it, until, after years, one is finally able to bring some small memory of it back into normal consciousness. And that too is a kind of torment, because I know that I am having these important experiences, and there is only a vague memory of it. I know exactly how I should sit and how I should meditate, and the position that I need, and I think that I will have the same experience. But I do not. I have other experiences. And why? God knows.

And why did I have to go through such a difficult time? Not everyone goes through so much. There are people in London who do not need nearly as much time to learn as I did. It depends on the character, and it depends on the Karma. This ability to absorb the teaching depends on a thousand things, on our own inner obstacles, on a million different things. We are so old. We are as old as the hills, older than the mountains. *(A small child says, with a sweet innocent voice, “I am not so old!”)* You too! *(Of course, everyone chuckles...)*

(‘I. says that Mrs. Tweedie should have a pause now.) Yes, I had the feeling that I needed to do something. *(Everyone laughs...)* It began to feel like it was too much all at once. So. We will have a break for a half an hour.

(The break begins and ends ...)

You know, I had a charming experience a few years ago. There was a young woman – she lives very far away now and is married and has two small children, so she only visits us very seldom. But at first she came every day. And she did that for an entire year. Then one day she asked me, “Do you

know why I come every day?" and I said, "Probably because you like it in some way." And she said, "No. I come hoping that you will take this terrible longing away from me." And I thought, "You poor soul! Every time you come, I make this longing stronger and stronger." (*There is a somewhat wary laughter from the audience ...*) But I didn't tell her that.

You see, when one is entrusted with this work by the teacher, one is given a kind of Yogic power with which one is able to influence the hearts of people. And in this way, one is able to increase the longing of people. Of course, I do not mean the longing for me or for London, but the longing for Him, which is really the longing for oneself. Because once you have sensed a moment of union ... with something, then you will know quite clearly that it is really with your own self that you are united: with this part of yourself that is made in God's image. And if it is made in God's image, then, of course, it is made of God Himself. I always say that we are almighty. I always say that we – every one of us – has such power within us. It is said in the Katha Upanishad, when Lord Yama, the King of Death, speaks to the small boy, Nachiketas, who visits him in the underworld, "If you identify yourself with the physical body, which dies, then you are mortal and small, and you will be sick and miserable. But if you identify with that within you which is immortal and eternal, then you are That, Oh Nachiketas." It is like a promise, "Then you are That."

But how do we reach this state? Gururji said, "The road to Him means to forget all knowledge, to abandon all preconceptions, simply to forget everything. Put yourself into His hands and trust Him, and then you will Know."

There is an interesting Chinese idea concerning this. They say that if you want to learn to paint bamboo, first you must meditate on bamboo for a year, then you must spend a year learning how to draw bamboo, and then you forget bamboo altogether for a year. After that you will be able to paint bamboo. It is the same idea, and just the opposite of what one learns in the world. You enter a university and learn as much as possible so that you are able to share your wisdom or your knowledge with others. Here it is quite the opposite. The mind no longer works!

'I'. can tell to you that it is also that way with me – even me, with my little understanding – really I am no one in comparison to these great beings, but sometimes I say to 'I', "I feel crazy today, as if I am drunk, and I must give a lecture this afternoon, what shall I do?" But somehow, I manage. When I need to speak, suddenly everything I need to say appears, and everything is OK. But in the morning I am sometimes so drunk that I cannot walk straight. I totter just like a drunkard. It is from so much energy. Look, I am eighty-two and I have the energy of a young girl. Of course, the body gets tired quickly, that is quite natural. Eighty-two is rather old. Many people die long before they reach eighty-two. (*The group has a gentle laugh.*)

So, we now have three-quarters of an hour remaining, and I would like you to ask me questions. Please. I have spoken about so many things today, and I am quite certain that there are things you would like to ask about. If you have a question, ask me and I will answer if I can. And if I cannot, well, then I cannot. We are all only human.

(Question: Who continues the tradition?)

