
Take It Easy, Vol 1

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Take It Easy, Vol 1

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A REST ON THE WAY BACK
FROM THE LEAKY ROAD
TO THE NEVER-LEAKING ROAD;
IF IT RAINS, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT BLOWS, LET IT BLOW.

MY SELF OF LONG AGO,
IN NATURE NON-EXISTENT;
NOWHERE TO GO WHEN DEAD,
NOTHING AT ALL.

WHEN ASKED, HE ANSWERED;
NO QUESTION, NO ANSWER;
THEN MASTER DARUMA
MUST HAVE HAD
NOTHING IN HIS MIND.

OUR MIND --
WITHOUT END,
WITHOUT BEGINNING,

THOUGH IT IS BORN, THOUGH IT DIES --
THE ESSENCE OF EMPTINESS!

ALL THE SINS COMMITTED
IN THE THREE WORLDS
WILL FADE AND DISAPPEAR
TOGETHER WITH MYSELF.

RELIGION IS IRRATIONAL -- by the irrational and for the irrational. Reason cannot contain it; reason is so small.

Religion is the vast sky of existence. Reason is a tiny human phenomenon. The reason has to be lost, has to be dropped. Only by going beyond the mind does one start understanding what is. That's the radical change. No philosophy can bring that radical change -- only religion.

Religion is non-philosophic, anti-philosophic, and Zen is the purest form of religion. Zen is the very essence of religion. Hence it is irrational, it is absurd. If you try to understand it logically you will be bewildered. It can only be understood illogically. It has to be approached in deep sympathy and love. YOU CANNOT approach Zen through empirical, scientific, objective concepts. They all have to be dropped.

It is a heart phenomenon. You have to feel it rather than think it. You have to BE it to know it. Being is knowing. And there is no other knowing.

That's why religion has to choose a different kind of language. Religion has to talk in parables, in poetry, in metaphors, in myth. Those are indirect ways of hinting at the truth -- only hinting at the truth, no direct pointing; just whispering, not shouting. It comes to you in a deep rapport.

These small poems of the Zen master, Ikkyu, are of immense importance. They are not great poetry, remember, because that is not the concern. The poetry has been used as a device, so that your heart can be stirred. The poetry is not the goal. Ikkyu is not concerned with creating great poetry; he is not really a poet, he is a mystic. But rather than speaking prose, he speaks in poetry -- for a certain reason.

The reason is: poetry has an indirect way of hinting at things. Poetry is feminine. Prose is masculine. Prose, the very structure of it, is logical; poetry is basically illogical. Prose has to be clear-cut; poetry has to be vague -- that's its beauty, its quality. Prose simply says what it says; poetry says many things. Prose is needed in the day-to-day world, in the marketplace. But whenever something of the heart has to be said, prose is always found inadequate -- one has to fall back to poetry.

There are two languages in language. Each language consists of two languages: one is prose, the other is poetry. Prose has become very predominant because it is utilitarian. Poetry has disappeared by and by, because it has no utility. It is needed only when you are in love. It is needed only when you are talking of love, death, prayer, truth, God -- but they are not commodities. They are not sold in the marketplace, they are not purchased either.

Our world, slowly slowly, has become linear. The other language, the deeper language, has lost its meaning for us. And because of the disappearance of the second language, the language of poetry, man has become very poor -- because ALL richness is of the heart. Mind is very poor, mind is a beggar. Mind lives through trivia. The heart is an opening to the profundities of life, to the depths of existence, to the mysteries of cosmos.

Remember this there are tWO languages in language, two ways of speaking, two levels of linguistic usage. There is a language of clear truths, concepts and formulas, the language of

pure logic, objective information, exact science. But that is not the language of the heart, and that is not the language of love, and that is not the language of religion.

Science and religion are diametrically opposite. They belong to different dimensions of existence. They don't overlap each other's grounds, each other's fields. They simply never meet! They don't criss-cross. And the modern mind has been trained for science, hence religion has become almost out of date, of the past. There seems to be no future for religion.

Sigmund Freud has declared that there is no future for the illusion called religion. But if there is no future for religion, there is no future for man either. Science is going to destroy humanity -- because humanity can live only through the poetic, the metaphoric. Life gathers significance only through the heart. Man cannot live by mind alone. Man cannot live by calculation, mathematics alone. Mathematics can serve, but cannot be the master. The head can only be the servant, and as a servant it is very useful; but when it pretends to become the master it is dangerous, it is fatal.

The language of objective science lives in the world of facts. Things are as they are; you say what you mean, as precisely as you can, and as unequivocally. Speaking, then, is deciphering a puzzle, defining, prescribing limits -- this is this, not that. It is water, not steam and not ice. Here is here, not there. One is one, two equals two, dead is dead. This is the world of facts -- dull and dead, stale and stagnant.

It is impossible to live just in the world of facts, because then you will never be able to relax. In fact, it is meaningless to live in the world of facts -- from where will you get the meaning? from where will you get the value? Then a rose has no beauty; it is only a botanical fact. Then love has no splendour; it is only a biological fact.

How can one live in facts? Living in facts, life starts becoming meaningless. It is not an accident that the modern philosophical minds are talking continuously about meaninglessness. We have created it by deciding to live only in one language -- the prose language.

It is a good thing that we have this language, the language of facts, the language of prose. Our world cannot do without it, true. It is needed, but it Can't be the goal of life. It can only serve. But we never use it when we Want to pour out our hearts and say what is really in us, hidden and almost impossible to name.

A man is certainly poor if he has not felt the inadequacy of ordinary language. If there is somebody so unfortunate that he has not felt the inadequacy of ordinary language, that simply shows he has never felt love, he has never felt any meditative moment, he has not known ecstasy. His heart beats no more; he is just a corpse. He lives and yet lives not. He moves, walks, but all his gestures are empty; they contain nothing.

If a man has not felt the inadequacy of the prose language -- the empirical language, the language of facts, mathematics -- that simply shows that he has not experienced any mystery of life, that he has not been living really. Otherwise, how can you avoid the mysteries? That he has never seen the full moon in the night; that he has never seen the beauty and the splendour of human eyes. That he has never laughed, that he has never cried; that he does not know what tears signify. That he is a robot. He is not man, he is not human -- he is inhuman. He is just a machine. He works, he earns, and then he dies. He reproduces and then he dies. But in vain -- he cannot say why he lived in the first place.

It is true that this kind of language is needed, it is a need, but even if all the needs are fulfilled, the ultimate need remains unfulfilled by it -- the need to celebrate, the need to rejoice; the need to have a dialogue with the stars and the ocean and the sand; the need to hold hands, the need to fall in love, the need to dance and sing. The ordinary language cannot

fulfill that ultimate need, and that ultimate need is what is specific to humanity.

A man is man only in so far as he lives in that ultimate need.

In questions of love and death and God and man, the first language is not only inadequate but also dangerous. If you use the first kind of language for the ultimate concerns of life, by and by your very language will destroy them. That's how we have destroyed God. That's how we have destroyed all that is beautiful and significant. Use wrong language and sooner or later you will be trapped by the wrong language, because your mind lives through language. You know only that which comes into your language; you know only that which you can clearly think about.

If you have dropped the vague world of heart, the vague world of feelings, sensations, emotions, ecstasy, then naturally you are closed to God. And then if you say God is dead, it seems to be absolutely true. Not that God is dead -- only you are dead towards God. To be alive towards God is to move into poetry. Poetry is the rainbow bridge between man and God, between man as mind and God as mystery. That is the opening, the door, the threshold.

Have you ever seen Khajuraho, Konarak, or other beautiful temples of India? In the old scriptures it is said that on each temple's threshold there should be a statue, a sculpture of lovers. It is very strange. Those scriptures don't specifically say why; they simply mention it for the architects, that it is a must. On each temple's threshold, on the door, there must be at least one couple in MAITHUNA -- in orgasm, in deep love, their limbs intertwined with each other, in great ecstasy.

Why on the door? Because unless you know love, you cannot know the bridge between man and God. And the door is a symbol: the door is the threshold between the world of mind and the world of no-mind. It is love that bridges the world of mind to no-mind. It is only through love that we come to know the orgasmic mysteries of life.

It is very significant -- although many temples are not built that way. People have been avoiding it. They are too moralistic and stupid. But the ancient prescription is of great significance: only love can be the threshold, because only love will make your poetry alive.

If you use only the first kind of language, you will be destroying something very delicate in you. You will become more and more accustomed to the rocks and less and less aware of the flowers.

But there is a second language, deep below the first, like a much older structure wide around the first. It is the language of what cannot really be said. Yes, poetry is the language of what really cannot be said. Still it HAS to be said. There is an urgency to say it -- and poetry is the language of that which cannot be said.

That which can be said can be said through prose. How will you say that which cannot be said if you don't have poetry? It is the language of what cannot really be said, that language that you speak so as not to have to be completely silent, the language of emotion and ecstasy.

THESE SMALL POEMS OF IKKYU may not be very poetic -- in fact, R. H. Blyth, writing about these DOKA of Ikkyu, says: "Ikkyu's little poems are not of great poetical value, yet they portray for us a man of deep sincerity, too honest perhaps to be a great Lyrical poet." The purpose is not poetry. The purpose is to convey something which cannot be conveyed through ordinary language. The poetry is being used as a vehicle, remember it. Don't think in terms of literature: think in terms of ecstasy.

And sometimes ecstasy can be expressed through small words. Just the other day I was reading William Samuel. He writes:

Pondering the enigma of communication one day out in the back-country of my hills, I witnessed the happy reunion of a father and his five-year-old son who had been lost in the woods for many hours. I knew the boy would be found -- and I knew I knew -- but despite the positive knowing, I was unable to allay the father's fears or bring him to understand the truth I saw. Then, even as I wondered -- even as I asked about this inability to communicate when it seemed so important to do it -- I saw the little boy and the father find each other.

Oh, such a reunion! A barefoot ragamuffin came running out of the woods shouting with all his might, "Daddy! Daddy!" and I saw the father, unashamedly sobbing, sweep the child into his arms. All he could say was, "Hallelujah! Praise God!" again and again. "Hallelujah! Praise God!"

There are moments when something has to be said and nothing can be said. There are moments when tears say much more than words. There are moments when laughter says much more than words. There are moments when gestures say much more than words. There are moments when silence speaks more than words. All the laughter, all the tears, all the gestures, silences, they are contained in the second language -- the language of poetry. William Samuel also writes:

Once in China, I was given a simple verse to read and then to give my interpretation. I was ready to give an answer immediately but was informed that I had twenty-eight days to think about it. "Why so long?" asked I, with the usual impatience of a Westerner. "Because nothing has been read once until it has been read twelve times," Was the answer. "Read and re-read."

I did. Twelve times twelve to make twelve readings -- and I heard a melody I could not have heard otherwise. Since then I have known why it is that certain lines in the Bible, or any other book, that have been read countless times will one day, upon just one more reading, suddenly take on a grand new significance.

That is the whole secret of mantras. A mantra is a condensed poem; it is essential poetry. Just by reading it, you can't understand it. Not that you don't understand intellectually -- it is simple, the meaning is apparent -- but the apparent meaning is not the real meaning. The apparent meaning comes from the first language, and the hidden meaning will have to be waited for. You will have to repeat it in deep love, in great prayerful moods... some time it will suddenly erupt from your own unconscious, it will be revealed to you. A melody will be heard. That melody is the meaning -- not the meaning that you had deciphered from the first reading, on the first reading. And one never knows when it will happen.

Hence, in the East, people have been reciting the Koran, the Bhagavad Gita, the Dhammapada; they go on reciting. Every day, morning and evening, they go on reciting. They recite as many times as possible. They don't even keep count; what is the point of keeping count? But with each reciting, something goes deeper into you, the groove is deepened. And one day the melody is heard.

When you have heard the melody, you have come to know the real mantra. You have stumbled upon the second hidden layer, the real poetry in it. That cannot be understood: that can only be heard. That cannot be understood: that can only be experienced.

These small poems of Ikkyu are like mantras. Don't try to understand them intellectually. Rather, play with them with deep love, sympathy, rapport. And, slowly slowly, like a fragrance, like a melody, something will arise in you and you will be able to see what this

man wants to convey. He wants to convey that which cannot be conveyed; he wants to say that which cannot be said. And he has been able to convey it.

This man Ikkyu was a strange master. Zen masters ARE strange masters. A religious person is bound to become strange, because he lives in a totally different way -- he lives in a separate reality. He starts existing here as an outsider. He becomes a stranger to this ordinary world, because he is here and yet not of it. He lives here, but untouched, uncontaminated, unpolluted by it. He lives here, and lives in such a way that he is untouchable. He does not escape from the world. He lives in the ordinary world in an extraordinary way.

I have heard a few stories about Ikkyu. One is this, which will give you some taste of the man. Before we enter into his poems, it is better to have some taste of the man.

One summer day while working, perhaps weeding, Ikkyu got so tired, and being hot, came up to the temple porch and aired himself in the cool breeze. He felt so fine that he went into the temple and took the Buddha from the shrine, and binding him to a pole outside, said, "Now, you too cool yourself!"

Looks absurd, binding a wooden Buddha to a pole, and saying to Buddha, "Now, you too cool yourself!" But look... something deep is there. For Ikkyu, nothing is dead any more, not even the wooden Buddha. All is alive. And he has started feeling for everything as he feels for himself. Those boundaries of I and you are no more relevant. He has come to the one.

And now another, just the polar opposite of this story:

One night, a very cold winter night, he was staying in a temple. And then suddenly, in the middle of the night, the priest of the temple heard noise and saw light, so he came running: "What is happening?"

He saw Ikkyu sitting there -- he was burning a wooden Buddha. The priest was aghast. He said, "Are you mad or something? What have you done? This is sacrilege. There can be no other sin greater than this. You have burnt my Buddha!"

And Ikkyu took a small stick and started poking into the ashes. And the priest said, "Now what are you doing, and what are you TRYING to do?"

And Ikkyu said, "I am trying to find the bones of the Buddha."

And the priest said, "You must be absolutely mad -- how can you find bones in a wooden Buddha?"

And Ikkyu laughed and he said, "The night is long and very cold, and you have so many wooden Buddhas -- why don't you bring a few more? And you can also warm yourself up."

Now this man is a strange man. One time he binds the wooden Buddha on a hot summer day to a pole and says, "Now, you too cool yourself." Another time he burns a wooden Buddha because the night is too cold. And he says to the priest, "Look at me -- the Buddha inside is shivering." In fact, both the stories are the same, from two different angles the same.

A man of realization, a man who has understood, makes no differences. Distinctions are lost, divisions disappear. All boundaries become meaningless. A man of realization starts living in the unbounded, in the infinite.

Now, these doka:

A REST ON THE WAY BACK
FROM THE LEAKY ROAD

TO THE NEVER-LEAKING ROAD;
IF IT RAINS, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT BLOWS, LET IT BLOW.

EACH WORD HAS TO BE PENETRATED WITH SYMPATHY. The Leaky Road' means this world, the world of desires. Through desires we are leaking our energy. Through desires we are wasting our being. Through desires we are disappear-ing down the drain.

This world is the Leaky Road. Man simply wastes himself here. Nothing is gained out of it, never. In fact, you come as emperors and you die as beggars. This is a Leaky Road! Each child is born as an emperor and soon the kingdom is lost, the purity, the innocence is lost. Each child is Adam in the Garden of Eden, and each child has to be expelled from the Garden. And he starts moving into the world of desires.

Ten thousand desires are there. They cannot be finished, they cannot be fulfilled. They bring only frustration and more frustration. Each desire is a new trap of the frustration. You hope again and you are trapped, and each desire only brings a great frustration. But by the time it comes, you start desiring again. You move from one desire to another desire. You can go on moving for millions of lives. In fact, that's how we have been moving.

Ikkyu calls it the Leaky Road. And the Never-leaking Road? -- the world before we and it were born, or the world when we and it are no more.

In Zen, this is one of the most fundamental meditations: to search for the face that you had before you were born, or, to search for the face that you will have when you are dead. Just to think about it brings great realizations. Just to medi-tate upon it constantly -- and one starts feeling something faceless. That is your original face: facelessness. You had no face before you were born, you had no body, you had no mind, you had no name, no form -- no NAMARUPA -- neither name nor form. You were, but you were not identified with anything.

To realize it again, amidst all this noise of the Leaky Road, amidst all these people who are just running after desires, chasing one desire and then another and then another; to recognize and to realize the original face when you were neither a body nor a mind, but only a pure consciousness, a witness, is the goal of all meditations. That is called the Never-leaking Road. If you can remain in that state, your life energies will not leak.

And the Way back is the return to that source, to that original face. All religions are the way back. Religion means a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn, an about-turn, an absolute about-turn. We are rushing away from the original source, we are rushing from ourselves. We have to return back. We have to come to our original source -- because only there is peace and contentment and bliss. Only there is fulfillment.

The source is the goal -- they are never separate. Only the source can be the goal! When one has come back to one's original source, one has achieved all that life can give, all hat life is meant to give.

Life is losing the paradise; religion is regaining it. Rushing into the world of desires is the Adam who is falling from grace; returning back is Christ. They are the same person! Adam and Christ are not two separate persons. They are the same person, only their direction has changed. Adam is on the Leaky Road, going away from the source, farther and farther away from the source. Christ is turning back, has taken the turn.

The Christian word 'conversion' means exactly that: turning back. Conversion does not mean a Hindu becoming a Christian, or a Mohammedan becoming a Christian. Conversion means Adam becoming Christ. It has nothing to do with Christianity; it has something to do

with Christhood itself. By becoming a Christian you don't become converted, nothing changes. You were a Hindu and you were rushing into the world of desires, then you become a Christian and you go on rushing into the same world -- just the label on you changes. Now you are no more called a Hindu, you are called a Christian. Or you can be a Christian and can get converted to being a Hindu -- that is not conversion either.

Conversion means a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn -- Adam turning back, the way back.

Buddhists have an even more beautiful word for it. It is called PARAVRITTI -- that exactly means about-turn and exactly a hundred and eighty degrees. Less than that won't do. If you miss even by a single degree, you will still be rushing into the world.

That is the meaning of my sannyas too -- the way back.

And 'the rest' means our short human life, so short that rain or wind, grief or passion, are of little moment or meaning.

Now listen to the doka:

A REST ON THE WAY BACK
FROM THE LEAKY ROAD
TO THE NEVER-LEAKING ROAD;
IF IT RAINS, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT BLOWS, LET IT BLOW.

Our human life is so momentary. There is no point in getting disturbed about it. Somebody has insulted you and you make so much fuss -- and it is so momentary! It is not going to stay. All is going to be lost. Or somebody has succeeded and goes mad. Or somebody has accumulated much wealth and cannot walk on the earth, starts flying.

In the ancient days in Rome there was a tradition, a beautiful tradition. It should be followed in every country. Whenever a Roman conqueror would come back -- he had conquered new countries, had been a great soldier, was coming with great success and victory -- the masses, the crowds, the mob, would shout in joy. He was greeted like a god. The tradition was that a servant used to walk just behind him and continuously remind him: "Don't be deceived by the people. Don't be deceived, sir, by the people! Don't be deceived by the fools, otherwise you will go mad." A servant, a slave, had to repeat it continuously just at the back of the conqueror so that he would remember. Otherwise it is very easy: when success comes one goes mad.

This should be followed in every country. A person should follow Jimmy Carter, Morarji Desai, just reminding them that "Don't be deceived by the success. It is momentary; it is just a bubble, a soap-bubble. Don't let it get into your head."

Success gets into the head -- and so does failure. It hurts. And all is momentary. This REST is momentary. Just think of the infinities... before your birth there was infinity, beginningless time preceded you; and after your death endless time is going to succeed you. And between these two infinities, what are you? what is your life? A soap-bubble, just a moment's dream.

Don't allow it to affect you. If one can keep aware, and is not affected by success and failure, praise and insult, enemies and friends, then one is moving back to the original source. One becomes a witness.

A REST ON THE WAY BACK
FROM THE LEAKY ROAD

TO THE NEVER-LEAKING ROAD;
IF IT RAINS, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT BLOWS, LET IT BLOW.

You don't get disturbed about it. Ponder over it, contemplate over it -- it is a great secret, one of the great secrets of Buddhas. Just to be alert that all is trivial, momentary, a midsummer dream. It is going, it is already going. You cannot hold on to it. There is no need to cling to it, there is no need to push it. It is going of its own accord, good or bad, whatsoever it is, it is going. All is going. The river is flowing. You remain undisturbed, detached, just a witness. This is meditation.

MY SELF OF LONG AGO,
IN NATURE NON-EXISTENT;
NOWHERE TO GO WHEN DEAD,
NOTHING AT ALL.

AGAIN, TRY TO UNDERSTAND EACH WORD: MY SELF OF LONG AGO... Before birth we were non-existent, and so we will be again after death. No self was there, and no self is going to be there after death.

Buddha insists very much on this vision of no-self, because all our desires hang around the concept of the self: I am. If I am, then a thousand and one desires will arise. If I am NOT, then how can desires arise out of nothingness?

This is one of the greatest contributions of Buddha to the world. As far as the idea of no-self is concerned, he has surpassed all other masters -- Krishna and Christ and Zarathustra and Lao Tzu -- he has surpassed all.

This is one of the most fundamental meditations. If it can settle in you that "I am not," then suddenly the world disappears. To know that "I am not" is to know that there is no need to do anything, to be anything, to possess anything, to attain anything. When there is no self, ambition is irrelevant. If there is a self, then ambition is relevant.

That's why all other religions, except Buddhism, have fallen in a trap. The trap is: they try not to desire the things of THIS world, but then they start desiring things of the other world. But it is the same -- DESIRE is the same. It does not matter what you desire. It makes no difference at all what the object of your desire is -- desire is the same.

You desire money or you desire meditation: desire is the same. Only the object has changed. And the object is not the problem -- the problem is the desire itself, desiring itself. Somebody desires long life here, a beautiful body here, success, name, fame; somebody else desires eternal life with God in paradise -- what is the difference? The only difference seems to be this: that the first man is not so greedy as the second. The second is more greedy.

That's why your so-called spiritual people are very greedy people. It is not just an accident that India is very greedy -- it is so spiritual. That spirituality creates new greeds. In fact, the so-called mahatmas go on teaching people: "Don't desire things of this world because they are momentary. Desire things of the other world because they are eternal." And this they call renunciation? Is this renunciation? This is getting more desirous. This is asking for eternal gratification.

The worldly people are simple people, they are satisfied with momentary desires. And the other-worldly seem to be absolutely greedy. They are not satisfied with this world; they need another world where eternal pleasure exists, where beauty never fades, where life is always young, where one lives and lives and never becomes old.

This is greed! This is pure greed! transplanted into another world. This is more greed than the first. Avoid this so-called spiritual materialism; it is utterly materialistic. It does not change your life. It can't change it. It simply nourishes your old mind. It poisons you even more.

Buddha says the basic meditation is to see that "I was not and I will not be, so how can I be in the middle of two nothingnesses? If I was not before and I will not be again after death, then how can I be right now?" One cannot exist between two nothingnesses. Then this too must be a nothingness -- we have not rightly seen it.

MY SELF OF LONG AGO...

Before birth we were non-existent, no-self, and we shall be so after death again. Therefore we are in this condition at the present moment, without a thing in the world we can call our own -- not even our own selves. This goes to the deepest core of the problem.

Don't dispossess things -- dispossess your self, and then things are automatically dispossessed. If I am not, then how can the house belong to me? If I am not, then how can I possess a woman or a man? If I am not, then how can I possess a child? If I am not, then how is possession possible? There is nobody to possess. See the difference.

Other religions have said: Renounce possessions! Buddha says: Renounce the possessor. Certainly, it goes infinitely deeper. You can renounce the possessions, but the possessor remains, and with the possessor the blueprint to possess again -- the possessor will bring his possessiveness by the back door.

You can see it happening: a man renounces his worldly life, moves to a Himalayan cave, but then he possesses that cave. And if somebody else comes and starts living in the cave, he will throw him out. He will say, "Get out! This is my cave." And this man has renounced his house, his wife, his children. Now the same possessiveness has entered in a new form.

It does not matter what you possess, but if you possess then you remain on the Leaky Road.

Dispossessing things does not mean escaping from things. Things are there, they will be everywhere. In the Himalayan cave also things will be there -- the mountains, the trees -- and you can start possessing them. If you sit under a certain tree, you start possessing it. This is your tree; no other ascetic can come and meditate there; he has to find his own tree. Or you start possessing the temples, the mosques, the churches. Or you start possessing philosophies -- Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan. Or you start possessing scriptures -- the Gita, the Koran, the Bible. Or you start possessing concepts of God: "This is my concept of God. Your concept is wrong and my concept is right."

Buddha cuts the root. He says there is nobody to possess. Just see the beauty of it and the tremendous import of it. He simply cuts the roots. He does not cut the branches and the leaves; they will sprout again, because the roots remain intact. Cut the root and the whole tree dies. Don't drop possessions: drop the possessor. And then you can live in the world and there is no problem. Just live in the world and don't possess because there is nobody to possess.

That's why I don't say to my sannyasins to renounce the world. I say renounce the ego and live in the world. The world cannot do you any harm. All the harm that happens happens through the ego. That's what Buddha calls 'self'; it is his word for 'ego': ATTA -- the self.

MY SELF OF LONG AGO,
IN NATURE NON-EXISTENT...

Buddha worked for six years continuously in search of the self. You have heard the famous teaching of all the ages: Know thyself! Buddha worked hard. For six years he tried from every nook and corner, from every angle, from every possible side, to penetrate into this reality of the self. But he could not find it. Know thyself, and the day you know you will know there is no self.

That day you have known -- when you know that there is no self. There is utter emptiness inside, absolute emptiness, silence undisturbed, virgin silence. There has never been anybody. It is just a dream.

In the night you dream and you think you have become an emperor. And in the morning you find yourself in the same old bed, and you are not an emperor. But the mind can imagine; the mind is a great imaginative force. The self is mind's imagination. It does not exist in reality.

Those who have penetrated deep into their own being have come to know utter silence. Nobody has been found there. And that is the greatest realization: to find nobody there... then all problems disappear, because the problem creator has disappeared.

MY SELF OF LONG AGO,
IN NATURE NON-EXISTENT;
NOWHERE TO GO WHEN DEAD,
NOTHING AT ALL.

Nothing' means NO THING AT ALL. There is a famous Zen anecdote:

A man came to a Zen master and asked, "Does a dog have Buddha-nature?"

Now you cannot ask such a question anywhere else. If you ask a Christian, "Does a dog have Christ-nature?" he will be absolutely enraged. You are insulting Christ, the only begotten Son of God. This is not only profane, this is sacrilegious. But in Buddhism you can ask; there is no problem about it.

The disciple asked the master, "Has a dog the same nature as Buddha?"

And the master's answer is very strange and very puzzling, and down the centuries people have been contemplating it; it has become a koan to meditate over.

The master said, "Mu." means nothing. Now the problem is: what does he mean by saying MU? It can also mean no; it can mean nothing, it can mean no. Is he saying that the dog has not the same nature as Buddha? That is not possible from a Zen master. Then what does he mean by MU? He does not mean no -- he means nothing. He is saying: Buddha is nothing, so is dog. He is saying yes by saying no.

He is saying: Yes, the dog has the same nature as Buddha, but Buddha is nothing! so is a dog. There is no self, either in Buddha or in a dog. There is nobody there inside! Buddha is empty and so is the dog. Only the forms are different, dreams are different. The dog is dreaming it is a dog -- that's all. You are dreaming you are a man, somebody is dreaming he is a tree. But inside there is nobody -- pure silence.

This silence is samadhi. When you start having glimpse of this silence, your life starts changing. Then you live for the first time in a poetic way. Then death creates no fear in you. Then nothing can disturb you or distract you.

The master's reply, MU, really means yes. But he didn't say yes for a certain reason -- because the yes will be misunderstood. Then the man would have thought that the dog also

has the same self as the Buddha -- that's why he didn't use the word 'yes'. He said no. But he does not mean that the dog has not the same nature. He means both have nothingness inside. The form differs.

For a Buddhist, and particularly a Zen Buddhist, there is nothing profane and nothing sacred.

Listen to this story:

It was a solemn, dignified gathering of deeply concerned people assembled to learn the Truth. They had gathered, they believed, to hear the final secrets of the universe. At long last they were face to face with the Absolute, the Ultimate, finally, they thought, to hear the gems of wisdom for which prince and pauper have struggled since the beginning of time.

Imagine the dignity of it all, the solemnity, the air of expectancy that filled the room as The Master entered. An electrified hush descended. The room became a cathedral. Every eye was upon The Master and there were those who thought they saw his aura. There were those who saw angels hovering near.

The Master sat down and prepared to speak. The audience leaned forward and with bated breath prepared to catch his every word. Finally, after what seemed an interminable time, The Master of Righteousness opened his mouth and taught them saying, "Today, this very moment, I am wearing fuzzy underwear." And that was all that he taught that day.

Zen has a totally different approach towards life. It does not believe in the sacred, it does not believe in the profane. It does not believe in anything -- it is all one. Dog and God -- it is all one. Buddha, no Buddha -- it is all one. The ignorant, the wise -- it is all one. The sinner and saint -- it is all one.

WHEN ASKED, HE ANSWERED;
NO QUESTION, NO ANSWER;
THEN MASTER DARUMA
MUST HAVE HAD
NOTHING IN HIS MIND.

TRY TO GO INTO EACH WORD. Mind in its own purity is just a mirror, an empty mirror. It contains nothing. It is a mirror because it is empty, because only emptiness call mirror. If something is contained already, then your reflection will not be the true reflection. When the mirror is absolutely empty, it is the most perfect mirror.

In meditation the mind becomes more and more mirrorlike. Slowly slowly all the dust of the thoughts disappears, all the clouds of desire disappear... and then there is nothing left, ANATTA, no-self, nothingness, MU. Mind in its purity is just a mirror, undisturbed by passion and unclouded by thought. Everything appears AS IT IS.

Daruma -- Bodhidharma's Japanese name -- answered when questioned, ate when he was hungry, slept when he was tired. The true life of a sage. Nothing in the mind: nirvana.

Listen:

WHEN ASKED, HE ANSWERED...

The enlightened person has no ready-made answer. He has no thought ready to throw into your heads. He responds. His utterances are his responses. He is a mirror. The disciple comes in front of the master and he responds; he responds to the needs of the disciple. He has no

fixed idea. He is not concerned with dishing something out and giving it to everybody. He simply waits there like a mirror. You come and you see your face.

Hence the contradictions of a master. A teacher is consistent, a master is bound to be contradictory, inconsis-tent. A mirror has to be inconsistent: one moment it is mirroring a cat; another moment it is mirroring a man; another moment it is mirroring tears, another moment laughter. How can a mirror be consistent? You cannot tell the mirror: "Be consistent! Yesterday I saw tears in you, today I am seeing laughter. Yesterday I looked in you and you were sad, and today you look very happy. Yesterday I saw you were in deep meditation; today I see you are dancing and singing. This is inconsistent!"

Only a photograph can be consistent, not a mirror. The photograph is a photograph. If there are tears, they will remain there for ever. The photograph is dead; it does not respond. If a monkey comes, the photograph will go on showing its tears. If a sage comes, the same. But remember, with a master it is different. If you are a monkey, then the master will show your face; then his answer will be in response to your being. He responds. He does not reply, he responds.

WHEN ASKED, HE ANSWERED;
NO QUESTION, NO ANSWER...

That's why it happened that Kabir and Farid, two great Indian masters, met and sat together for two days continuously -- not a single word was exchanged. Two mirrors reflecting each other, what can they reflect? Just put two mirrors in front of each other: one mirror will mirror the other mirror, and so on and so forth... mirror and mirror and mirror, but nothing will be mirrored. There is nothing.

Two silences sat together, Farid and Kabir, looked into each other. There was no question, hence there was no answer. There was NOBODY, hence there was no response.

WHEN ASKED, HE ANSWERED;
NO QUESTION, NO ANSWER;
THEN MASTER DARUMA
MUST HAVE HAD
NOTHING IN HIS MIND.

Yes, that is the mind of a master -- he has nothing in his mind. To have something in the mind is to remain unenlightened. To have nothing in the mind is to become enlightened. Even if you have enlightenment in your mind, then you are not yet enlightened. To have nothing in the mind is to be enlightened. Remember it.

Let me repeat it: If you have the idea that you have become enlightened, then you are not yet enlightened. Even this idea is enough to keep you tethered to the road which leaks; even this idea is enough to keep you tethered to the world of desires.

Just the other day, somebody wrote me a letter. He thinks he has become enlightened, so he wants to come and shake hands with me. Shaking hands is perfectly good, but the very idea that you have become enlightened will keep you unenlightened. Wait... when you are ready, I will shake hands with you. You just wait, have a little patience. Let ALL ideas disappear, even the idea of enlightenment.

The day you come like a mirror, I will shake my BEING with your being -- why hands?! Hands won't do.

THEN MASTER DARUMA
MUST HAVE HAD
NOTHING IN HIS MIND.

Ordinarily, we are walking bundles of solutions to problems that no longer exist. Everybody is so. You are carrying thousands of solutions for problems which are no more existent -- and you call it knowledge. It is hindering your capacity to know. It is not knowledge.

Drop all the solutions that you are carrying. Drop all the answers that you are carrying. Just remain silent. And whenever a question arises, out of that silence you will hear the answer -- and that will be THE answer. It will not come from you, it will not come from scriptures, it will not come from anywhere -- it will come from nowhere and it will come from nobody. It will come from your innermost nothingness.

The other religions call that nothingness 'God'. Buddha often emphasizes the word 'nothingness' -- and significantly so, meaningfully so. Because once you use the word 'God', people start getting attached to it. Then they have some idea; they ask what God looks like. You cannot ask what nothingness looks like -- or can you? Once you have the word 'God', you start asking: "How to make the image? How to create a temple? How to worship? How to pray? What name to give to him?" And then there are many names and many images... and then the fight ensues.

That's why Buddha emphasizes the word 'nothingness' so much -- because it is really beautiful. It does not allow any games to be played with it. It does not allow itself to be corrupted by you. But if you understand rightly, nothingness means God, God means nothingness.

OUR MIND --
WITHOUT END,
WITHOUT BEGINNING,
THOUGH IT IS BORN,
THOUGH IT DIES --
THE ESSENCE OF EMPTINESS!

MIND HAS TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN TWO WAYS. One: Mind with a capital 'M'. That is the universal Mind, the cosmic Mind, the Mind of the whole -- the whole itself, the con-sciousness that pervades existence. It is a conscious existence. It is alive, alive to the very core. Everything is alive. You may know it, you may not know it. It may not be tangible to you, it may not be visible to you, but everything is alive. Only life exists.

And death is a myth. Death is an illusion. So is un-consciousness. Even the rock is not unconscious -- it is conscious in its own way. It may not be available to us, it may not be possible for us to know whether it is conscious or not, because there are millions of ways of being conscious; man's way is not the only way. Trees are conscious in their own way, and birds in their own, and animals and the rocks.

Consciousness can be expressed in as many ways as possible. This universe has infinities of every expression.

Mind with a capital 'M' is the cosmic Mind -- that has to be attained. That's what Buddha calls 'nothing', that's what he calls mirrorlike emptiness.

Then there is another mind that we go on talking about with a lower case 'm', the small mind. Then my mind is different, your mind is different; man's mind is different from the

trees' minds, and the trees' minds are different from the rocks' minds. Then there are differences. And each mind has its own limitation; it is tiny.

One has to disappear from the tiny to the infinite. The lower case 'm' has to be dissolved into the capital 'M'.

The lower case 'm', the small mind, is part of time, and the capital 'M', the cosmic Mind, is eternity. The lower case 'm' is also part of the capital 'M'. Eternity penetrates into time -- just as the moon is reflected in the lake; not really there, but reflected.

Our small minds are only reflections of the great Mind. When the moon rises, the full moon, millions of lakes on the earth will reflect it, and the seas and the rivers and the ponds. Wherever there is some water it will be reflected. But the moon is one and reflections are millions... so are our small minds. The Mind is one -- you can call it the Buddha Mind, you can call it the Mind of the whole, the cosmic Mind, or the Mind called God. These are just different names for the same reality.

This small mind has a beginning and an end. That great Mind has no beginning, no end.

Now listen to the words:

OUR MIND --
WITHOUT END,
WITHOUT BEGINNING,
THOUGH IT IS BORN,
THOUGH IT DIES --
THE ESSENCE OF EMPTINESS!

A very contradictory statement. On one side Ikkyu says: OUR MIND -- WITHOUT END, WITHOUT BEGINNING... HE IS talking about the Mind with a capital 'M'.

Then he says: THOUGH IT IS BORN, THOUGH IT DIES... now he is talking about the lower case 'm' mind, the small mind. The small mind is born and dies; the great Mind continues. The small mind is only a reflection; reflections are born and die.

As a reflection you are born and you will die. If you cling too much to the reflection, you will suffer. That's what suffering is, that's what hell is. If you don't get too much attached, if you are not clinging to the reflection... the body is a reflection, this mind is a reflection, this life is a reflection. If you watch it silently, you will be able to see all these reflections are passing -- and then you become aware of the mirror in which these reflections are passing.

That mirror is eternity. To attain to that mirror is to know what truth is.

ALL THE SINS COMMITTED
IN THE THREE WORLDS
WILL FADE AND DISAPPEAR
TOGETHER WITH MYSELF:

THE THREE WORLDS are the worlds of the past and the present and the future -- the world of time. The sutra is of great revolutionary meaning.

ALL THE SINS COMMITTED
IN THE THREE WORLDS
WILL FADE AND DISAPPEAR
TOGETHER WITH MYSELF:

The moment you know that you are not, then all that you have done in the past, are doing in the present, or will be doing in the future, has also disappeared. When the doer disappears, the doings have disappeared.

In the East, people have been too much concerned with karmas, actions. They have been very much afraid because whatever bad things they have done in the past, they have to pay for them, they have to suffer for them.

Ikkyu is giving you a great key: Don't be afraid -- because YOU ARE NOT, so you have not done anything! How can you do? because in the first place you are not. He is taking the very ground from underneath your feet -- with it, all disappears.

ALL THE SINS COMMITTED
IN THE THREE WORLDS
WILL FADE AND DISAPPEAR
TOGETHER WITH MYSELF:

So the only thing is to go deep into yourself and to see your nothingness. You need not do good things to weigh against the bad things that you have done. You are not to go and do good deeds -- because whether you do bad or good, you remain in the illusion of a doer. See the difference!

Ordinary religions teach you to be moral, do good, avoid sins. Remember those Ten Commandments -- they consist of the ordinary religion: Don't do this, do that. The extraordinary religion says: Disappear as a doer -- don't be bothered about doing good or bad. And who knows what is good and what is bad?

In fact, nothing is good and nothing is bad, because existence is one -- how can there be two? It is ALL one. Good turns into bad, bad turns into good; one never knows what is what. Things are changing continuously into each other. You can watch it...

You were doing something good, and something bad turns out. A mother tries to protect her child from all the bad things of the world, and just because she is protecting she is forcing her to go into them -- because she is creating the temptation.

Remember the old story: God said to Adam not to eat from THIS tree -- he created the temptation. He must have been a good father, he destroyed the child. Just by saying, "Don't eat from the Tree of Knowledge," he created the temptation and the desire, the irresistible desire, to eat from that tree.