No Sufi would found an organization that was intended to last forever. It would never work, certainly not in the line that I belong to. We do our work, we turn it over to others and we leave. And that 'turning over' is done by the direct transmission of power. Thank you; that is an important question. This transmission is called Tawadjuh and is also mentioned in my book. It is the direct transmission of Yogic power, a merging with the teacher. The next ones, the ones who have been prepared for it, then carry on the tradition. I must prepare a few people in my group who will be able to carry this tradition further, and I do that. But it cannot be written down, and it is not an oral tradition: one does not speak about it. It happens as a transmission of power from heart to heart.

We do not believe, as other Sufis do, that the son must inherit this power or authority from the father. My teacher transmitted that power to me in the moment of his death. Now, of course, I know

when that happened. It was the last time he looked at me. It happened just as he died. I remember that I got such a shock. He was dying – he died from a heart attack – and he suddenly looked at me, and there was such a love in his eyes. And he had never looked at me with love. Never! ... Never! ... And suddenly ... I was so shaken. I thought, “Oh my God!” And I walked away. I walked to the doctors who stood at the other side of his garden. They spoke among themselves about his illness, and discussed whether they should give him an injection or not. The last time an injection had helped him, but they were not sure what to do this time. Finally they gave him the injection and he died. This time the injection had not helped.

So in this tradition no one inherits the tradition, in the sense that no one from the family inherits it. Sharma told me that Guruji had told him, “Here no one inherits anything in the family. My sons are not very interested in spiritual life. I have prepared my disciples.”

And one day he said, “We are not healers. We do not heal. But! When someone comes to us who is sick, and who desperately wants spiritual life, then he will be given the chance to live a spiritual life. And if he takes that chance, then he will be automatically healed.” But he added, “I do not do that. It is done. We do not lower ourselves to heal.” Now what could that mean, “to lower ourselves to heal?” You see, to be able to be useful to people, we must live on a certain inner level. Our spirits and minds, according to the Yogis, – please, I myself do not know this, I am only relaying what I have heard – our minds or spirits can work on fourteen different levels. And we must be on a certain level to be useful for people. And to be able to heal people, we would have to come down to the level of the people who need to be healed. One says, “come down.” I do not believe in higher and lower; that does not really exist. One says higher and lower to try to make something understandable. It is similar to when Guruji said that he did not believe that some people were more – or less – suited for spiritual life, or that someone is closer or further from God. He said, “We are all swimming in the infinite ocean. Who is nearer to the shore? And to which shore?” So in other words, we are all already on the level where we can reach God. But we must want it. Do not forget that the word ‘impossible’ does not exist in the dictionary of the lover.

(Question continues: Why did God create humans?)

It is in my book. (*Everyone chuckles.*) Read my book! (*More laughter.*)

(Question: I have a question about meditation.) Yes, thank you. She asked me before and I had told her that it was not the time to answer. And now it is. What would you like to ask?

(Question: I have been doing your meditation for about two years, and just now there was a moment in which I was – as if pulled out of daily life, and from all of my troubles. And of course, that was very beautiful. And then I became afraid that I might sort of float away and not be able to deal with my job and normal life; that I might somehow fall into this nothingness and lose my mind. I am self-employed and so my life is not so very secure. And also I am afraid that if I enter this nothingness, that really nothing is there, that the mind is no longer there.)

First I would say that this ‘nothing’ is only nothing for the mind. But wisdom is not in the mind. Wisdom is in the soul, and the soul is one with God. This ‘nothing’ only seems to be nothing for the mind, and in this sense it is an illusion. This ‘nothing’ is everything, it is ‘the fullness’, and the greatest bliss. Continue to meditate. Two years is not much. If you continue for many, many years, I can promise you that you will sink into this ‘nothing’ while you are meditating, and this ‘nothing’ will answer you. And it will give you a great feeling of fulfillment. You will experience that God loves you, absolutely and completely, just as you are. And the time comes when you can experience this love every night. The Sufis sing of these nights of love. You are loved, and that is the truth, only you and no one else. Of course, God also loves the others. This is the same story as when Krishna danced with sixteen thousand milk-maids, and each one believed that she was alone with her Lord. (*There are some uneasy reactions in the audience ...*) It is the same symbology.