Now, he wanted to do good, but what happened? The original sin happened.

All people who go on doing good prove to be very mischievous; the do-gooders are the most mischievous people in the world. The world has suffered a lot from them. Their intention is good, but their understanding is nil. And just a good intention is not going to do anything.

Those who understand, they say it is not a question of good and bad: it is a question of the disappearance of the doer. Or We can say it in this way: To remain as a doer is bad; to disappear as a doer is good. Not to be is virtue; to be is sin.

This is Buddha's understanding. All our doings are just dreams. When one becomes awakened, one simply starts laughing: all the bad, all the good, have been just dreaming. Listen to this story:

Once upon a time there lived a working man who detested coffee. His wife did not know this, however. He had never told her. She loved coffee very much and took great delight in packing a thermos of the stuff in his lunch box every morning.

He always carried the box and the thermos to work, but being a frugal man brought them home again in the evening, the thermos of coffee still untouched. Then, to save a penny, and because his wife loved coffee as much as he detested it, he poured the java back into the coffee pot when she wasn't looking. He was excused the evening coffee on the grounds that it kept him from sleeping well.

One night the wife dreamt that her husband was unfaithful to her. The next night she had the same dream. It angered her, but she said nothing. A week or so later, the dream happened a third time, causing her much jealousy and anguish.

"It is true," she thought. "It must be true. The worm is unfaithful to me!" So she set out to avenge herself. This she did by putting a pinch of arsenic in his thermos every morning until she killed herself.

At the husband's trial of acquittal, the judge said, "It is always the same: those who believe the dream murder themselves."

The greatest dream is that "I am" -- and that has become our suicide. Now it will look very paradoxical. The idea that "I am" has proved very suicidal. And if you disappear as a self, if you commit that spiritual suicide, for the first time you will start living. For the first time you will be born to eternal life. For the first time you will know something which is not of time.

And then there is nothing good, nothing bad. Then a man eats when he is hungry, sleeps when he is tired, answers when a question is raised. Then a person has no idea how to live -- then a person lives without mind. Then a person lives with nothingness in him, and this is the goal of Buddhism. To live as nothingness is nirvana.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Death in the Ego is Life in Love

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The first question

YOU SAID YESTERDAY THAT SCIENCE AND RELIGION ARE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE. IN THE WEST THERE ARE MANY SCHOOLS TEACHING SCIENTIFIC MYSTICISM, AND THE PATHS OF TANTRA AND YOGA

ARE ALSO VERY SYSTEMATIC. YOUR LITERATURE IS ALSO DEEPLY AND ARTISTICALLY RATIONAL. THERE SEEMS TO EXIST A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE RATIONAL SCIENCE AND THE IRRATIONAL RELIGION. PLEASE COMMENT.

THE BRIDGE IS POSSIBLE -- AND THE BRIDGE IS POSSIBLE only because they are diametrically opposite. The gap exists, so the gap can be bridged.

Opposites can meet, and they can meet only because they are opposites. Opposites attract each other. That's how the whole life moves, has dynamism. It is through polar opposites: man/woman, yin/yang, matter/mind, the earth and the sky, this and that. There is a constant bridging, but the bridging is possible only because they are opposites. If they are not opposites there is no need for any bridge.

So the first thing to be understood: science and religion ARE diametrically opposite, but to bridge them is possible. That bridge will not make them the same. In fact, that bridge will make their diametrical opposition more loud, more clear.

Religion can have a scientific flavour, it can be systematic, but it never becomes science, it remains mysticism. It takes the garb of a science, the methodology, the terminology of a science, but it remains mysticism, it remains poetry.

You can translate poetry into prose; the prose can be translated into poetry. Just by translating prose into poetry you will not make it poetry -- it will remain prose. And just by translating poetry into prose, it will NOT become prose, it will remain poetry. Buddha speaks in prose, but what he speaks is poetic.

I am not a poet. I speak prose, but what I speak is poetic, its soul is poetic. And it remains poetic.

Religion can use scientific systematization -- that's what Tantra and Yoga have done. Science can also use mysticism as a method to inquire into reality, and all the great scientists HAVE used it, but still it remains science. Its basic trust is in reason. Religion's basic trust is not in reason. On the periphery religion can become scientific, but at the core it remains irrational. And science, on the periphery, can become very very poetic, but at the core it remains rational.

Albert Einstein, or other great scientists, great explorers, are very much like mystics. Their search into reality is almost the same as the search of William Blake into reality. Einstein's eyes are full of mysticism, but deep down his trust is in reason. Even if he stumbles upon something through his poetic feelings, through his intuition, he will immediately translate it into reason. He will trust it only when it becomes rational.

And just the opposite is the case with a mystic: even if he comes to know something about reality which is very rational, he will transform it into the irrational, he will turn and change it into poetry.

They ARE opposites, but they can be bridged -- and they are always bridged wherever you can find a contradictory person. But then that man is going to be contradictory. He will speak two languages together and he will speak in contradictions, in paradoxes. All the great scientists are paradoxical, and all the great mystics also.

A master, whether of science or of religion, is bound to be paradoxical. He cannot be one-dimensional, he has to be in tune with both the realities -- but then he becomes very very difficult to understand.

That is your problem with me: I talk about the irrational, but I talk rationally about the irrational. I am ALL for the illogical, but my approach? -- I slowly slowly persuade you

towards the illogical through logic. I ARGUE for it. My argument for the illogical is bound to be logical, because no argument can be illogical in itself -- it has to be logical.

The other day I mentioned that in old scriptures it has been said that each temple should have at least one maithuna figure on the threshold of the temple -- at least one. If it can have many, good. A master is a threshold, a door, an opening. His feet are rooted in the earth and his hands are reaching towards the sky -- the master is the bridge between reason and irreason. The master is the bridge between religion and science, between love and logic. A master is a threshold -- hence he can convince you, he can use all logical argumentation, and yet his goal remains illogical. Once you are convinced, he throws you into the mysterious. It is a quantum leap.

I would like to say something more about that ancient tradition:

Mediaeval architects' manuals, all the manuals in India, make it a rule that all temples must bear maithuna sculpture s on their doorways. 'Maithuna' is a Sanskrit word -- very pregnant. It does not mean ordinary intercourse, it does not mean an ordinary couple in love -- it means UNIO MYSTICA. It means two persons so deeply dissolved into each other that they are no longer two. It is not just a couple making love -- it is LOVE, and the couple has disappeared into it. It is a state of being lost into each other, of oneness.

Other architects' manuals say that the temple has to be a meeting of the sky and the earth. The earth is visible, logical, material. The sky is vague, nebulous, undefined. The temple has to be a place where the defined meets the undefined. The temple has to be a place where the known meets with the unknown.

Man is logic, man represents logic, mathematics, sys-tematization, science. Woman is illogic, intuition, feeling, emotion, poetry; vague, undefined and indefinable. The maithuna figure represents this meeting of logic and illogic, of mind and heart, of body and soul -- of ALL the pairs of opposites of yin and yang. And when yin and yang meet and merge and become one, a temple is created. Love is the temple: orgasm, that state of orgasmic flow where you don't know who you are -- man or woman -- where you don't know any identity, all identity is lost, when you are in an utter state of forgetfulness AND remembrance... forgetfulness of all that you had known about yourself and remembrance of ALL THAT YOU REALLY ARE, forgetfulness as an ego and remembrance as a whole. That is the meaning of maithuna.

Maithuna means lovers in a deep state of oneness, in a state of inner marriage -- not just the outer marriage. You will be surprised to know that only man can come to that inner marriage -- animals can't. Have you ever seen animals making love? You will never find any ecstasy on their faces, in their eyes, never. Love-making is done as a matter of fact, as a biological phenomenon. They do it almost as a drag.

Biologists, physiologists, have agreed upon the fact that the female, except in human beings, has not known orgasm at all; no animal female knows orgasm. It is man's privilege to know orgasm. Orgasm means the inner marriage, even in man....

Ninety percent of women in the past have not known orgasm -- that means they never knew anything about the inner marriage. Their love remained biological. They were used by nature to reproduce, but there was no meditateness in it. My own observation is this: because of this phenomenon, all the old religions were against sex -- because sex represented the animal. But they were not aware that man can transcend sex -- and the transcendence can happen only through sex -- that man can attain to something inner through the outer. That which is not possible for animals is possible for man. Man can move in an orgasmic state, in an ecstasy, where sex becomes irrelevant, is left behind. Bodies become irrelevant, minds

become irrelevant. One plunges into the very depth of being -- for a single moment, of course, but God becomes available.

Maithuna means: love so deep, so tremendously deep, that a glimpse of God becomes available.

Maithuna means a couple which is no more a couple, a state of being a couple from the outside, but from the inside there is only one -- it exists all alone. For a moment the duality is surpassed, for a moment the harmony attained, the accord has happened -- hence, orgasm is so relaxing. And Wilhelm Reich is right: if man can become capable of orgasmic joy, then madness, all kinds of neurosis, psychosis, will disappear from the earth.

That is the experience of Tantra too. But to put a maithuna figure on the threshold of a temple took great courage. The very step was of deep revolution. Those people must have been courageous; they declared something by it. They said: It is only through love that the polar opposites can be bridged.

A master is love. A master is in a state of orgasm continuously. He is oneness. His duality is gone. He knows that only one exists. In that state, opposites can be bridged.

The couple entwined in deep love stands there on the threshold of the temple in a great ecstasy of oneness: lost, merged: one with something deeper and higher than both.

You have to fall in love with a master. The master is a threshold to God. You have to learn how to merge with the master, how to become one with the master. Only through that will you know the bridging.

They stand there possessed by the God called Love. And that's exactly the relationship between a disciple and a master: possessed by deep, immense love. It is non-sexual, it is non-physical -- but it is the same that is attained by two lovers. It is the same! The peak is the same. Two lovers move through physiology, through biology; they go through a long way to reach the peak. A disciple and a master reach to that peak immediately. They don't go roundabout; they don't pass through the body or the mind. That is the meaning of surrender, or SHRADDHA, or trust.

Their love opens the doors of a new perception, a new way of looking at reality. That new way of looking at reality bridges the polar opposites. They are passing from the ordinary to the extraordinary, from prose to poetry, from logic to love, from separation to unity, from the ego to the state of egolessness.

Have you not seen it happen? Deep in love, the ego disappears. You cannot find it. Hence I insist: while making love, remember always to look once at least when you are reaching to the peak -- look in. Is there any ego? And that experience can become a satori.

Ordinarily you don't look within. You become so engrossed with the fun of love, with the joy of love, that you forget meditation. If you can remember in that moment when you are dissolving, if you can remember to have a look within, you will never be the same man again. Coming out of love, you will come a totally new man. A new being is born. You will have new ways of perception and new ways of seeing reality.

Once seen, that the ego does not exist, you cannot gather that ego again. And even if you gather it, you will know it is false, it is pseudo. Now that understanding has penetrated deep into you.

The lovers move from time to timelessness. Observe: when the peak happens, time disappears. For one moment, time stops, the whole world stops, all movement stops. That stopping of all movement and time is what we mean by 'peak', the climax, the orgasm.

Time can stop with a master too. And it stops! -- it stops every day here to many people. For moments. You are just in tune with me. You are no more there, I am no more here We

both have disappeared. Something exists which is beyond both. You have entered the temple, you have bridged the polar opposite.

The reality cannot really be divided; it cannot be divided into logic and love, into time and eternity, into body and soul, into God and matter -- it cannot be divided. Although the polar opposites exist, they are not enemies, they are complementaries. They support each other: without the one, the other will not be possible.

Can you think of poetry if there is no logic left? Or can you think of logic if no love is left? They look opposite, yet deep down somewhere they support, they feed each other, they strengthen each other.

So, bridging IS possible, but it always happens through love. It always happens through a threshold. I call the master the threshold.

In a moment of love or trust... you are just here and now! the eternal now, the absolute here. You are on the doorway.

Remember, doorways are openings. Porphyry wrote: "A threshold is a sacred thing." A threshold is that which joins the opposites. What is a temple really? A threshold. It joins the world with the beyond; it joins the marketplace with meditation. That's why the temple exists in the marketplace -- it has to exist there.

That's why I insist: Don't renounce the world -- be there! And remaining there, search for the other and you will find it. It is hidden somewhere there in the marketplace. If you listen attentively, to the market noise, you will be surprised -- there is hidden music in it! Great music in it! Just drop liking and disliking. Listen attentively. Be en rapport with it. And everywhere in the known you will find the unknown, in the visible the invisible.

Porphyry is right when he says a threshold is a sacred thing. A threshold is the boundary between this and that, between two worlds, ordinary, profane space and the sacred world beyond. The threshold is the point where we pass from one mode of being to another, from one level of consciousness to another, from one reality to another kind of reality, from one life to another kind of life. To enter into a temple is symbolic of entering into one's own depths -- or heights. Existentially they mean the same thing. You can call it depth or you can call it height -- they mean the same thing. It is the vertical dimension.

There are two dimensions: the horizontal and the vertical. The threshold joins these two dimensions. The ordinary profane life is horizontal; the religious life is vertical. Let me remind you about the Christian cross: it is simply a representation of these two dimensions, the horizontal and the vertical. The cross is a beautiful symbol; the cross is a threshold. The cross is a bridge where the horizontal and the vertical meet, where the ordinary and the extraordinary meet.

And obviously, the most natural metaphor for opening and opener can only be the state of love-making. According to another ancient text: "Where cows have sported with bulls, accompanied by their young ones, or where beautiful women have dallied with their lovers, that place is an appropriate place for a temple."

A strange statement. Listen again. You will be shocked, particularly Hindus and Christians and Buddhists -- all will be shocked. But this comes from an old Eastern text. It says: "Where cows have sported with bulls, accompanied by their young ones, or where beautiful women have dallied with their lovers, that place is an appropriate site for a temple."

Strange, but tremendously significant. That's how it should be. A temple has to be a meeting, a bridging.

You ask: You SAID YESTERDAY THAT SCIENCE AND RELIGION ARE

DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE.

YES, THEY ARE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE, hence they are attracted towards each other as man and woman. They call fall in love. They are complementaries too -- all opposites are complementaries too.

IN THE WEST THERE ARE MANY SCHOOLS TEACHING SCIENTIFIC MYSTICISM, AND THE PATHS OF TANTRA AND YOGA ARE ALSO VERY SYSTEMATIC.

True, there is a way to teach scientific mysticism, but mysticism is always going beyond science. That's what I am doing here! I am teaching you logical illogicalness, scientific mysticism, worldly religiousness.

Remember it: whenever there is really something happening, there will be the paradox -- because the bridge will be needed. But still, mysticism is mysticism, science can be used as a device, but mysticism never becomes scientific. The ultimate flight remains unscientific, transcendental.

And Tantra and Yoga ARE very systematic -- but just on the way they are systematic. Once you have followed them long enough, they push you into the chaos, they push you into the chaos of existence where all systems have to be abandoned -- because all systems are tiny, because all systems are small prisons made by the mind.

A prison is very systematic. Have you not seen it? Have you ever gone to a prison? Just go to see... that's the MOST systematic thing in the world. Your house is not so systematic as the prison -- everything is systematic, every-thing follows certain rules, and absolutely. People get up early in the morning at exactly a certain hour, they take their breakfasts, they take their baths, they move almost like robots -- everything is systematic.

In fact, when everything is too systematic you are imprisoned, freedom is crushed. Freedom needs chaos.

A strange thing has been observed by psychologists. The strange thing is that in the army people are taught to be very systematic and their goal is to create war, their goal is to create chaos, their goal is death, to kill and to be killed. Their goal is to destroy -- their goal is Hiroshima, Nagasaki. But army people are absolutely systematic. The army lives in order to create disorder. Just see the complementariness: the army lives in order to create disorder.

And have you seen another polarity? Artists create order out of disorder, but they live very sloppy, lazy lives, very disorderly lives. If you see an artist living, you will start thinking of committing suicide. Just lousy! No system at all. You can go and see Chaitanya Hari -- when he goes to sleep, when he gets up -- there is no order. And he creates beautiful music, he creates order.

Artists create order, hence they have to complement it by disorder in their lives. And army people create disorder, hence they have to complement it by order in their lives. Things move in balance.

Buddhas talk VERY logically because their goal is illogic. And you can see modern physicists talking very illogically: the theory of relativity is illogic. The theory of uncertainty is illogic. Non-Euclidean geometry is illogic. Higher mathematics is illogic. They talk VERY illogically and they create logic, their goal is logic. They are moving towards order.

You will always find this balance happening. Life cannot be one-sided, otherwise it disappears. It needs day and night. summer and winter, birth and death; it needs love and hate

So I say: science and religion are diametrically opposite, but I am not saying that bridging

is not possible -- bridging always happens, continuously is happening. It happens from the side of science, it happens from the side of religion too. And when it happens, you have a great master, a Buddha or an Einstein. Whenever it happens you have the super phenomenon.

The second question

WON'T YOU SPEAK TO US OF DREAMS? I HAVE TAKEN TO DREAMING I AM DREAMING, OR TO LIVING THROUGH PAINFUL SITUATIONS OF THE PAST OR FUTURE AND DEALING WITH THEM DIFFERENTLY. SOMETIMES I WAKE IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT OR AFTER A SHORT SLEEP WITH SUCH A SENSE OF TERROR A VULNERABILITY, I FEEL I AM FIVE YEARS OLD. YOUR PRESENCE IS IN MY DREAM-CONSCIOUSNESS WITHOUT FAIL, EVERY DREAM SINCE I'VE BEEN HERE. WHAT ARE ALL THESE NEW DEVELOPMENTS? I KNOW YOU PLAY DOWN OUR DREAM-LIFE, BUT AREN'T THEY AS MUCH PART OF THE "WHO AM I?" QUEST?

SAVITA, WHETHER YOU ARE DREAMING or not dreaming, you are dreaming. Whether you are dreaming with closed eyes or open eyes makes no difference. You dream in the night, you dream in the day. There are night-dreams and there are day-dreams. You simply go on changing from one dream to another dream, one kind of dream to another kind of dream.

Listen.... You dream in the night, and then abruptly the sleep is broken, then you feel horror -- that too is a dream. Now you are dreaming of horror, of vulnerability, fear. Then you fall asleep again and you start dreaming. And in the morning you open your eyes and you start dreaming with open eyes. Dreams are a continuum. Your mind is made of dreams. Your mind consists of dreams.

Remember the one who is seeing the dreams. Awake to that witness. Don't pay much attention to the dreams.

That is where the East and West differ. The Western psychology is too much addicted to dreams, dream analysis; one has to go deep into dreams.

Savita is a therapist, a psychoanalyst, so obviously she must be feeling offended when I put down or play down your dreamlife. Don't feel offended -- this is a totally different approach. By analyzing dreams you will never come to end them. By analyzing dreams you may become a little more understanding about dreams, but awareness is not going to happen through it. By analyzing dreams you may even start dreaming better dreams, but better dreams are just dreams all the same. By analyzing dreams you may start feeling your motivations hidden behind the dreams, your repressed desires, your ambitions, but you will never come to know who you are. How can one come to know who one is by analyzing dreams? Dreams are objects and you are the subject. You have to take a PARAVRITTI -- a conversion; you have to move a hundred and eighty degrees. You have to stop paying attention to the dreams; you have to pay attention to the one who has been dreaming.

The East is concerned with the witness, not with what it witnesses. You may be seeing a real tree or you may be seeing a dream tree -- it makes no difference. For the Eastern approach it makes no difference whether the tree is real or just a dream tree. In both the cases it is the object, in both the cases you are not it. So what difference does it make whether it is there really or you have just imagined it?

The only thing that makes any difference is the one, the mirror, in which the tree is reflected -- true or untrue, that is irrelevant. But the pool of pure water in you where it is reflected... pay attention, emphasize the witness, go deeper into the witness.