So, do not be afraid. When you felt as if you were pulled away from all of your sorrows, that was a brief experience of a Yogic state. Please. Never be afraid of what you experience while you are in a state of meditation. The fear itself will cut your connection to these states. This fear comes from the ego. It comes from the small 'I'. And if you allow it, it will interfere between the higher states and your inner self, your higher self.

(Question continues: Do you mean if I deal with my ego in daily life, that it will go better in my meditation as well?)

Yes, if you are able to reduce your ego a little, even in daily life, then your meditations will improve. But through meditation itself, the ego becomes smaller. The more time you spend in deep meditation, the more time you spend in the Truth, the smaller your ego becomes – quite automatically – because you have sunk into that great Everything. Thus on one hand, your ego becomes smaller. But. The more you enter this state, the more you have of Yogic powers, and the more you can successfully do what you want to do – and from that, the ego becomes larger. In the end, you only really lose the ego when you unite with God. And that is really mastery, that is ... well, none of us are there. Yes, please.

(Questions: Could you speak about enlightenment?)

No, I cannot. Enlightenment will be different for each of us. We are all unique, and your enlightenment will be completely different from mine. You are a man, and are made differently from me. You will be enlightened according to your own light, and I will be enlightened according to my light. But exactly what this light is, is a great question. But thank you. That was a lovely question. *(There is some laughter. Well, the question may have been nice, but ...)* Yes?

(Question: You have spoken of desires. You have said that if one wants to do something good, one must first desire to do it. Afterwards you said that one has to give up desires.)

Yes, so here again we have a contradiction. You see, there are desires and desires. If I want to reach God, that is a good desire, but if I want to do harm to someone, or do some idleness, that is not a good desire. So it is here that one of the greatest Yogic virtues is required: discrimination. That is the most difficult thing that a Yogi must learn. How far I can say, 'Yes', and where must I say, 'No'. Sometimes one does something that one knows is not the best, just to have peace, perhaps just to get rid of someone. For example, a woman might sleep with a man just so he will leave her alone. Now that is not discrimination. That is not a good reason to sleep with someone. I think that love should be the only reason to do that. You see, this is a dumb example but it just popped into my head. *(Everyone is somehow astonished, but has a good laugh ...)*

So there are good desires and bad desires. But you see, we usually have so many desires, thousands of desires. And we split ourselves, we split our energies so much with these thousands of desires that we forget to have the one great desire to go to God. That is why Yogis try to do their mantras the entire day, so that their spirits stay focused on God, and so that they think as much as possible about God. So we should have great desires, and the greatest desire is, of course, the desire for the Truth. When we want only that, we are almighty.

(Question: You have spoken about Karma. You wrote that your master said that you had to give up the idea of Karma, and that he tried to prove to you that it does not exist.)

Yes, That is correct. Gurujī once told us, "You come to us teachers with your cups full of ideas, and these cups are even covered. I must first empty you." We have to be emptied of our ideas and our concepts and our dogmas. These are all 'I'; these are all ego. He had, first, to empty me. Later, I had experiences which confirmed Karma, but that was an experience, not an idea. Karma certainly exists, but if our belief in it is very strong, it becomes a dogma for us, and so our cups are not quite empty. And he wanted to empty my cup completely.

(Question: How can I tell which desire comes from the ego, and which from something higher?)

In the beginning, one does not know. One only learns through experience, though your mistakes. The Sufis say that you fall down in order that you can stand up again. I have made terrible mistakes, and I still make them. The ego is very strong, and very necessary for us to be able to live in this world. Sometimes I think, "Aha, I do that for this reason." Then I look deeper within myself and still I think, "Yes. I do this for this reason. It is clear that that is the reason why I do it." And then I look still deeper, until I say, "Oh. Is that the reason? No! It is not! I do it from vanity!" Or I do it for this reason, or to please somebody, just like a Pharisee. But you must learn that yourself; you must develop discrimination, and that is the most difficult of all the virtues to learn. Even a Yogi will still be learning about that on his death-bed. It is really very difficult to learn: just how far one should go with things, and if things are as they appear to be.