And that's my purpose here in order to help you -- not to analyze your dreams. That you can do in the West in a far more scientific way. The West has become very very skillful in analyzing dreams. But the East was never worried because the East says ALL IS DREAM, SO what is the point of analyzing?

And there is no end. If you go on analyzing and the source that creates the dreams is there, it will go on creating new dreams. They will be coming and coming and coming.... That's why nobody is ever totally psychoanalyzed; there exists not a single person on the earth who is really and totally psychoanalyzed, because the goal of total psychoanalysis is that dreams should disappear. That does not happen. It didn't happen even to Freud or Jung. They continued to dream. That means they continued to remain suppressed; that means they continued to remain the same as they were before. Dreams were still coming, because the source had not been radically changed.

The projector is working and you go on analyzing the film on the screen, and you go on thinking how to analyze it. And then you differ, your analysis differs; and then there are schools of psychoanalysis. Freud says something, Jung says another thing, Adler still another, and so on and so forth. Now there are as many psychoanalyses as there are psychoanalysts, and everybody has his own opinion, and nobody can really be refuted -- because all is dream work,

Whatever you say, if you can say it loudly, convincingly, with authority, with argument, with logic, it appeals TO people -- it must be true. And they all seem to be true. ALL those interpretations seem to be true, because no interpretation is of any worth. All interpretations are wrong!

The East has a totally different kind of approach: witness -- don't analyze. In analysis you become too much interested, focussed on the dream. Forget the dream: just look at the watcher. That watcher is constant. In the night IT sees dreams; in the day it sees dreams. First you see the dream, Savita, and then you are awakened abruptly and you see horror. Then you fall asleep again and you may see a sweet dream, a beautiful dream, a happy dream, or a nightmare again... and this goes on and on. One thing is constant: the seer, the watcher, the witness.

Turn upon the witness. And that's what I am trying to say to you -- while you are dreaming in the day and when you are dreaming in the night, only one good point about dreams is that you say:

YOUR PRESENCE IS IN MY DREAM-CONSCIOUSNESS WITHOUT FAIL, EVERY DREAM SINCE I HAVE BEEN HERE.

That's good. At least one thing is constantly there which will help you to fall upon yourself. Emphasize that presence.

Gurdjieff used to say to his disciples, "Make one thing constant in your dreams and sooner or later you will get rid of dreams." And small things he used to give, small techniques, devices -- and they work! To one person he said, "Whenever you dream, just in the dream see that you are raising your hands above your head. And in the daytime also, practise this many times so you become very accustomed and habituated to it, so it becomes almost mechanical, so even in dreams you can raise your hand above your head."

And the man said, "What will happen?"

Gurdjieff said, "That, when you have become capable, come and tell me."

Three months passed and the man continued, day in, day out, walking, eating, whenever he would remember, he would raise his hand, and would remember also, "Tonight am going to raise my hand in the dream."

And then it happened after three months: one night he was dreaming that he was walking on a road and there was much traffic and noise, and suddenly he realized, and he raised his hand above his head -- and the dream was broken. And in THAT moment of dream gone, he suddenly saw himself for the first time -- the turning, the conversion. It was in the middle of the night. He danced, he was so joyous. And since that day, dreams disappeared.

And when dreams disappear, reality comes closer and closer every day. It is the dreams that are hindering you from seeing that which is.

When he came in the morning to see Gurdjieff, before he had told anything Gurdjieff said, "So it has happened -- because I see your eyes have a different, shine, a different light. They have clarity. That dream stuff that used to move behind your eyes is no more there. So it has happened! So you were capable of raising the hand! Now don't be worried: whenever it comes, again raise the hand.

Every possibility is that it may not come again, because at least you have done one thing consciously. Even in your dream, just a small thing of raising your hand, you remembered a small thing. It was very small, but remembrance is great. You remembered, even in your dream. So the witness has reached there -- now no need to worry."

I would like to say to Savita: Invite me more and more in your dreams. Let me also enjoy your dreams. Go every night with a very conscious feeling that I will be there in your dreams. Make it an alert effort, deliberate, and one day it is going to happen. It will not be just a dreamlike phenomenon. I will be really as present as I am now, or even more, because right now I can see there are dreams in Savita's eyes. If in your dream you can see me as I am even for a single moment, all dreaming will disappear.

Analysis is to no point. Dreams have to go. When dreams are gone, reality comes in. By one door, dreams go out; from another door the reality enters in. And reality is silent, quiet, peaceful, blissful....

The third question

WHY DOES IT FEEL LIKE YOU ARE DYING WHEN YOU ARE IN LOVE? IS FALLING IN LOVE A SUICIDAL DESIRE? OR JUST A SELF-DESTRUCTIVE INSTINCT LIKE THE LEMMINGS' MARCH TO THE SEA OR A MOTH'S FLIGHT INTO A FLAME? IT'S WEIRD.

LOVE is DEATH, but the one who dies in love has never existed really. It is the unreal self, the idea of an ego, that dies.

So love is death, it is suicide, it is dangerous. That's why millions of people have decided against love. They live a loveless life. They have decided in favour of the ego -- but ego is false. And you can go on clinging to the false and the false will never become real. So the life of an egoist always remains in insecurity. How can you make something unreal real? It is always disappearing. You have to cling to it, you have to constantly create it again and again. It is a self-deception. And it creates misery.

Misery is the function of the unreal. The real is blissful -- SATCHITANAND. The truth is blissful, and the truth is awareness. SAT means truth, CHIT means consciousness, ANAND means bliss. These three things are the qualities of truth. It is so, it is alert, and it is blissful.

Unreality is misery. Hell is that which does not exist but you create, and heaven is that which exists but you don't accept. Paradise is where you really are, but you are not courageous enough to move into it. And hell is your private creation. But because it is your creation, you cling to it.

Man has never left God. He lives in God, but still suffers because he creates a small hell around himself. Heaven need not be created -- it is already there; you have to relax and enjoy it. Hell has to be created.

Take life in a relaxed mood. There is no need to create anything, and there is no need to protect anything, and there is no need to cling to anything. That which is will whether you cling to it or not, and that which is not cannot remain whether you cling to it or not. That which is not is not, and that which is is.

You ask: WHY DOES IT FEEL LIKE YOU ARE DYING WHEN YOU ARE IN LOVE?

Because the ego, the unreal, dies. Love opens the door to the real. Love is the threshold of the temple. Love opens you towards God. It brings great joy, but simultaneously it brings great fear: your ego is disappearing. And you have invested so much in the ego. You have LIVED for it, you have been taught and conditioned for it. Your parents, your priests, your politicians, your education, your school, college, university, they have all been creating your ego. They have been creating ambition; they are factories to create ambition. And one day you find yourself crippled by your own ambitions, caged by your own ego. You suffer much, but the whole life you have been taught that this is valuable, so you cling to it -- you suffer and you cling to it. And the more you cling, the more you suffer.

There are moments when God comes and knocks at your door. That's what love is -- God knocking at your door. Maybe through a woman, through a man, through a child, through a love, through a flower, through sunset, sunrise... God can knock in millions of ways. But wherever God knocks, you become afraid. The priest, the politician, the parent, and the created ego -- it is at stake. It starts feeling that it is dying. You pull back. You hold back. You close your eyes, you close your ears; you don't hear the knock. You disappear back into your hole. You close your doors.

Love feels like death -- it is. And those who want to be really blissful have to go through that death, because the resurrection is possible only through death.

Jesus is right when he says you will have to carry your cross on your shoulders. You will have to die. He says, "Unless you are reborn, you will not see my Kingdom, you will not see what I am teaching to you." And he says, "Love is God." He is right because love is the threshold.

Die in love. It is far more beautiful than to live in ego. It is far more true than to live in the ego. Life in the ego is death in love. Death in the ego is life in love. Remember: when you choose ego, you are choosing real death -- because it is death in love. And when you choose love you are only choosing unreal death, because to die in ego you are not losing anything -- you had nothing from the very beginning.

That is the whole emphasis of Ikkyu's DOKA yesterday. You are not, so why be afraid?

Who is going to die? There is nobody to die! To whom are you clinging? Whom do you want to make safe? Whom do you want to protect and armour? There is nobody. There is only emptiness... emptiness... utter emptiness.

Listen to Ikkyu's song. Accept this emptiness and the fear will disappear. Be a moth when you find the flame of love burning bright -- be a moth! Jump into it... and you will lose the false and you will gain the real; and you will lose dreams and you will gain the ultimate. You will lose something which was not there and you will gain something which has always been there.

The fourth question

WHY IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIAN MAN AND WESTERN WOMAN NOT SUCCESSFUL? IT ALWAYS BREAKS AT SOME POINT. WHAT IS THE REAL PROBLEM WHICH COMES IN, WHICH STOPS THE RELATIONSHIP FROM GROWING MATURE? PLEASE SAY SOMETHING.

VEDANT BHARTI, all relationships break at some point -- have to break. You cannot make your house on the threshold, you should not. Love is a door: pass through it. Pass, certainly, don't avoid it. If you avoid it you will miss the deity in the temple. But you should not make your house on the threshold, at the door. Don't remain there.

The door is just an opening. You have to move!

Love relationship is a must, but not the destiny, not the end -- only the beginning. I am all for love. But remember: love is something that has to be transcended too.

There are two types of people -- both go neurotic. One type is those who are so much afraid of love because they are afraid of dying. They cling to the ego. They avoid love. They may call it religion, but it can't be religion -- it is just sheer ego and nothing else. That's why the monks -- the Catholic, the Hindu, the Buddhist -- they have such stronger egos, subtle but very strong, hidden but very strong. The humbleness is only superficial, is just a sugar coating on the poisonous ego. They have pious egos, but egos are there. And a pious ego is more dangerous than an ordinary ego -- because the ordinary ego is apparent, you can't hide it. But the pious ego is very hidden and you can carry it in subtle ways for ever and ever.

So this creates one kind of neurosis: people avoid love and they think they are going towards God. You can't go because you have avoided the door itself.

Then there is another kind of neurosis: seeing the beauty of love, taking the courage to jump into it, dissolving the ego for a few moments... because in love it can only be for a few moments. The ecstasy of love cannot be eternal, because it is ecstasy between two parts meeting, dissolving into each other. Unless you dissolve with the whole you can't have eternal ecstasy. Dissolving with the part -- with a man, with a woman -- you will be dissolving only in a very small drop of God. It can't be oceanic. Yes, for a moment you will have the taste, and then the taste disappears. This creates another kind of neurosis: people cling to love affairs. If love dies with one woman, they change to another woman, another man; they go on and on. They start living on the threshold. They have forgotten the deity, they have forgotten about the temple. Love has to be transcended into prayer.

Never be in the neurosis of the first kind, and never cling to the second kind of neurosis. Go on... move on.

A great emperor, Akbar, created a small, beautiful capital in India. It was never used

because before it was completed Akbar died. So his capital was never transferred to it from Delhi. The place's name is Fatehpur Sikri. It is one of the most beautiful towns ever planned -- and never used by any man.

Every small detail was looked into. Great architects of those days were consulted, great masters were consulted. Akbar asked all the great teachers in India of those days to give him a small sentence which could be written on the door, the passage. A bridge led to Fatehpur Sikri -- a river had to be crossed and Akbar had made a beautiful gate on the bridge. Some Sufi suggested a saying of Jesus, and he loved it. Many sayings were suggested, but He loved it and that saying was written on the door. That saying is beautiful. It doesn't exist in the Bible; it has come from another oral source. It says: Life is a bridge -- pass through it, but don't make your house on it.

Love is also a bridge -- pass through it.

So no love affair EVER succeeds. Gives you hope, gives you great hope, but always ends in frustration. That frustration is in-built; just as the ecstasy is in-built, so is the frustration. In the beginning it is ecstasy, in the end it is frustration. That frustration will lead you to go beyond, otherwise how will you go beyond? When will you search for the real deity in the temple if you cling to the door? If you think, "The door is enough and I am contented," then nobody will ever move.

Jesus says man reaches to God through love, love is God -- but this is only half of the truth. The other half is: man never reaches through love -- man reaches only by transcending love. When both are understood together, you have understood the phenomenon of love. Love is God and love is not God. In the beginning it is, in the end it is not. In the beginning it brings ecstasy, those honeymoon days, and then the frustration, the boredom that every marriage ends in.

Just think of two persons sitting together, bored. All has been explored and there is nothing to explore any more. This is the moment! Either you can start looking for another man, another woman, or you can start looking beyond love.

You have lived love, you have seen its beauties and you have seen its uglinesses; you have seen its joy, you have seen its misery; you have seen its heaven and its hell. It is not pure heaven, no; otherwise nobody will ever go to God. It is pure heaven and pure hell -- it is both. Hell and heaven are two aspects of it. In the beginning hope and in the end frustration.

Passing through that hope and that frustration again and again, one day the understanding arises, "What am I doing on the threshold? I have to go beyond!" And not out of anger but out of understanding one goes beyond.

So the first thing: no relationship ever succeeds. And it is fortunate that no relationship ever succeeds -- otherwise, when will you relate to God? Why should you think of God? Man thinks of God because love gives a glimpse. Man thinks of God because love gives hope. And man HAS to think about God because love gives frustration. All hopes turn into hopelessness.

Without love there will be no search for God because man will not have any experience of hope and meaning and significance and grandeur. Love gives you a glimpse of the beyond... don't cling to it. Take the hint of it, and search for something more, go on searching. Use love as a stepping-stone.

You ask: WHY IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIAN MAN AND WESTERN WOMAN NOT SUCCESSFUL?

So first thing: no relationship is successful, whether between Indian man and Western woman, or Western man and Western woman, or Indian man and Indian woman. It can't succeed; its very nature prohibits it. It feels it is succeeding, but it never succeeds. It comes very very close to success, but it never comes exactly to the point. It takes you on great journeys, but it never supplies the goal. It keeps your hope aflame, but just hope. But good, at least it takes you to the threshold. One step has been taken; half the journey is complete, but half the journey still remains.

And the second thing: it is more difficult between an Indian man and a Western woman, or a Western man and an Indian woman. The problem is not between man and woman, the problem is between Eastern and Western. Man and woman are just man and Woman; East and West make no difference. But the minds are there. Those minds create trouble.

The Indian has one kind of mind and the West has evolved a different kind of mind. So when an Indian man is with a Western woman, or vice versa, there is no communication. They don't speak the same language. It is not only that they don't speak the same language -- English, German or French or Italian -- they may speak the same language, still they don't speak the same language, because they have different kinds of minds. Their expectations are different, their conditioning is different. The Indian man says one thing and the Western woman understands another thing. The woman says one thing and the Indian man understands something else. Unless they drop the minds, unless they become pure man and woman, there will be great difficulty.

And Vedant Bharti must be asking this question out of his own experience. One night, eavesdropping on Vedant Bharti, I heard this dialogue:

Vedant Bharti: "Oh, my gorgeous, sweetest darling! Am I the first man you've ever been to bed with?"

And the American girl: "Of course you are! Why do all you Indians always ask the same stupid question?"

Different minds.... The Indian mind is very male chauvinistic. The Western woman is now a liberated woman; she lives in a totally different kind of milieu. She is not the woman you have lived with for centuries in India. It can't be possible now to possess a Western woman; she is no longer property -- she is as free as you are.

In India, the woman has been taken as property; man can possess her. Not only ordinary man -- even great men in India think of woman as a possession. You may have heard the famous story of Mahabharata. Yudhishtira, one of the very famous men in Indian history -- and has been thought to be very religious, he is known as DHARMARAJ, a religious king, or a king of religion -- playing, gambling, he even staked his wife. He gambled her, because it was thought that your wife is your property. He staked his kingdom, he staked his treasury, he staked everything; then only the wife was left -- he staked the wife too. And still in India he is thought to be one of the greatest religious men. What kind of religious man is this? Just to think of staking an alive person, gambling? But in India the woman has been thought of as property; you are the possessor, and the whole and sole possessor.

In the West that slavery is no more, it has disappeared. It is good. It has to disappear from India too. Nobody can possess anybody, man or woman. NO person can be possessed; no person can be reduced to property! This is ugly, this is sin! What can be a greater sin than this?

You can love a person, but you cannot possess. The love that possesses is not love -- it is ego.

In India, the man is very male chauvinistic. And the Indian woman has not yet asserted her freedom. There exists nothing like the lib movement in India. The woman still goes on living in the same way.

So when an Indian falls in love with a Western woman, the problem arises -- he starts possessing. And the Indian mind is very much obsessed with sex; that too creates a problem. You will be surprised when I say the Indian mind is very much obsessed with sex, because you think India is very religious and moral. Yes, it is, but its morality and religion are all so much based on repression that deep down is the obsession with sex.

If your woman just holds somebody else's hands, the husband is mad. Just holding hands! Holding hands can be just a simple gesture of friendship. There is no need to give any sexual colour to it, but the Indian man cannot think that. If his woman is holding hands with somebody else, that means she is sexually relating to somebody else. He will be in a rage. He will not be able to sleep. He would like to kill the man or the woman or himself. Something has gone very wrong.

In the West things are looked at in a different way. One can hold somebody's hand just as a sheer gesture of friendship, of lovingness, of sharing. It need not have any sexual overtone to it. Or, even if it has, it is nobody else's business. It is the person's freedom. A person has to decide his life, how to live, with whom to live. Nobody else can be the decisive factor, but that creates problems.

Just listen to this: in the West sex is not so important as people in the East think it is. Sex has almost become a sharing of energy, a loving play with each other, a fun. It no longer has that seriousness that it used to have in the past. In India it is still very very serious. And when something is serious, remember, ego must be involved in it. Ego is always serious; it makes everything serious. And whenever something is playful, that simply shows ego is no more involved in it. And ALL playfulness is good because it is liberation.

When you fall in love... if all Indian falls in love -- and here it is going to happen again and again -- when an Indian falls in love, he is falling very seriously. That is the trouble. And the woman may not think it serious at all. She may think it is for the moment. You appeal to her -- for the moment. There is no commitment in it; there is no tomorrow to it. But the Indian mind is bringing not only tomorrow -- the whole life. Or there are people who even think of other lives in the future. Those are hidden sources; you don't talk about them, but the clash is going to happen.

She has fallen in love with you because she enjoys loving; it is a beautiful experience. She has not fallen in love with you in particular -- she is in love with love itself. That is the difference. You are not in love with love itself -- you are falling in love with this particular woman. It is a life-death problem for you. If tomorrow she starts moving with somebody else, you will be mad. But you misunderstood. It was a gesture of the moment.

The American girl had just returned to New York from a holiday in England and was talking to her best friend.

"Mabel, I've been thinking about Keith ever since I left England. Now I'm back home and I don't think I should write to him as our friendship was only slight."

"But, Wendy, you promised to marry him!"

"I know, but that was all."

Marriage no longer has that seriousness that it has in the East. Marriage is just a kind of friendship -- nothing special about it.

If you don't understand these different minds it is going to be a difficult problem, communication will not be possible. Man in the East has always enjoyed freedom -- mm? -- they say "Boys are boys." But the woman has not been given any freedom. In the West now there is no discrimination. Man or woman -- both are free. And whatsoever man has been doing, now woman is also doing, it; she has every right to do it.

In the East we played a trick. The trick was that we placed woman very high on a great pedestal; we worshipped woman. That was a trick to imprison her. We satisfied her ego through worship. We said, "A woman is a goddess, a woman is purity. A woman is not of this earth. A woman has to be virgin before marriage and then she has to remain monogamous for the whole of her life." And we gave too much respect for this, and we conditioned the women so much for this, that they became addicted to the ego, and they remained on the pedestal. Imprisoned there, chains there! And man was enjoying all kinds of freedom. Boys are boys....

The woman in the West has come down from the pedestal. She says, "Either you also come up on the pedestal or I am coming down. We both have to exist on the same ground." And that's how it should be.

"I say, old man," said Clive to the host of the party, 'there's this rather delectable young chick whom I'm getting along with really well, if you know what I mean."

He walked and continued, "And I wondered if I might use your spare bedroom for a short while."

"No, I don't mind," replied the host. "But what about your wife?"

"Oh, don't bother about her," said Clive. "I'll only be gone a short time and I'm sure she won't miss me."

"I KNOW she won't miss you," stated the host. "It's only five minutes ago that SHE borrowed the spare bedroom!"

The male ego has never allowed that to happen. It has allowed itself all kinds of freedom; it has not allowed that freedom to the woman. Now things have changed in the West. Man and woman are standing on the same plane as human beings. The woman is no more a goddess, and she does not pretend and she does not WANT to pretend.

But the Indian mind is very much clouded by the past.

If you drop these minds, if you are just a man and a woman, then there is no problem. The problems arise out of the Indian mind and the Chinese mind and the American mind -- if you drop the minds then there are no problems. Then love can flow, and you can grow through it.

But still remember: no love can be ultimate satisfying. It can go a LONG way but it cannot go the whole way. Finally you have to go beyond it. Learn how to love by loving people, then one day use that learning to fall in love with the whole, with existence itself. Only that day have you come home.

The last question

NOTHING GOOD, NOTHING BAD. NOTHING TO GAIN, NOTHING TO LOSE. TAKE IT EASY. WITH THIS AS A REFERENCE, PLEASE EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN EPICUREAN HEDONIST AND A ZEN BUDDHIST.

THERE IS NONE. The Zen Buddhist knows it, the Epicurean hedonist does not know it. That's the only difference -- otherwise there is none.

Between the enlightened person and the unenlightened person there is no difference at all, not even a single inch's difference. The enlightened person KNOWS it, the un-enlightened person does not know about it -- that's all. The unenlightened person believes in the distance, in the difference, hence he creates IT. The enlightened person has come to know there is no difference. The belief has disappeared.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #3

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IF AT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY
THERE BE NO FINAL RESTING PLACE,
HOW CAN THERE BE
A WAY TO LOSE OURSELVES IN?

SHAKYAMUNI,
THAT MISCHIEVOUS CREATURE,
HAVING APPEARED IN THE WORLD,
MISLED, ALAS,
HOW MANY PEOPLE!

THE MIND --
WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT?
IT IS THE SOUND OF THE BREEZE
THAT BLOWS THROUGH THE PINES
IN THE INDIAN-INK PICTURE.

THE MIND REMAINING
JUST AS IT WAS BORN --
WITHOUT ANY PRAYER
IT BECOMES THE BUDDHA.

TELL A LIE,
AND YOU FALL INTO HELL.
THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BUDDHA

WHO CONTRIVED
THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST?

TRUTH IS NOT A COMMODITY THAT IS WANTED BY PEOPLE. They think they already know it. And even if they think they don't blow it, they think "Who needs it?" Their need is for more magic in their life, for more illusions, for more dreams.

The ordinary mind is constantly seeking new dreams, new sensations. In fact, it is afraid of truth. The truth may shatter its magic, it may shatter its desires, it may shatter the beautiful dreams that one has been going through.

Truth is not needed by people. The moment a person becomes interested in truth, he is no more part of the mob -- he becomes an individual. That very interest creates individuality. Otherwise, you remain part of the crowd; you don't really exist. You start existing only when you start searching for truth. But the search is arduous. It needs courage, it needs intelligence, it needs awareness.

Buddhism is no ordinary religion. It is not a religion of the mob -- it is the religion of rare individuals. It is not the religion of the mediocre -- it is the religion of those who are really intelligent. No other religion is so individualistic. And the paradox that Buddha says there is no self, the paradox that Buddha does not believe in individuality... but his religion is that of the individuals.

Just to be interested in what Buddha has said is a great adventure, because nobody before or after has been such a radical revolutionary.

Today's sutras of Ikkyu are of immense importance.

The first sutra:

IF AT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY
THERE BE NO FINAL RESTING PLACE,
HOW CAN THERE BE
A WAY TO LOSE OURSELVES IN?

You will have to meditate over it. Slowly slowly, the meaning will dawn into your consciousness.

First: there is no goal, so nobody can go astray -- let it penetrate your heart, let it pierce you like an arrow. There is no goal in life! so there is no way to miss it. All other religions depend on that; all other religions go on telling people "You are missing." That is the meaning of the word 'sin' -- to miss, to miss the target. The original Hebrew root means to miss the target; not being able to reach the goal -- that is sin.

According to Gautam Buddha there can be no sin. You can't miss it! because there is nothing to miss. The goal exists not; the goal is imaginary, it is your creation. You create the goal, then you create virtue and sin. Those who are moving towards the goal are virtuous, and those who are not moving towards the goal are sinners. You create the goal and then you divide humanity into saints and sinners. Drop the goal and saints disappear and sinners disappear and divisions disappear, and the higher and the lower disappear, and valuation disappears, and then there is no heaven and no hell.

See the point of it! Just the idea of the goal creates heaven and hell. Those who are moving towards the goal, the obedient people, the good people, they will be rewarded by heaven. And those who are not going towards the goal, the sinners, the bad people, they will be punished by hell. First you create the goal and then everything follows... then heaven and hell are created, then saints and sinners are created, and then fear is created -- fear of losing

the goal -- and then EGO is created, the ego of attaining the goal. You have created the whole mess, the whole neurosis of mind.

Buddha strikes at the very root: he says there is no goal. Just this simple statement can become a liberating force: there is no goal. Then one is not going anywhere. One is always here; one is never going anywhere. There is nowhere to go, and there is NOBODY to go. All has always been here, and all has always been available.

The goal means the future; then you start becoming more interested in the future, you start forgetting about the present. The goal creates tension, anguish, fear -- "Whether I am going to make it or not?" -- and competition and jealousy and conflict, and the hierarchy. Those who are coming closer to the goal are higher; those who are not coming closer to the goal are lower.

The whole Christian church depends on a single phenomenon disobedience. Buddha says there is nobody to command and there is no way to obey.

Life has no goal as such. Life itself is its own goal -- the goal is intrinsic. The value of life is in itself; it does not come from anything else. Life is not a means to some end somewhere in the future. Life is its own end, its own means. Life is all....

Once you understand this you cannot say life is meaningless.

Socrates started a certain idea in the West which has culminated in its logical perfection in Sartre. Socrates says: A life lived without meaning is not worth living. Now this is the seed -- from Socrates to Sartre this seed has been growing and growing down the ages in the West. Now Sartre says: Because there is no meaning, life is meaningless, not worth living at all.

Albert Camus says: The only problem that man has to solve is the problem of suicide -- the only metaphysical problem. Why? because he says life is meaningless, so why live? If Socrates is right, that a life is worth living only when it has some meaning, some goal, when it is moving somewhere, reaching somewhere, attaining something, achieving something... only then it is worth living. And if there is nothing to achieve and nowhere to go, then life is meaningless. Then why live at all? Why not commit suicide?

Buddha's understanding is totally different. He says: life is its own meaning. You need not create any other meaning -- and all created meanings will become just sources of anxiety. The rose blooming in the garden is not blooming for something else! And the river flowing to the ocean is not flowing for something else -- the flow is the joy. The flowering is the celebration.

You in love -- meditate over the phenomenon. Is the love leading you somewhere? Love is its own delight; it need not have any other goal. It is enough unto itself.

When you drop the idea of meaning and goal, a strange phenomenon happens -- the idea of meaninglessness also disappears. With the idea of meaning, side by side, parallel, runs another idea: the idea of meaninglessness. Buddha cuts the root. He says there is no meaning to be attained, hence there is no question of feeling meaninglessness. Life in itself is its value.

Ikkyu comments on this beautiful existential intuition:

IF AT THE END OF OUR JOURNEY
THERE BE NO FINAL RESTING PLACE,
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There cannot be. Nobody has ever gone astray! Adam has never left the Garden of Eden. He is still living in the Garden of Eden -- but he has become goal-oriented so he cannot see it. He has started thinking of the future. Because of that thought of the future, his mind is

clouded and he cannot see that which is around.

When you are too much future-oriented, you start becoming forgetful about the present -- which is the only reality.

These birds chattering... that faraway cuckoo... THIS moment!... this herenow... is forgotten when you start thinking in terms of achieving something. When the achieving mind arises, you lose contact with the paradise you are in.

This is one of the most liberating approaches: it liberates you right now! Forget all about sin and forget all about saintliness; both are stupid. Both together have destroyed all the joys of humanity. The sinner is feeling guilty, hence his joy is lost. How can you enjoy life if you are continuously feeling guilty? if you are continuously going to the church to confess that you have done this wrong and that wrong? And wrong and wrong and wrong... your whole life seems to be made of sins. How can you live joyously?

It becomes impossible to delight in life. You become heavy, loaded. Guilt sits on your chest like a rock, it crushes you; it does not allow you to dance. How can you dance? How can guilt dance? How can guilt sing? How can guilt love? How can guilt live? So the one who thinks he is doing something wrong is guilty, burdened, dead before death, has already entered into the grave.

And the person who thinks he is a saint, he cannot live either, he cannot delight either. Because he is afraid: if he delights he may lose his saintliness, if he laughs he may fall from his high posture. Laughter is mundane, joy is ordinary -- the saint has to be serious, utterly serious; he has to be a long face. He cannot dance, because dance may distract him. He cannot hold the hand of anybody; he may fall in love and attachment may arise. He cannot look at a beautiful woman or a man -- who knows, somewhere lurking in the deeper layers of unconsciousness there may be a desire, a lust. He cannot relax, because if you relax, your repressed desires will start surfacing. He has to repress them continuously! A saint is never on a holiday, cannot be, because the holiday means he will have to allow all that he has been controlling. A saint cannot relax, and if you cannot relax, how can you enjoy? how can you celebrate? how can you be grateful?

The sinner loses because of guilt and the saint loses because of the ego, the pious ego -- both are losers. And both are parts of the same game, partners in the same game, and the game is created by the goal. Give a goal to humanity and humanity will remain in misery. Goals are misery-creating.

The achieving mind, the constantly achieving mind, is the original source of all illness, of all disease.

Buddha says: There is nowhere to go -- relax. You can't miss in the first place -- relax. How can you miss? There is no target! Wrong has never been done. And so is right -- right has never been done. There is nothing right, nothing wrong. In fact, there is no doer -- how can you do wrong or right? There is no doer -- how can you be a sinner or a saint? Deep inside you are just a hollow bamboo and existence flows through you for no other motive than the sheer delight in flow.

Existence flows because it delights in flow. There is no utilitarian goal.

That's why I say religion can only speak the language of poetry. It cannot speak the language of arithmetic, it cannot speak the language of logic -- it can only speak the language of love. Logic is always goal-oriented; arithmetic is always goal-oriented. Watch the roseflowers and the grass leaves and the rivers and the mountains, live with nature, and slowly slowly you will see nothing is going anywhere. Everything is moving, but not in any particular direction to a particular goal.

Movement is delight.

That's what William Blake, one of the great mystic poets of the West, says: Energy is delight.

If there is no way to lose yourself, no way to sin, no way to become a saint and no way to feel guilt, the so-called religion disappears, the church becomes meaningless, the dogmas and the rituals lose all significance. Then LIFE becomes religion, and then there is no other religion beyond life, other than life. Then life becomes the only scripture. Then life becomes all that is there.

Live and know, live and feel, live and be.

The religion of Buddha is a religionless religion, and Zen is its culmination. Zen is its fragrance. What was seed in Buddha has become a fragrance in Zen. Zen is the pure essence of Buddha's heart. What this man, Gautam Siddhartha, realized, what this man came to see, has been expressed by Zen in its uttermost beauty. It rarely happens.

Ordinarily what happens is: Jesus comes and he himself is the greatest expression of what he has experienced. Slowly slowly, the followers are less intelligent, more mediocre.

And by the time the church has become established, it has become part of the mob, of the crowd, of the lowest -- lowest in intelligence, awareness, love. It has lost its glory. It has lost its snow-capped peaks. Now it moves in the dark valleys.

With Buddha totally different phenomena happened. He was one of the most fortunate masters of human history, because what he found has been going on higher and higher in its expression, in its poetry, in its rhythm. In Zen it has come to its uttermost flowering. Zen is pure essence, just fragrance. Only those who are REALLY intelligent will be able to understand it; otherwise, the mediocre will feel offended -- even mediocre Buddhists feel very offended.

Just listen to Ikkyu's words.... The mediocre man cannot find any security in them. He lives through goals -- the mediocre sinner and the mediocre saint, both live through goals. Only an absolutely intelligent person can live without goals; only intelligence can live herenow. Only intelligence can live in the moment, without bringing anything from the outside.

Jesus says: Look at the lilies in the field -- they think not of the morrow, they toil not. And yet even Solomon, attired in all his costly clothes, was not so beautiful as these poor lily-flowers.

What is so beautiful in these lily-flowers? Solomon is not so beautiful with all his kingdom and riches. Even he was not attired in such grandeur, in such splendour as these poor lily-flowers. What is SO beautiful in these flowers? They live in the moment, they think not of the morrow.

A man of absolute intelligence becomes a flower. He lives herenow. He has no past and he has no future. And because he has no past and he has no future, you cannot say that he lives in the present either, because present is just a midway station between the movement that happens from past to future. The present is just a station on the way. When past and future disappear, present also disappears. What is left is a timelessness. Now is a timeless moment. It is eternity -- and Buddha calls it meditation.

If guilt disappears, religion disappears. And guilt disappears if goal disappears. Guilt is a shadow of the goal.

Now, Christianity won't like it, Islam won't like it, Hindus won't like it -- they all live on the goal. They will not like this flight to the beyond; they will not like this poetic, aesthetic religion. They have become accustomed to a very ordinary religion, businesslike; it is part of

their marketplace .

Buddha is very wide-winged. He goes to the farthest sky. And he wants you to come to those heights of being, depth of being. AND THEY ARE ALL AVAILABLE NOW! So remember again and again: he is not giving you a goal somewhere in the future -- he is simply making you aware that all that you need is available now. Nothing more is needed. Nothing more will EVER happen, nothing more can ever happen. If you want to live, all is happening now -- become part of it, dissolve into it. And to help you dissolve into it he emphasizes that there is no self, because if there is a self you cannot dissolve. You can dissolve only if there is no self.

With ONE stroke of his sword, Buddha makes all religions disappear -- the priest, the saint, the sinner, the commandments, Adam and Eve, the disobedience, the original sin. With one stroke of his sword they all disappear, they are annihilated Man is left alone -- and nature. And because there is no self inside you, there is no division between inside and outside; there is no boundary between outside and inside. Outside is inside, inside is outside.

That's why a strange paradoxical statement has been made by Zen people: samsara is nirvana -- THIS very world is enlightenment, this very earth is the lotus-land of Buddhas, and this very body the Buddha.

SECOND THING: this understanding has not to be practised. You cannot practise it, because practice implies the goal. This understanding either is there or is not there. There is no methodology to practise it.

Practising means you are again thinking to do something tomorrow, or at least you can do it tomorrow and you can reap the results tomorrow. But the tomorrow has entered somewhere deep in your unconscious, it has come back. No practice can give you this understanding. THIS understanding is not a question of practice -- this understanding is only a question of understanding.

So it was not accidental that Buddha and his teaching were destroyed in India, because the mediocre mind could not tolerate him, his insight: it was too much. They could not understand it. They wanted some methodology to be given, to be practised, and Buddha was talking of pure essence. And he says right now is deliverance.

And a very strange phenomenon happens: if there is no sin and no saintliness, whatsoever you have been doing starts changing -- not that you change it. In fact, to commit a sin, first it has to be a sin. Go deep into it... The temptation of a sin is because of the denial. The joy of committing it comes because it is a sin. If it is no more a sin, the very temptation disappears.

If Adam had not been told: Don't eat from this Tree of Knowledge, he would never have bothered about it. The very commandment created the temptation.

Watch your own mind, how it functions. If it is said about something, "Don't do it!" a great desire to do it arises. One feels offended by the commandment. One wants to rebel; one wants to assert oneself. One wants to say, "I am myself, and I will do my own thing, and I am not going to listen to anybody."

Each child passes through that stage, and each man and woman is stuck in that stage. Whatsoever your parents have been telling you not to do you have been doing. In fact, by their telling you constantly not to do they are creating temptations. Freedom is very non-tempting, remember it. If the world has freedom to do things, sins will disappear of their own accord; there will be no need to make them disappear.

And man has tried down the ages to make them disappear and has not succeeded. But the same stupid, vicious circle continues. Again and again man has tried to force laws on people,

and the more those laws are enforced, the more people become rebellious. They have to become rebellious, because that seems to be the only way to protect their freedom, their being. Otherwise, they will be turned and reduced to slaves.

Adam did well; otherwise he would have been in paradise, but a slave. What is the point of being in a paradise AND a slave? That doesn't appeal to the dignity of your inner consciousness. It is better to be in hell but to be oneself; it is better to suffer but to be. It is better to suffer and to go to the very end of suffering, but not to lose one's ground, one's freedom, one's dignity.

Adam did well. If he had lived in paradise and had not rebelled and had not eaten the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, he would have been an impotent person, he would have been spineless, he would have been bloodless, he would have been dead. He did well. He came out; he risked, he was courageous. It was worth losing that paradise for freedom's sake.

And this happens to everybody, and the society has not yet understood this simple phenomenon. People go on prohibiting: Don't do this! Don't do that! And the same commandment creates a great urge to go against it. Sins exist because of the saints.

I have heard:

A small boy saw a small girl carrying an apple. He told the girl, "Would you like to play a game with me?"

The girl asked, "What game?"

He said, "Adam and Eve."

The girl said, "Good -- what has to be done then? "

The boy said, "You tempt me, you say, 'Don't eat this apple!' and I will eat it."

The human mind functions that way.

Buddha says: If goals disappear, virtues and sins will automatically disappear. And people will be transformed! because there will be no temptation to do anything, because there will be no commandment. Just see the point of it. Just watch that inside you. What have you been doing?

My own observation of thousands of sannyasins is that they are still fighting with their parents, continuously. Their deep problem is: their parents have told them not to do something if they do it, they feel guilty; if they don't do it, they feel they are not free. Either way they are in a trap, and they go on fighting.

A man becomes free only when he is no longer reacting to his parents, when those parental voices have disappeared from consciousness, when they have no more impact this way or that, when they no more create for or against in you. When you are almost able to ignore them, to be indifferent to them, you have become a mature person.

People ask me: "What is the definition of a mature person?" The person who is free of his parents is a mature person.

Jesus is right when he says to his disciples: Unless you hate your parents, you will not be able to follow me. Now, a man who preaches love saying that looks very absurd -- but he is right.

My own feeling is that the word 'hate' is a mistranslation from the Hebrew. I don't know the Hebrew, but I know Jesus. That's why I say it MUST be a mistranslation. He must have said: Be indifferent, ignore. Don't be attached any more. He must have used some term which means 'be detached' from your parents, because the word 'hate' cannot be used for many reasons.

One thing: if you hate your parents, you are not yet detached, you are not free. Hate means you are against, so they will control you still. They will control in a subtle way: you will go on doing things that they wanted you NOT to do. because you hate them. Your parents were saying;, "Don't smoke," and you will go on smoking because you hate them. This is the way you show your hatred. But you are attached, you are still connected. You have not been able to disconnect yourself. You are still tethered; you are still holding the apron string of your mother. You are still childish.

Neither love nor hate -- the parental voice has to disappear. You have to just watch it disappearing.

Buddha goes even further. He says: Unless you kill your parents... unless you KILL your parents.... He does not mean that you have to murder them actually, but deep inside you have to murder them. You have to drop them. You have to forgive and forget. Don't react to your parents' voice inside you.