Sometimes the appearance will be one way, and the reality quite another thing. Sometimes a person comes to a teacher, and the teacher does something that makes the disciple think, "I have not come for that. I have come for something quite different. What is going on here?" The person may think, for example, that he has come to learn music, and then the teacher begins with something quite different; perhaps he tells the student to clean his shoes. One often finds such things in the Sufi tradition. But the teacher knows where he must bring the disciple. He will know the Karma of the disciple. Then he receives an order from his superior, and he knows he must follow it, that he must do a certain work with the disciple. That happens to me too. And then I am left alone, and I must use my own discrimination to find exactly how I should carry out this order.

(Question: If I want to make contact with God, what form should I use? Meditation or prayer?)

Whichever one is easier for you. If you pray from your heart, God will hear you. If you meditate from your heart, God will hear you. If you say something mechanically with your mind, that will not help at all. One day, Guruji said, "What your heart has heard, God has also heard." That means that the feelings must be there. If the feelings are there, then God will hear it.

(Question: Do the Sufis belong to an outer form of Religion? ... *inaudible.*)

The woman says that she belongs to a Tariqat, which is a Sufi path or tradition within the religion of Islam. So. Sufis are older than Islam, and they do not belong to any religion, because Sufis are mystics. So to call Sufism Islamic mysticism is not correct. There are books that say that Sufism is twenty-six thousand years old; older than the Upanishads. And there is proof of that in the book, "The Sufis" by Idries Shah. In the introduction, he writes that Sufis already existed in the second millennium B. C.. And in my book I quote where Guruji explained that Sufis – except at that time they were not called Sufis – were a brotherhood who went from prophet to prophet to hear the Truth. They were the first Sufis, and Islam did not exist at that time. Islam is only one thousand four hundred years old. (Question continues: You said that Moslems also came to your teacher.) Yes, and why not? (Question continues: ...) How does Sufism relate to other religions? It doesn't relate. Sufism is Sufism. Sufism is a spiritual path to God. (Question continues: But what is your own opinion about this?) I have no opinion at all about it. (*Everyone is enjoying the way Mrs. Tweedie is handling a somewhat aggressive ... protagonist, and laughs.*) All religions are the same for me. There are many ways to God. And of course, the great beings certainly never founded religions. They were all lovers of God. It is only after they died that other people founded religions based on what they taught. Then all the religions became what they are now: dogma. And Sufism is anti-dogma, and in this way it is very radical. We go to God, and each one of us goes alone. So I believe that all religions are one and the same. That is my personal opinion. (*The questioner again asks about Mrs. Tweedie's personal experience with religion, and Mrs. Tweedie responds curtly.*) Pardon me, but this is too complicated for me. The next question, please. This is now useless conversation.

(Question: What can you say about the devil, evil and the negative.)

I do not believe that the devil, as a person, exists. I think that evil is in humans, in our thoughts. There are very evil people who do very evil things. And it is within us too. Every one of us has evil thoughts and evil qualities. We cannot deny that, and that is the devil in ourselves. But I do not believe in a devil as a being, or as a person; I find that childish.

(Question: How did you know that Sufism was the right path for you.)

If you read my book, you will see that I did not know that at all in the beginning. I had so many doubts, and I fought with my teacher so much. I always thought that the mind is everything, education is everything; that book knowledge is everything. Then, more and more I began to understand that there was something else to be found there, with my teacher, besides things of the mind. And that somehow drew me in. This again is a question that is difficult to answer. You see, we are all unique. Your path will be the individual path of your soul, to that which one cannot name. And He will come to you by whatever name you call Him. Try it. (Questioner: I will.) Good! (*There is relaxed and happy laughter...*)

(Question: You have spoken about the limitations of book knowledge, but then why did your master order you to write your book.)