And a modern trend in psychoanalysis -- transpersonal psychoanalysis, transpersonal psychotherapy -- will agree perfectly with Buddha and Jesus. Once you are free from the goal, the guilt, the ego, you suddenly lose all temptation.

It happened once:

A young man wanted to commit suicide. He was my friend. His parents were very much worried. He closed himself in a room; his father came running to me. First they tried to persuade him to come out of the room, but he wouldn't listen, he wouldn't answer. The whole neighbourhood gathered there; they were all trying to persuade him. He stopped talking to them; he became quiet, absolutely quiet. They would knock on the doors and he would not answer. There was great fear: "Has he committed suicide? or is he going to commit? or what is happening?" There was a panic.

The father came to me and said, "You come -- something urgently needs to be done. His life is in danger."

I went there and they were crying. The mother was crying -- he was the only child. The father was crying and the friends had gathered. The whole neighbourhood was there. I went to the door, I knocked on the door and I said, "Listen, if you really want to commit suicide, this is no way. Why gather such a crowd? Why make so much fuss? I have brought my car. I will take you to a beautiful place on the Narmada River -- you can jump from there."

He opened the door; he looked at me with very suspicious eyes. He could not believe it! I said, "You come with me."

He came with me. I asked him, "Would you like to do anything before you commit suicide? Any food -- some Italian dish, spaghetti? Or something else? Would you like to go to some movie? Would you like to see your girlfriend, or anything! -- mm? -- because this is your last chance. And I have other things to do also, so you just finish soon. I want to be back home by twelve o'clock in the night. So eleven we will leave, you take the jump, I say goodbye to you -- and it is finished! Why make so much nonsense? And this is not a place to die, in the marketplace."

And the place where I used to live, Jabalpur, it has a beautiful spot. If anybody wants to commit suicide, I have never come across a more beautiful spot. For three, four miles, marble hills, just marble hills, and between those hills flows the River Narmada. People say there is no other place in the world so beautiful. Taj Mahal is nothing. It is unbelievable. When you go into it on a full-moon night on the boat, you cannot believe your eyes that such a thing can exist .

Many times when I took people for the first time, they could not believe. One of my old teachers went with me, and he started crying and he said, "I would like to touch and feel the rocks, because I cannot believe that they are. This is more beautiful than any dream I have ever seen."

So I said, "In such a marketplace, trying to die? Come on!"

By and by -- and he was just listening to me and he was not saying yes or no -- he said, "I have nothing to do, but I am very tired. I would like to sleep for a few hours."

I said, "Okay, you sleep in my room. I will also sleep and we can fix the alarm and we will go."

So I fixed the alarm, and I saw he could not sleep. He was turning and tossing, and when the alarm went off he immediately put it off. And I said, "What are you doing?"

He said, "I am very much tired!"

I said, "Tired I am not -- that is my problem because I will have to come back too. You will be finished once and for ever. These are not questions a dying man has -- tired, this and that. What is the point of being tired or rested? You just get into the car!"

He became very angry and said, "Are you my friend or my enemy? I don't want to commit suicide! Why are you forcing me to commit suicide?"

I said, "I am not forcing -- you wanted to commit. I am simply a friend and helping; I am simply co-operating. If you don't want to commit, that is your business. But whenever you want to commit, come and I will be here!"

And he never came. Not only that, he started avoiding me. I have not seen him for years.

Temptation comes out of denial. All those people clamouring and shouting and crying and weeping would have helped him to die; they were tempting him. He was getting more and more into the idea. When so many people are saying no, it is very natural to get tempted.

Just watch inside yourself: what have you been doing? Are you still fighting with your parents? going against them? doing something that they never wanted you to do? doing something that they were very angry with? Are you fighting with your priest and your politicians? Then you will remain in their power.

Buddha says: Once the denial disappears, the temptation also goes with it. Temptation is a shadow of the denial.

So remember, don't think that Buddha is saying go on committing suicide, go on committing sins, go on doing this and that. He is simply saying: Understand it! And through understanding you will simply see that life takes a new turn, a transformation happens. You start living in a totally different way you have never lived before. You start living silently, joyously, celebrantly.

The second sutra

SHAKAMUNI,
THAT MISCHIEVOUS CREATURE,
HAVING APPEARED IN THE WORLD,
MISLED, ALAS,
HOW MANY PEOPLE!

THIS CAN BE SAID ONLY BY A ZEN MASTER. It is said in utter respect and love. Shakamuni is the Japanese name of Gautam Buddha. Now, Ikkyu is a follower of Gautam Buddha, in tremendous love with Gautam Buddha, a Buddha himself. Now, very jokingly he

says:

SHAKAMUNI,
THAT MISCHIEVOUS CREATURE,
HAVING APPEARED IN THE WORLD,
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What is he saying? Christians can't understand it, Hindus can't understand it. This is a totally different language -- a language of love, a language of understanding. Buddha will understand; Ikkyu knows that. Others who are Buddhas will understand it; Ikkyu knows it. It can be said.

He is saying: There is no goal, there is no way, then what were you teaching to people? If there is no goal and nobody can go astray, then what were you doing for forty years continuously, guiding people? You mischievous person, having appeared in the world... in the first place there was no need for you to appear in the world, because Buddhists say -- traditional Buddhists, not Zen Buddhists -- Buddhists say Buddha appeared in the world to guide people to salvation. Ikkyu is referring to that.

Buddhists say Buddha appeared in the world to guide the ignorant towards enlightenment. Ikkyu is saying: What nonsense! Buddha says there is no goal, there is no ENLIGHTENMENT, there is nowhere to go -- why did he appear in the first place? And for forty years teaching people, naturally, IS mischievous -- because ALL guidance is misguidance. There is nowhere to go, then what point of guiding?

SHAKAMUNI,
THAT MISCHIEVOUS CREATURE,
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HOW MANY PEOPLE!

And millions and millions of people have been following Buddha. They have not understood. If they had understood they would have become Buddhas, not followers.

And, being with me, you have to remember that. Become enlightened -- don't try to become enlightened. Trying is missing the whole point. I am not here to guide you. I am here to take all guidance away. I am not here to Lead you into some other world. I am here to make you aware that there is nowhere to go and there is nobody to lead and nobody to be led.

Seeing the point, a laughter arises, and that laughter is enlightenment. Seeing the point, one relaxes -- that relaxation is enlightenment.

Jokingly, Ikkyu is teasing the master. He is saying:

SHAKAMUNI,
THAT MISCHIEVOUS CREATURE,
HAVING APPEARED IN THE WORLD,
MISLED, ALAS,
HOW MANY PEOPLE!

See the beauty of it, the love and the tremendous respect. If some Christian says such a thing about Jesus -- 'mischievous creature' -- all Christians will be very much offended. That person will be immediately, excommunicated from the church; he will be condemned as a

sinner. You can't call Jesus a mischievous person -- because you have never loved him so deeply. You are afraid. Love is not afraid. You have not really respected Jesus. You are afraid if you say such things, your respect will be destroyed. But Ikkyu knows the respect is so deep that it can't be destroyed by anything. He can burn Buddha on a cold night -- no fear arises. No Christian can do that, no Hindu can do that, no Jain can do that. That simply shows there is some fear: you are afraid it may be disrespectful. But the fear arises only if you have some disrespect somewhere.

Ikkyu is so certain, so absolutely certain, so unhesitatingly certain -- that's why he can burn Buddha, and he can tie Buddha to a pole and can say to him, "Now you cool yourself."

There is no goal, there is no way -- and Buddha taught the way? There is no way to be there BUT to be there. And, moreover, there is no there either, but only here. All leadership is misleading, and to guide is to misguide. Buddha was not a guide and Buddha was not a leader.

Neither am I a guide. I am simply sharing my understanding, not guiding you. If you love me, if you love this moment of sharing,, you will see a few things -- immediately! You need not wait for tomorrow, because all that happens, happens now. The trees are green now, and the birds are singing now, and the rivers are flowing now, and I am speaking now -- and you are thinking to get enlightened tomorrow? Now or never.

It is a sharing! It is not guidance. There is no way so there cannot be any guide, and there cannot be any guidebooks either.

The master is one who guides without guiding and leads without leading -- who simply shares his understanding, his being, his love; who makes himself available to people who are ready to see, who are ready to open their eyes, who are ready to open their hearts. I am available -- if you are also available to me, then something is going to happen THIS moment! Then something is already happening. In that availability between the master and the disciple, something is immediately transferred, some transformation happens.

One cannot get out of illusion, because illusion is that which is not. You have never been in it! See the point and you are out of it -- the goose is out! The great illusion is to think that there is illusion.

THE MIND --
WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT?
IT IS THE SOUND OF THE BREEZE
THAT BLOWS THROUGH THE PINES
IN THE INDIAN-INK PICTURE.

IKKYU HAS EXPRESSED IT PERFECTLY WELL. What is this mind, this illusion in which we are living? What to call it? The mind is not something AND it is not nothing -- it is something between the two. It is not real, otherwise you could not get out of it. It is not unreal either, otherwise it would not have been there. Then what is it?

THE MIND --
WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT?

It is just in between the two. It is unreal and appears as real -- it is an appearance. You see.... One evening, the Sun has SET and it is darkening. The night is descending, and in a forest on a footpath you come across, you see a rope. But you don't see the rope, you see a snake. The rope is there, but the rope has triggered the idea of a snake in you. Many things

must have contributed to it. You were afraid; it was getting dark and you are not yet home and the forest is dangerous, and the animals and snakes and lions and who knows? -- and ghosts. And when you are alone in a forest all kinds of things start becoming, taking shape in your mind. And out of that fearing mind you see a rope, but you can't see the rope. Your eyes are so full of fear, ideas, imaginations -- you see a snake. And maybe the wind was blowing and the rope had shaken a little bit, was trembling. And you start running away, and you scream, and you are in danger.

So is the mind! A rope not seen as rope -- a rope seen as a snake is the mind. One has to come closer to the snake to see what it actually is. That's what meditation is all about. Come closer to the mind, become a witness, watch it. Watch silently. Don't analyze -- just watch. Look into it, what it is, what is happening. And sooner or later you will see there is only a rope, no snake. The moment the rope is seen, the snake has disappeared. Then you will not ask, "What am I going to do with the snake now? Should I kill it?" That question is meaningless.

This is the situation of the mind. We have not seen it clearly, we have not seen it from a closer viewpoint. We have not seen it through awareness, alertness. We have not watched it.

THE MIND --
WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT?
IT IS THE SOUND OF THE BREEZE
THAT BLOWS THROUGH THE PINES
IN THE INDIAN-INK PICTURE.

A beautiful illustration: fragile Indian-ink on a fragile Japanese rice-paper, and pine trees and wind blowing.

Have you seen Zen paintings? No other style can paint breeze. For that, that fragile rice-paper is needed and the fragile Indian black ink, and the Zen master to paint it because he knows the mind. Just an idea -- but you can see in the painting the breeze blowing and the trees bending and the river has ripples. And a small, small human figure, and his clothes are also showing the wind; you can see the flow of the wind. The wind can't be seen, but you can see the impact of the wind. It is not unreal, it is not absolutely unreal, otherwise how can you see it? It is not real either, because how can it be real? -- it is just an ink painting. So it is somewhere between the two -- it is MAYA, it is magic, it is illusion, it is dream.

So don't fight with the mind and don't flee from the mind either. In both the cases you have taken it for granted that it is real. There are two types of people: those who follow the mind -- they have taken it as real -- and those who either fight or flee; they have also taken it as real. There is no need to follow it, there is no need to fight or flee. All that is needed is to look deep into it.

A deep look, and you see the pine trees bending in an ink painting. The breeze is just a painted breeze; nothing is real there, nothing is really happening there. Have you not seen your mind as just a movie, millions of pictures moving?

Aldous Huxley has imagined in some future century that movies will change into feelies. It is possible, and it is going to happen, because whatsoever a man once imagines sooner or later becomes a reality. A feelie is going to happen. A feelie means you will be sitting in a movie house, but you will not only see, you will also feel.

For example, it is raining... then you will feel the wetness in the air, the wind blowing, even a few drops of water coming to you. You see on the screen a rose-garden and the whole house will become full of rose fragrance. If the film is three-dimensional and it creates all the

sensations that are moving in front of you, it will create more illusions.

And it can be done in such a way... that too is possible. In Disneyland they have some place like that -- where the screen is not only in front, but the screen is all around you. You are sitting just in the middle, just as you are sitting here in the middle. If you look at the back, you see the trees. If you look at me, I am here; if you look at the side, the people. You are sitting in the middle and the screen is all around.

They have made a few films, experimental. For example, you are flying in an aeroplane and you look out of the window this side and you see the clouds and the sun setting, and you look from the other side and it is darkening, and you look at the back and you see the clouds going further away, back, and you look ahead and you are reaching into something else.... And if you smell also, then the reality will become more and more real. It can almost take the grip of you absolutely; you can forget for a few moments that what you are seeing is just a movie or a feelie. You can be lost.

And this is the situation we are in -- this is what mind is. Mind is a feelie. It is simply making many dreams available to you, but in three dimensions, with all the feelings.

Just think: it is possible one day, sitting glued in the chair before your TV, you see a beautiful woman walk out of the TV, hug you -- and you know this is just a feelie... this is possible! This is going to happen. And you know deep down that this is just nonsense, there is nobody. But still, you can smell the woman, the French perfume. You can even touch her, the curves....

How can you protect yourself? This is possible; this is not impossible. This is going to happen. Theoretically it has become possible; now practically it is going to become possible. Then you may be lost for a few seconds in a great love affair. You will forget -- you would LIKE to forget. Who wants to remember the truth when such a beautiful woman is there? You say, "Okay, let it be a dream or whatsoever it is, but let me enjoy right now." And she is hugging you and you can feel her all over your body. And still deep down somewhere a consciousness goes on saying that this is just a feelie, there is nobody.

This is what happens to a meditator. A meditator will till love a woman, but he knows this is a feelie. He will hold hands and will know... who knows whether there is anybody or not? Because there is no way to prove that somebody else exists outside you. In a dream you think whatsoever you are seeing is true; in the morning it is not true, no more true. Now, is there any way to say, right now, whether you are seeing me in a dream or in reality? It may be just a dream! You have fallen asleep and you are dreaming the morning talk. Is there any way to distinguish whether it is real or unreal? There is no way. It may be just a dream; you may be just seeing things and they may not be there.

And the problem becomes very very deep, because in a dream you forget that it is a dream. And you have seen the dream so many times, millions of times, and always in the morning you find it was all unreal. But the next day again you see the dream and it is real again.

The day-dream becomes unreal in the night, and the night-dream becomes unreal in the day. Now what is the way to decide which is which, and which is really real and which is only apparently real?

Buddha says it is all mind game. Closely watch the mind, and slowly slowly you can start seeing the mind game. Not that you need not be there any more, because it is all mind game -- where are you going? where can you go? There is no need to go anywhere but just to know.

You can enjoy this picture all around you in Disneyland, and you are lying in an

aeroplane, and you can see the Niagara Falls and the mountains receding back, and you can see from every side... and you are disillusioned for a moment, and there will be a continuous shifting of consciousness. One moment you will think it is real, one moment you will think, "It is not real -- I am just in Disneyland."

Mind is a Disneyland.

THE MIND --
WHAT SHALL WE CALL IT?
IT IS THE SOUND OF THE BREEZE
THAT BLOWS THROUGH THE PINES
IN THE INDIAN-INK PICTURE.

THE MIND REMAINING
JUST AS IT WAS BORN --
WITHOUT ANY PRAYER
IT BECOMES THE BUDDHA.

A VERY REVOLUTIONARY STATEMENT: THE MIND REMAINING JUST AS IT WAS BORN. If the mind remains just a mirror and reflects nothing, is not conditioned by anything, has no content.... The contentless mind is the only reality we can be certain about and certain of.

That's why Zen people say: Look into the original mind. 'Original mind' means when there was no impact of anything on the mind; before conditioning started, before you were told who you are; before you were taught, before you learnt; before your mind started collecting contents. Just go deep down into that first moment where there was no content but only the container, just the mirror reflecting nothing -- that is real. The witness is real.

THE MIND REMAINING
JUST AS IT WAS BORN --
WITHOUT ANY PRAYER
IT BECOMES THE BUDDHA.

Then there is no need to pray, no need to do anything; no methodology, no technique is needed. Just go deep down and see the original mind, the contentless mind, the mirror without dust, the mind without thoughts, without clouds -- and you have arrived, and you are a Buddha.

The difference between you and a Buddha is only this: you have more than Buddha. Buddha has Less than you, because Buddha is just a pure mind and you are a thousand and one things added to that purity. So remember, Buddha is poorer than you, I am poorer than you. You are far richer than me. I am lacking many things, missing many things: misery, meaninglessness, frustration, anger, passion, greed... and a thousand and one things you can count. You are really rich.

When Buddha attained enlightenment, somebody asked him, "What have you gained?"

He laughed. He said, "I have not gained, I have lost much. I am far poorer than I used to be. I have lost all ignorance, all illusions, all dreams. Now I am just my originality."

TELL A LIE,
AND YOU FALL INTO HELL.
THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BUDDHA

WHO CONTRIVED
THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST?

Again, Ikkyu is again and again teasing Buddha. He says: TELL A LIE... Buddha has said: Don't tell lies. Buddha says: tell a lie and you will fall into hell. Then what about Buddha himself? Ikkyu asks, he has been telling all kinds of lies.

In the first place, truth cannot be said, so whatsoever you say about it is a lie. And Buddha talked for forty-two years, day in, day out, morning, evening, he was talking and talking. And he says truth cannot be said! Then for forty-two years, what was this man doing? Was he crazy? Truth cannot be said, and he went on saying and saying... and that's what I am doing.

I say truth cannot be said, never has been said, will never be said -- so whatsoever I am saying can't be true.

Ikkyu asks:

TELL A LIE,
AND YOU FALL INTO HELL.
THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BUDDHA
WHO CONTRIVED
THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST?

And Buddha not only says a thousand and one things about truth, he also goes on devising methods, meditations -- VIPASSANA, ANAPANSATIYOGA. And he says there is no way to do anything, there is no need to do anything, and still he teaches people what to do, how to do. He says there is no goal and he talks about the path. He says there is nowhere to go and he says: I will teach you the right path to it. Now what kind of nonsense is this? It is nonsense, but still of great significance.

Through talking for forty-two years continuously and saying again and again that truth cannot be said, he made many people aware of the phenomenon that truth cannot be said. He made many people realize the phenomenon that truth cannot be said -- that truth can only be experienced. By devising methods, meditations, he helped many people to come to a point where one knows no meditation is needed and no meditation was needed in the beginning either.

But people are such that even if they come to truth, they come very very slowly, very grudgingly, very hesitatingly. Inch by inch they have to be pushed. The phenomenon can happen in a single jump, but they have to be pushed inch by inch. And to push them, a thousand and one lies have to be invented by the master, HAVE to be invented. I go on inventing lies -- and just have mercy on me, otherwise I am going to hell!

Listen and understand what I am saying, otherwise I will have to invent more lies. If you don't listen then there is no other way than to go on inventing lies. It is like this -- Buddha has told a story:

A man returns home -- he has been to the market. When he comes home, suddenly he sees the house is on fire. His children are playing inside, and he calls them and he shouts, "The house is on fire. You come out!" But the children don't understand what it means that the house is on fire. In fact, they become very intrigued, and they jump and shout and they enjoy the flames all around the house. They have never seen such a beautiful scene. Children are children. And the father is very much worried. He cannot go in; the whole house is

surrounded by fire. He simply can shout.

He devises a method. The children are not ready to understand. They don't understand that the fire is dangerous -- they can't understand, they have no experience of it. He simply remembers that when he was going to the market they had said, "Bring some toys for us."

So he shouts, "I have brought those toys for you. Come out!" And they all come rushing out. He has not brought the toys, but the children are out -- that is the point.