... Aha! (*Everyone laughs at Mrs. Tweedie's delayed reaction.*) You see, my teacher probably knew why he gave me that order, but I do not. He gave me the order and I did it. So I cannot help you. But there is an interesting story connected with this. The English publisher from Element Books told our M., "I have always been against our publishing this book because Sufis are usually so modest and do not bring themselves into the limelight. And in this book there is so much of 'me, me, me', that I thought that something was not right about it". And our M. said simply, "Orders are orders. Her teacher ordered her to keep a diary, and of course, she had to write it as a diary, so the 'I' had to be in it. How else could she write it? Otherwise it would have been stupid." And this gentleman said, "Ah..." And then everything was OK, and he wrote me a lovely letter. And he was right; my book really is 'me, me, me'. But, for God's sake! It came from my diary, from things that I personally experienced in my own heart. (*Mrs. Tweedie knocks her microphone off of the table, and suddenly notices that it is gone.*) It disappeared! (*Everyone begins to really laugh as several people scramble around looking for her microphone.*) It just disappeared! ... Ah! Thank you. Yes. He fished it out from somewhere... (*Everyone, including Mrs. Tweedie, is rolling with laughter...*) I suddenly thought, "Where is the microphone?" (*The laughter goes on for some time!*) Well. That was a funny interlude.

(Question: You speak a great deal of pride and dignity, and at the same time of humility and patience. How do you reconcile them?)

Yes, I speak of pride and dignity, and then I say that one should be humble. You see, God has His great pride, but His pride is different from our pride. He is proud of the beautiful world that He has created. So there is dignity and dignity, and pride and pride. There is the pride of the small ego. I am magnificent and great and better than you ... and so forth. That is the ego. But there is another kind of dignity, the dignity of being a human who absolutely and completely obeys God, and who knows what God wants of him. That is another kind of dignity and another kind of pride. And one must be able to discriminate between these two.

(Question: What is the purpose of fear in life. That is also a very strong feeling, and it can be a great obstacle on a spiritual path.)

You see, according to psychologists, fear is very deeply embedded in our unconscious. It is connected with our days in the jungle. We were animals for so long, that, according to Carl Jung, these patterns became embedded in us. It came from our time when we lived in the jungles as animals. And that appears again in our childhood. We can even experience fear while we are still in the womb. I know a woman who was born in a mental hospital, and she had unconscious memories of her mother's fear. Since then a very good psychologist has been working through that with her. And very slowly she becomes freed from this fear. But every human has fear. (Question continues: But must one work through one's fear to be able to progress on a path?) I do not know. I can only say, personally, that the time comes when you are no longer afraid of anything. Once you know that you have died so many times, and been born so many times, that you are so old – thousands of years old. Of what should we really be afraid? Of pain? Pain passes. I think that anxiety and fear always remain with us, but somehow we are able to overcome them. Carl Jung said, "You can only become what you already are." So you must accept that this fear is within you. The only way out of this fear is to grow out of it, then you will no longer be afraid. I think that that is the answer. Thank you.

(Question: Is every personal development necessarily connected with pain and suffering?)

I think that it is, and I will tell you why. When a human is happy, he does not make any effort, but when he suffers, he does. I think that we are simply made that way. Unless we suffer, we do not make any effort. I personally believe that that is true. But that is my personal view.

(Question: I would also like to ask something about pain. Do physical and psychological pain come because the ego is broken?)

No, I do not think so. I think that a great deal of physical pain can come from Karma; and psychological pain ... you see, when you are on the path, this longing is very painful. But, as a great Persian poet, the Sufi Shah Latif, said, "Light will come to you through your longing."

And I think that that is a good place to end. "Light will come to you through your longing."

And I am told that our time is up. But it is not quite up. Now we will meditate. Well, but the time is really up! We could meditate for a quarter of an hour. Do you want that? (*From the audience, comes, sharp and loud and clear, "Yes!" ...*)

(*And the recording ends.*)