That is the whole work of a master. You come to me and I give you toys: go to the Encounter, go to Tao, go to T'ai Chi, or go, if you are a little toughie, then go to the torturers, Rolfing, etc.... These are toys. You don't want to come out of the house -- I have to create toys. But these are all lies.

Ikkyu is just jokingly saying this:

TELL A LIE,
AND YOU FALL INTO HELL.
THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BUDDHA
WHO CONTRIVED
THINGS THAT DON'T EXIST?

If you meditate over these sayings, great will be the revelation out of them. All teaching, the teaching of Buddha included, the teaching of Ikkyu included, my teaching included, all teachings included, are lies, false, as far as words are used in them -- because the moment truth is said, it becomes a lie. It can be experienced but not expressed.

The Buddha tells us the way to salvation, but there is no way and no salvation! Then what is he saying? He is simply saying there is no way and no salvation. See it! and the salvation has happened. There is NOWHERE to go -- see it and you have arrived! It is a question of seeing it.

And if you start seeing, your whole dream-life disappears.

I was reading -- Tucker N. Callaway has written in his memoirs:

It was twilight as I wandered through the spacious grounds of a Zen temple, Nanzenji, in the ancient city of Kyoto. Overhead the rush of water through the brick trough of the ivy-covered aqueduct mingled with wind sighs from boughs of gigantic pines. Tasting the fragrance of burning needles, I moved towards the red glow of a tiny fire deep in the shadows. A black-robed monk was at his task of raking clean the sand. After timeless moments of pregnant silence, I spoke: "What is your intention in Zen?"

"To be this smoke," he replied.

All had been said.

If you understand what Ikkyu is saying to you, your dream-life will disappear like smoke. You will disappear like smoke. And then what is left is truth. And then what is left is nirvana. One never becomes enlightened -- when one is not, there is enlightenment.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #4

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The first question

TODAY YOU SAID THAT THE WAY TO ENLIGHTENMENT IS LONG AND ARDUOUS, AND ALSO THAT IT IS HERE AND NOW, NOW OR NEVER. AS IT IS HERENOW, HOW CAN IT BE LONG AND ARDUOUS?

That's why it is long and arduous -- because you are not here-now. You are far away from here now. You will have to come, you will have to journey.

When I say truth is not far away, I mean TRUTH is here-now -- I don't mean you are not far away from truth. You ARE far away from truth. Truth is not far away from you, God cannot be far away from you. God exists in you as you. God exists as eternity, not as past or future. God simply is. How can God be far away? There is not place for him to be far away. He is all over the place. He is everywhere... in your breathing, in your heartbeat. But you are not here.

God has not gone away: you have gone away from him.

You have to understand this. For example, in the night you sleep and you dream -- you dream you have gone to the moon. You are here, but the dream has taken you far away. In the morning when you awake, you will not find yourself on the moon -- you will be here in Poona. But in the dream you were far away from your reality. You have to come back from your dreams... and the journey is arduous because you have invested SO much in those dreams, and you are hoping to gain so much from those dreams, and you have lived in those dreams for so long that they have become reality, your reality.

The East calls this dreaming state of mind MAYA -- illusion. And then you can go on searching for God in your illusions and you will not find him. You have to awake. And to be awake is arduous because a thousand and one dreams will be shattered. And in those dreams all your joys, all your so-called successes, ambitions, are involved. Your WHOLE ego is involved. The ego will be shattered.

You are here but the ego has gone to the moon -- and the ego can only live through dreams, it can only live through illusions. It is nourished by illusions. The more illusions you have, the more grandiose an ego you have. The greater your illusions, the bigger your ego. It is very difficult to renounce those dreams.

In the East this is called sannyas: to renounce those dreams. When it is said, "Renounce the world," it is not meant the actual world -- the wife, the husband, the children, the house, the marketplace. No, not at all. What is really meant is this dreamworld in which you go on constantly moving away from yourself and away from reality. Renounce the dreams! And

that is arduous.

Now, let me read your question again:

TODAY YOU SAID THAT THE WAY TO ENLIGHTENMENT IS LONG AND ARDUOUS -- it is -- AND ALSO THAT IT IS HERE AND NOW -- it is. AS IT IS HERENOW, HOW CAN IT BE LONG AND ARDUOUS?

That's why. You are not to go anywhere, you have to come here! You have already gone somewhere. You have moved away from your innermost core. You never come home. And God exists there, but you keep God at your back. Your eyes are roaming far away in distant stars; they never come back. From one star to another you go on hopping. Your mind is a vagabond.

So it is arduous and yet it is easy. The contradiction is only apparent. It is arduous because of you: it is easy because of God. If you think of God you can take it very easily, you can relax. If you depend on yourself, it is very arduous.

That's why I say if you depend on yourself, if you depend on your effort, you may never come back -- because it is through effort that you have gone away. You have to surrender. In that very surrendering, grace descends.

And what can you surrender? What have you got? Why are you so afraid of surrendering? You have got only dreams and nothing else, just soap-bubbles.

Surrender your dreams and the truth is herenow. That's why I say NOW OR NEVER -- -- because existence always exists in the now, and the mind exists in the then. Existence is here and the mind is always there, and they never meet. Here and there never meet; now and then never meet. Just look deep down in your mind: it is very rare to come across a contemporary.

Somebody is living five thousand years back; he is still part of the days of Rig Veda. He is still reading Rig Veda. he is still following the Vedic ritual. Five thousand year have passed, but he has not come here, now. He lives there -- in the dead, in the gone, in the memory.

Why do you call yourself a Hindu or a Christian, or a Mohammedan or a Jain? To call yourself these things simply means you cling to the past. These are names that come from the past. Herenow you are only a consciousness, neither Hindu, nor Mohammedan, nor Christian. If you get entangled with the past, you are a Hindu, or a Brahmin or a Sudra. Or there are a few other people who think they are very progressive: communists, socialists . They are involved in the future, hence they think they are very progressive. But to be in the past is to be as far away from the present as to be in the future. It makes no difference.

There are two kinds of mind in the world. One: involved with the past, the orthodox mind; and the other: involved in the future, the so-called revolutionary mind -- but both are minds. The orthodox thinks the golden age has passed, the RAM-RAJYA has passed. And the revolutionary, the so-called revolutionary, thinks the golden age has to come, the Utopia has yet to happen. His eyes are there on the distant future. But there is no difference between these two; they are the same kind of people. Both are avoiding the present, both are escaping from the present, both are denying reality. So a communist or a Mohammedan, a socialist or a Hindu, to me are all in the same boat -- the boat of time.

Whom do I call religious? The man who is not more in the boat of time, who starts living in eternity, who lives in the now, who has no past and no future. Who does not go to the Rig Veda and who does not go to DAS KAPITAL -- who simply goes in himself. Who looks at the sun that is there on the horizon, and who listens to the birds that are singing right NOW,

who looks at the trees that are blooming. Just see that quality of being; here, that collectedness, that integrity, that centering I call religiousness.

Religion does not mean affiliation. Religion means being in reality without any dreams. Dreams come either from the past or from the future. A religious man is an empty man, a hollow bamboo. He allows the reality to live through him, he flows with it. He has no goals, he is not going anywhere. He is just being here, as God is just being here... hence the meeting.

That's why I say now or never. Now is eternity. By 'never' I am denying time: I am saying you will not find God in time.

The present is not part of time that has to be remembered. Ordinarily you have been taught that time has three tenses: past, present, future. That is absolutely wrong. It has no understanding about time. Time has only two tenses -- past and future. The present is not part of time: the present is part of eternity. The present is that which abides, which is always. To relax into it is meditation, or call it prayer. And to know it is celebration. Infinite joy starts showering on you, great benediction descends -- because with the past and the future all worries disappear, all dreams disappear.

That's what Ikkyu means when he says the original mind is clean, clean of all ideas. It is a mirror without dust. It simply mirrors that which is.

The second question

IT HAS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE THAT IT IS NOT SO MUCH THAT THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IS ILLOGICAL AS IT IS SUPRA-LOGICAL; THAT IS, IT SEEMS TO TRANSCEND THE MORE LIMITED AND FEAR-INVENTED LOGIC THAT IS OF THE HEAD ALONE IN THAT IT INCLUDES THE LOGIC THAT IS OF THE HEART AND BEYOND. FOR IT HAS BEEN THAT WHENEVER I HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF TO FEEL RATHER THAN THINK, THAT WHICH EMERGES ONLY SEEMS ILLOGICAL AT FIRST TO THAT ASPECT OF MIND WHICH IS STRICTLY LIMITING MY PERSPECTIVE. BUT THEN WHENEVER I HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF THE FREEDOM TO PLUMMET TO THE DEPTHS OF THE FEELING, THEN THE COSMOLOGICAL REASON FOR MY PARTICULAR NEED TO EXPRESS HAS BEEN SHOWN IN TERMS POST-BIRTH, BIRTH, PRE-BIRTH AND PAST LIFE TRAUMA. COULD THERE BE ANYTHING MORE GRANDIOSELY LOGICAL THAN THE INFINITE INTERCONNECTIVENESS OF THE VAST EMPTINESS? HOW COULD IT BE ANY OTHER WAY? IF IT CANNOT BE ANY OTHER WAY, THEN IT MUST ALL HOLD SUPRA-LOGICALLY TOGETHER AS IT SO OBVIOUSLY DOES.

FROM SUCH AN ANALYSIS IS WOULD SEEM LOGICAL TO CONCLUDE, AS MYSTICS HAVE ALWAYS DONE, THAT THE HEAD'S FEAR OF TAKING THE QUANTUM LEAP INTO THE MUCH VASTER LOGIC IS WHERE THE PROBLEM SITS, RATHER THAN IT BEING A PROBLEM OF LOGIC PER SE.

The question is from Swami Anand Parad. He is a well-known author. And the answer is in the question itself.

That's why my people were laughing -- they have answered. They have not left anything for me to answer. It is ALL logic, logic-chopping.

And remember, logic is very cunning. Cunningness is intrinsic to logic. It can pretend, it can talk in terms of supra-logical, but that supra-logical is nothing but an extension of the same logical mind.

Go slowly into this question: IT HAS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE THAT IT IS NOT SO MUCH THAT THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IS ILLOGICAL AS IT IS SUPRA-LOGICAL.

Now the logic is trying to defend itself. The logic is afraid of the illogical. If it is called supra-logical then it is okay -- just by changing the label? A rose is a rose is a rose... what you call it will not make any difference. It will be a rose called by any other name whatsoever. Just by calling it 'supra-logical', why does your mind feel better? Calling it supra-logical, the mind has claimed it. It says, "It is within MY limits -- supra maybe, but it is within my limits. I can cover it, I can hold it. You need not go beyond me."

You have just to become a little more logical. You have to just make your boundaries a little bigger.

Your imprisonment will remain. The jail becomes a supra-jail. It has bigger boundaries; you push the boundaries farther away. You can push them so far away that you cannot see them. That's what is happening in the world, has been happening always. What you call a nation, what is it? It is a supra-jail. The boundaries are so far away that you cannot see them. But when you cross the boundaries of a country to another country, you remember then that you are a prisoner. Then you know that you are surrounded by police and the army, that a visa is needed, that a passport is needed. That you don't belong to the earth, that the whole earth does not belong to you. That it is a big jail called India, China, Pakistan, America, Canada -- there are many jails on the earth. But they are so big! Unless you come closer to the boundary you will not know them.

Have you not felt it? Crossing the boundary of a country you feel great uneasiness; you simply feel yourself a prisoner. You are not a FREE man. And the freedom seems to be just talk.

Freedom cannot exist on the earth unless nations disappear. Nations cannot allow freedom. All the constitutions of the world, even the so-called democratic constitutions. they talk and they only talk about 'freedom' of movement'. What kind of freedom of movement is this? And you must be knowing it by bitter experience, because you are here suffering all kinds of indignities. The police are after you. the government is after you: "You have to leave the country. Your six weeks are over, or eight weeks are over." What kind of freedom is this? Freedom of movement you call it . And a man cannot move from one country to another country.

The prison is big. It is a supra-prison.

If you are not a Hindu you cannot go into a Hindu temple. If you are not a Jain you are not allowed into a Jain temple. These are again prisons. And there are prisons and prisons and prisons.... Mind is very cunning in deceiving itself.

That's why I don't call it supra-logical. I simply call it illogical -- for a certain reason. The reason is this: that by calling it illogical I want to shatter all the walls. Supra-logical and the wall remains. It recedes farther back, it may almost become invisible, but it remains. Hence I insist that IT IS illogical. The jump into God is illogical, it is not logical.

I agree with the Christian mystic Tertullian: "CREDO QUIA ABSURDUM." He says: "I believe in God because God is absurd, illogical, irrational." A rational God will not be much

of a God; it will be just a concept. A logical God, a logical universe, cannot be a real universe -- because logic is an imposition, it is an invention of man. The trees don't know about it. and the stars don't know anything about it. It is only man who imposes a certain pattern.

ALL patterns are imposed out of fear. The fear is that man always want to label things -- once he has labelled a thing he feels very at ease. Now he thinks he knows. This naming business has gone very deep.

Somebody asks, "What kind of tree is this?" and you tell him, 'This is a pine,' and he is satisfied -- as if he has known what it is just by calling, it a pine. He thinks he knows. If he had not been answered what kind of tree this is, he would have felt uneasy, because that illogical, that tree beyond human language, human comprehension, is standing there as a challenge. Pin it down! put a label on it! and you are satisfied. What have you come to know by putting a label on it?

Thousands of talented people simply go on doing this naming business -- they call it research. What kind of research is this. This is not research at all. It is not even I search -- it is just making mind feel easy. Small children go on asking, "What is this?" you just answer anything -- -ABC -- you say anything, and they are satisfied. Then they are asking about something else: "And what is this?" They go on just asking, "What is this?" From that very curiosity, all naming business arises.

When I say life is illogical, I mean it is not nameable. Try to understand what I mean! I mean it is not nameable. You cannot pinpoint it. Call it supra-logical and you have pinpointed it, you have pinned it down. Now it is no more the butterfly alive; it is a pinned butterfly in an album, dead . You have transformed its quality completely, you have destroyed it.

When I say illogical I mean unnameable, I mean no word will be able to express it.

Lao Tzu says: Truth cannot be said. The moment you say it, it becomes untrue.

This is what I mean by calling reality illogical, irrational. It is beyond the comprehension of mind. Call it supra-logical, and you feel at ease; then you are no longer afraid of it. You have the feeling that you know about it.

Absence of knowledge creates deep insecurity. There is still something which we don't know. It has to be known! Maybe there is danger. Have you not felt it when you meet a stranger? The immediate curiosity is who he is -- what name, what religion, what country? Immediately you start inquiring. Just within four, five questions you have pinned the man down -- mm? -- he is a Hindu, an Indian, works as a clerk in an office. How much salary? In India they even ask that, and they even ask how much you get on the side. Nobody feels any insult; nobody feels "What is being asked?" People say, "Answer!"

Once you have known the financial position, the status, the name, the religion, the caste, you relax. So you can relax, you know this man. You have known this type of man before. But can any man be pinned down like that? NO two men are alike. Each individual is only like himself. By calling him a hindu you are just misinterpreting the whole thing. You may have known other Hindus, but they were OTHER Hindus. and this Hindu is a totally different phenomenon. You cannot understand him by understanding other Hindus. You may have known other clerks, but his is a totally different man.

There is no way of understanding him through these queries. If you want to understand a man really, you will have to go deep down into this man's mystery -- and that is illogical. You will have to go into love. That's what I mean when I say illogical.

IT HAS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE THAT IT IS NOT SO MUCH THAT THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IS ILLOGICAL AS IT IS SUPRA-LOGICAL.

Parad, you have not experienced religion yet. You don't know what you are talking about. You may have felt a few emotions, very elevated, but that is not religion. Any experience as such is not religion -- religion is not an experience. Try to see the point. Religion is NOT an experience because there is no experiencer left. It is a dissolution. One disappears into it. One cannot experience it. One is not found. One simply dissolves. Just like a drop of water falls into the ocean and disappears into the ocean.... Is this an experience? It is death, it is disappearance. And yet the drop has become the ocean itself.

When a man disappears into God like a drop disappearing in the ocean, this is religious experience -- but can you call it experience? The experiencer is no more there. The subjectivity is no more there -- there is no object to it. Our ordinary experiences are divided into three things: the knower, the known and the knowledge. The religious experience is a unique phenomenon. There is nothing known, there is no knower, there is only knowing. The knower has gone, the known has disappeared, there is only knowing. The lover is no more there, the beloved is no more there, there is only loving. It can't be called an experience ordinarily, If you want to call it 'experience', put it in inverted commas.

You say: IT HAS BEEN MY EXPERIENCE THAT IT IS NOT SO MUCH THAT THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IS ILLOGICAL AS IT IS SUPRA-LOGICAL.

Then whatsoever you have experienced is a mind phenomenon. Your mind can comprehend it. Then you can make it supra-logical!

For example, if you feel a certain energy arising in your spine, this is supra-logical. In fact, I will not even call it supra-logical -- this is just logical. There is no need to bring that 'supra', that big word. It is all experience, a physical, tangible experience. Or you see light deep down in your third-eye center, great light arises -- this is an experience. And this you can call supra-logical because it is not an ordinary experience. But this is not religion.

Religion is still far beyond all this. There is no light, there is no energy, there is no God to be encountered, there is no you left -- all has disappeared. There is UTTER emptiness, what Buddha calls SHUNYATA -- nothingness. that is not supra-logical: it is simply illogical. Logic cannot exist there because mind as such is no more. Logic is a shadow of the mind. When the mind itself has disappeared, logic cannot exist. and supra-logic can exist only when logic is in existence; they are linked together.

THAT IS, IT SEEMS TO TRANSCEND THE MORE LIMITED AND FEAR-INVENTED LOGIC THAT IS OF THE HEAD ALONE..

What you are calling 'the logic of the head alone' is the ONLY logic. sometimes you can even start calling the logic of the heart a different kind of logic, but it is not logic at all. If it is still logic, ordinary or supra, then it is still of the head. Head is logic, heart is illogic -- that is their polarity. And if you call it also logic, then you have made your heart also an appendage to the head; it is no more the polar opposite. Head is logic, heart is illogic -- that is their polarity. and if you call it also logic, then you have made your heart also an appendage to the head; it is no more the polar opposite. Head is logic and heart is supra-logic -- you have put them into one line; they have become part of one syllogism. Heart is NOT part of the same syllogism. Heart cannot think -- how can it have supra-logic? Heart feels -- feeling has no logic. It is illogical.

You fall in love with a woman, what logic is there? And if there is logic, there can't be love. If you think she is rich, if you think that she is the only daughter of her parents, if you think there is going to come power and prestige through her, then there is logic but there is no love. That is the problem! Your parents think logically about your love affair, and you think illogically. That's why parents and children can't communicate -- the gap, the generation gap. The young person is yet brave enough. Life has not cowed him down. He can still take the risk -- he would like TO take the risk. He has energy and vitality to go into the unknown.

But the older generation, the people who have lived their lives, they know that it is dangerous, that it is insecure -- better be logical. Marriage was created by logical people. They killed love affairs completely. It was dangerous. India is one of the most logical countries in the world. The logic was: let the children get married, even when they don't know anything about love -- child-marriage. That was the logical conclusion.

Once they are young, they would like to fool around. It looks foolish to the older generation: they will get into difficulties, they will start falling in love with people who may not be so economically secure. Or there will be a thousand and one other problems. A Brahmin boy can fall in love with a Sudra girl, and that will create difficulties. A rich man's girl can fall in love with a poor man's boy, and there will be difficulty. It is better to avoid all difficulties: child-marriage was invented. That was a logical conclusion. Before they know anything of love let them get married, so they will grow like brother and sister, as brothers do. You never choose your sister, you never choose your brother -- and still you love. That love is not real love; that is only liking, familiarity. Living together, playing together, one starts liking.

India reduced... there is only one relationship with all freedom to choose. Father you cannot choose, it is given; mother you cannot choose, sister you cannot choose, brother you cannot choose, uncles you cannot choose -- they are all given. There was only one freedom left which was dangerous: you could have chosen your wife or your husband. India destroyed that freedom too. You were not allowed even to choose that. Small children, four years old, five years old....

When my mother got married she was only seven years old. I was asking her again and again, "Tell me how you felt?"

She said, "I didn't know what was happening. I was simply joyous that something was happening. I used to run out to see what was happening, and they would pull me back inside the house. And they locked me in on the day when the real ceremony was going to happen, because I was so much interested in the bands and the music and the horses. And the people were coming...."

And I asked my father, "What did you feel?"

He said, "I don't know -- I just enjoyed the horse ride!"

Just a small child -- must have enjoyed. And so many people walking around -- he must have felt like a king. Something was happening, but what was happening...?

Then they grew together. Then, naturally, when you grow together you start liking each other -- but love has been denied, love has been killed. It is very rare, there is not much possibility of love growing, because all romance has been destroyed.

Heart is illogical. Mind is logical. Don't call heart supra-logical. That is again, Parad, your fear. You are afraid of the heart; you want to bring it under the rule of the head. Logic is head's rule.

There are people who don't love. They THINK they love -- their feeling also comes via thinking. When they come to me and they say, "I think I am in love," I ask them, "You just be

true -- either you are in love or you are not in love. How can you THINK you are in love?" Thinking is bogus and false, but thinking has become so predominant. We have been taught to think and to avoid feelings.

Feelings are dangerous. They have no utility. Thinking is utilitarian; it makes you capable of living in the world, of fighting in the world -- for survival, for your ambitions. It makes you calculating, cunning, clever. It gives you power. Feeling? Feeling does not give you any power. Feeling has no politics in it -- that is the problem. Thinking is political: feeling is religious. and I have never come across a political person who is religious or can be religious, unless he renounces politics. I have never come across a religious person who can be political. It is impossible. If he is political, then his religion is false. then his being religious is also part of his politics.

You say: FOR IT HAS BEEN THAT WHENEVER I HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF TO FEEL RATHER THAN THINK...

My feeling is that you were still thinking -- you were thinking that you were feeling.

... THAT WHICH EMERGES ONLY SEEMS ILLOGICAL AT FIRST TO THAT ASPECT OF MIND WHICH IS STRICTLY LIMITING MY PERSPECTIVE. BUT THEN WHENEVER I HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF THE FREEDOM TO PLUMMET TO THE DEPTHS OF THE FEELING...

WHO ARE YOU GOING INTO THE DEPTHS OF FEELING? -- the

head, the mind, the thinking, the logic. Yes, if you go into feelings with logic.... Logic is a chronic systematizer; it is obsessed with systematization. Wherever it goes, it systematizes, it immediately starts categorizing. It cannot allow chaos -- chaos seems to be like a death. It immediately starts putting things in order.

Who is this one, Parad, who goes deep into the feelings? About whom are you talking? You are identified with the head -- feelings are something accidental into which you are going. You are not the feeling. You are the head, you remain the head. Then, naturally, sooner or later, you will systematize. And, if you cannot systematize something which goes on rebelling against the systems, you will deny it, you will say it doesn't exist. You will ignore it, you will forget about it. Nobody wants to allow something which becomes a constant strain on you.

That's why millions of people have denied God -- because the very presence of God, the very idea that God is, is frightening. That means sooner or later you will have to encounter him; sooner or later you will have to FACE him. That makes people very much afraid. They start trembling -- the very idea: facing God! Then what are you doing? Is it worth it? Will you be able to say to God that this is what you have been doing? This is what you have wasted your life in? That you were a prime minister? That you were so stupid as to waste your whole life for power-politics? That you were a rich man; that you wasted your whole life in collecting rubbish? Will you be able to face God?

And all that you attained in life will be left here. You will not be able to carry your money or your power. You will be standing naked, utterly ashamed. There is a beautiful story:

When Alexander the Great was coming to India, he met one strange man, Diogenes, on

the way. Diogenes is one of the rare flowerings of human consciousness. Alexander was interested in the man; he had heard many stories about him. He was afraid to go to him. It was below him, it was against his ego. But when he was coming to India, on the way he heard that he was living just by the side of the river. Then he could not resist the temptation and he said, "Nobody will know back home that I had gone to see Diogenes. And I can always say that I was just passing and I met him by accident."

He went to see Diogenes. It was a winter morning, a cool breeze was blowing, and Diogenes was lying on the river-bank, on the sand, taking a sunbath naked. He was a beautiful man. When there is a beautiful soul, a beauty arises which is not of this world -- which is illogical. If Alexander looks beautiful, it is logical, remember, because he has all that you think one should have. He has power, money; he has all that one can think or imagine to have. His beauty that of possessions.

Now, here was a man lying naked, with nothing -- he had nothing, not even a begging-bowl. Buddha at least had a begging-bowl. Diogenes didn't have a begging-bowl, because one day when he was walking, and going towards the river with his begging-bowl to get some water to drink, he saw a dog rushing to the river. Of course, the dog reached first, and the dog jumped in the river and drank. Diogenes laughed and he said, "This dog has taught me a lesson. If he can live without a begging-bowl, then why can't I?" He threw the begging-bowl, he also jumped like the dog in the river and drank. Since then he had had nothing. And this dog must have felt something for Diogenes, because they became friends; they lived together .

Alexander came. He could not believe the grace of the man. He had never seen such a graceful man, such utter beauty, something from the unknown, something illogical... because there is no reason! You cannot pin it down, where it is coming from. He was in awe and he said, "Sir..." He had not said "Sir" to anybody in his life. He said, "Sir, I am immensely impressed by your being, and I would like to do something for you. Is there something that I can do for you?"

Diogenes said, "Just stand to the side because you are preventing the sun -- that's all. Nothing else do I need."

Alexander said, "If I have another chance to come to the earth, I will ask God, instead of making me Alexander again, to make me Diogenes."

Diogenes laughed and he said, "That you won't ask for, because who is preventing you right now? You can become Diogenes. Where are you going? For months I have seen armies moving and moving -- where are you going? and for what?"

And Alexander said, "I am going to India to conquer the whole world." And then what are you going to do?" Diogenes asked.
And Alexander said, "Then I will rest."

And Diogenes laughed again and he said, "You are mad -- because I am resting NOW; and I have not conquered the world. I don't see the necessity of it. If just in the end you want to rest and relax, why not now? How are they related? Who has told you that before resting, you have to conquer the world? And I tell you: if you don't rest now, then never. You will never be able to conquer the world, because something or other will always remain to be conquered... and life is short and time is fleeting. You will die in the middle of your journey -- everybody dies in the middle of the journey."

Alexander said, "I will keep it always in mind, but right now I cannot do it. But many many thanks for your advice."

And Alexander died in the middle. He never reached back home, he died on the way.

When he was moving back from India, he died on the way. And that day he remembered Diogenes. Only Diogenes was in his mind -- he could never rest in his life, and that man rested.

And then a strange story has been known down the ages, that Diogenes also died on the same day. And they met on the way towards God, just crossing the border river. Alexander Was ahead, a few feet ahead, when he heard somebody behind. He looked back, and he was surprised -- surprised and ashamed. It was Diogenes, the same beautiful man.

Alexander tried to hide his shame. He said "So again, again we are meeting, the emperor and the beggar."

And Diogenes said, "That is true. But you misunderstand one thing: you don't know who is the beggar and who is the emperor. You are the beggar, I am the emperor, because I lived my life totally, I enjoyed it. And I can go to God, I can face him. You will not be able to face him, because I can see: you cannot even face me! You are trembling, you are ashamed. You cannot look into my eyes -- what will happen to you when you have to face God? your whole life has been a wastage."

People deny God -- they have to deny because the presence of god makes them very very uneasy. My own experience is that people who are very much in fear, deeply in fear, deny God. They deny all that is incomprehensible to them. They always want everything to be systematized, because one you systematize something, it is within your control, it is in your fist, you are the master. When something goes on slipping out of your systematization, you start freaking out.

And life IS illogical. And if you don't understand the mystics, ask the physicists -- they have also stumbled upon the same fact. Ask albert Einstein or Eddington -- ask these people, because they are now seeing very strange phenomena, strange and illogical.

Looking into matter deeply, physicists have stumbled upon the same illogicalness. Electrons behave in such a way that it is not logical; there is no way to predict the behaviour of an electron. and its behaviour is contradictory -- that's why it is called 'quanta'. 'Quanta' means -- and from 'quanta' the word 'quantum leap' that you have used in your question -- 'quanta' means a particle is behaving in such a strange way that you can think of it as a particle or as a wave. Both together, simultaneously! That is impossible. That is very much against Euclidean geometry. Either something is a dot, a point, or something is a line; either something is a particle or something is a wave. One thing cannot be both together, simultaneously. But that's how it is.

When Heisenberg was asked, "How can you say it? It is illogical!" he said, "It is illogical, but what can we do? We cannot order those quanta to behave rightly and logically. We have no power over them. That's how they are behaving. So if it is illogical, change your logic -- but we cannot change quanta. We cannot put policemen there to say, "Behave! Behave logically, behave morally!"

Hence the theory of indeterminacy. Uncertainty has arisen. Physics has become almost mysticism, because they have also come across the phenomenon. It is illogical, it is incomprehensible. That is the meaning of a mystery. If the mystery becomes comprehensible, then it is no more a mystery; you have solved it.

And man, out of fear, has been trying to solve all the mysteries. If he cannot solve, then he denies. That's why scientists go on denying the soul -- because they cannot solve it. It creates so many problems, the very idea -- it becomes insoluble. There is no soul.

There are things which are not comprehensible and yet experiencible. Just think of two

persons going to listen to great music. One is a musician, the other is a non-musician. Both listen to the same music. The musician will listen to the harmony, the melody, and the non-musician will listen only to the single notes, individual notes. He will hear the noise -- one note, another note, another note... notes following notes -- but he will not see the thread running between them, he will not be able to see the melody that arises out of them. That melody remains invisible to his ears; it is not heard. But the musician will be able to hear the melody, although he cannot prove it -- it is incomprehensible.

What is melody? That is God. What IS melody? Melody is that music is something more than the parts, something MORE than the parts. something more than the sum total of the parts is the melody. That is the meaning of soul: something more than the sum total of the body-mind is soul. And what is God? Something more than the universe, more than the sum total of all the parts. But that is incomprehensible, and that is not supra-logical, because supra-logical is again comprehension of the same mind -- the same mind trying to become more and more clever.

FROM SUCH AN ANALYSIS, you ask, IT WOULD SEEM LOGICAL TO CONCLUDE, AS MYSTICS HAVE ALWAYS DONE, THAT THE HEAD'S FEAR OF TAKING THE QUANTUM LEAP INTO THE MUCH VASTER LOGIC IS WHERE THE PROBLEM SITS RATHER THAN IT BEING A PROBLEM OF LOGIC PER SE.

LOGIC IS FEAR. They are the same thing. Logic is out of fear! Out of the fear of the uncomprehended, out of the fear of the chaos, logic creates a small world, clear-cut. Logic is like a garden that you have planted, and not even like a Zen garden but like an English garden -- clean-cut, symmetrical, rational. That's why English gardens are so ugly, because they are so artificial and so unnatural. In nature there is no symmetry. If you go into a jungle there is no symmetry; trees are growing in their own ways and every tree is doing its own thing. But that is the beauty of a jungle. You can feel something of God there, but you cannot feel anything of God in an English garden. You can feel something of Victoria, but not of God. That's the beauty of a Zen garden.

It happened once:

A great emperor was learning from a Zen master about Zen gardening. Three years he learnt, and he made a beautiful garden; he had thousands of gardeners working. He was learning from the master and he was implementing everything that he learnt. After three years the master came -- that was the examination. The emperor was trembling, because these three years he had known the man, he was ferocious. And you could not deceive him. He had tried every way, whatsoever he had said had been implemented, but still he was afraid -- because he had not yet learnt the secret. He was still logical, he was systematizing things, although he had made a very asymmetrical garden -- but in the asymmetry itself there was a logic, there was symmetry hidden behind.

The master came. He looked around, and he never smiled. For hours he went around and around. He looked at the whole garden and the emperor was perspiring, he had failed. The master had not said a single word. And then finally he said, "I don't see a single dead leaf in the garden. Where are all the dead leaves? How can such a big garden be without dead leaves?!"

And the emperor said, "I told my servants to remove all the dead leaves because you were coming."

He said, "Tell them to bring all the dead leaves back!"

They went outside the garden, they brought all the dead leaves back, and the master threw the dead leaves in the garden. And the wind started playing with the dead leaves and it took them all over the place. And he laughed and he said, "Now it is okay -- now it is natural. But you have failed. Three years more, then I will come again."

What is a quantum leap? A quantum leap is going from system to no system, going from cosmos to chaos, going from the finite to the infinite, going from the knowledgeable to the unknowable. A quantum leap cannot be from logic to supra-logic -- what leap is there? There is no leap. There is a connection, it is a continuity. Logic and supra-logic are in one continuum where is the quantum leap? The quantum leap is when you break away from the continuity, when the old disappears and the new suddenly exists -- and there is a gap between the two, there is no connection. That needs courage. That's why I insist again and again: religion is only for the courageous people. Religion is only for those who dare enough, who love to live dangerously.

The third question

I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS AND YET I AM AFRAID OF THEM. WHEN I AM ALONE IN THE NIGHT, I FEEL THAT THEY ARE THERE AND THEY WANT TO SPEAK TO ME...

IN FACT, YOU deny things which you are afraid of. Your denial simply shows your fear. You say, I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS. If you really don't believe in ghosts, then from where can the fear come? then why should you be afraid? for what? But your disbelief is nothing but a way of hiding your fear.

Remember: your belief is out of fear, your disbelief is out of fear. If you live in fear, whatsoever happens to you is going to happen out of fear. I see religious people going to the temples and the mosques and the churches out of fear, and I see atheists denying God out of fear. If I look deeply I don't see any difference between the theist and the atheist. They are both the same -- reacting differently, but the situation is the same, and the fear is the same. Their differences are only superficial.

In each atheist the theist is hidden. And in each theist the atheist is hidden -- that's why it is so easy to convert them. Have you heard the famous story of Khalil Gibran?

In a city it happened:

There were two great philosophers -- one was a theist, the other was an atheist. And the whole town was getting bored with them, because they were both trying to convince the town continuously. And they had puzzled everybody because they would roam around and talk to people, and one day a person would talk to one philosopher and would become a theist, and another day he would come across the atheist and he would convince him of atheism, and so on and so forth.... And the whole town was in great confusion. Their life became impossible.

People want to live. They are not much concerned about atheism or theism. These are just their ways to deceive themselves. But the confusion was too much, and deceiving was impossible because the other was always there. And both were very convincing.

The people of the town decided, "Let these two discuss and debate and decide. Whosoever wins, we will be with him. We are always with the winner."

People are always with the winner.

In Soviet Russia they are communists and atheists; they are with the power. In India they are all theists. Do you know? Before 1917 in Soviet Russia everybody was as religious as they are in India. It was one of the most religious countries -- and what happened? What kind of religion was that? What happened? The same country turned absolutely anti-religious! This country can turn absolutely anti-religious. Once communists are in power, this country will turn absolutely anti-religious. This religion is all bogus. This is just fear. So whosoever is in power, people follow him. If atheists are in power, then they must be right. Power is right; power convinces people.

So in that town, people gathered and they said, "Tonight is a full-moon night and we will stay awake the whole night, and you both discuss and debate and decide. And whosoever wins, we will follow him. We always follow the victorious."

In India we have an ancient saying that truth always wins. In fact, the case is just vice versa: whatsoever wins becomes the truth. People are always with the winner.

So it happened: that full-moon night, both philosophers debated and discussed. They were both very great logicians. But by the morning the town was in even more confusion: they had convinced each other, so the atheist became the theist and the theist became the atheist. But the trouble continued.

These are not really two different things.

You say: I DON'T BELIEVE IN GHOSTS...

You believe. You are simply trying to deceive yourself -- hence the fear. You know that when you are alone in the night they are there. But you are unnecessarily afraid of poor ghosts. Compared to human beings, they are very innocent people. Have you ever heard of any ghost turning into an Adolf Hitler? or Genghis Khan or Tamerlaine? Have you ever heard of ghosts creating Hiroshima, Nagasaki, preparing for the Third World War? Have you ever heard of ghosts doing any harm? Their harm, if sometimes you hear some stories, is more or less trivial -- small things.

I have heard about one young ghost: The young ghost got very scared when his friends told him too many human stories.

And I have also heard: Then there was the ghost who did not believe in people.

They are also afraid of you. And you say you are afraid that when you are alone in the night I FEEL THAT THEY ARE THERE AND THEY WANT TO SPEAK TO ME...

I have also heard: The father ghost told his son, "Spook only when you are spoken to."

You don't be worried. They are already worried very much; they are afraid of you. Ghosts are simple people, very simple. In fact, they are the same people like you, they just don't have bodies so they can't do much harm.

But the fear does not come from ghosts -- the fear is there, out of fear come the ghosts. You are afraid and you would like to project your fear somewhere or other -- because to be afraid without any reason to be afraid makes people more frightened. Just to be afraid will be too much, you will not be able to bear it. You need something to be afraid of. So people create their ghosts.

In America they are afraid of the communists. In Russia they are afraid of the capitalists, and so on and so forth. People create their ghosts. Hindus are afraid of Mohammedans; Mohammedans are afraid of Hindus. Everybody is afraid of everybody else. Man is afraid of woman; the woman is afraid of man. Children are afraid of their parents, and parents are very deeply afraid of their children. Students are afraid of their teachers, and teachers are very much afraid and trembling inside because of their students.

It is fear. Fear is there. And to know fear in its purity is to get beyond it. So don't bother about ghosts. If somebody convinces you there are no ghosts, or somebody convinces you that they are very beautiful people, that won't solve the problem. You will simply shift your fear onto something else. Fear will remain; you will find another cause.

It makes no difference. Down the ages man has been changing his philosophy, the causes, but basically human reality remains the same.

For example, in the past people were afraid of ghosts; they used to become possessed by ghosts. Jesus relieved many people of ghosts. Then philosophies changed. Sigmund Freud created new ghosts, schizophrenia... new explanations of the same fear; paranoia... new explanations, new dressings, but the same old problems. First people used to become possessed by ghosts, and it was easier -- those ghosts were not so difficult. Even a simple man like Jesus relieved many people just by a single touch. Those ghosts were simple.

The ghosts that Sigmund Freud has created are very difficult: you have to lie down on a couch for five years, and then you get up and with you all the ghosts get up. And again you are lying on another couch with some other psychoanalyst, and the same story will be repeated again and again. Slowly slowly, if you don't have much money, understanding will arise that one has to live with these ghosts. There is no point... why not enjoy them? But if you have money then there is a great problem; then the understanding will never arise. In rich people understanding never arises because they can afford it. Understanding arises only in poor people because they can't afford it, they have to understand. They are forced to understand.

That's why psychoanalysis is not a business in poor countries. Who can afford lying down on a couch for five years talking nonsense to a stupid person looking at you? Nothing happens. But in the West people have money and time -- and what to do with it?

And communication has become so impossible. Nobody wants to talk to you, so you have professional listeners -- those are the psychoanalysts. Those are professional listeners: you pay for them. You talk and they listen. You feel good. At least you have one audience, and a very expert one. And he listens very attentively; at least he shows that he is listening attentively. It feels good -- at least there is one person who understands you, listens to you, pays attention to all the rubbish that you are talking. You feel good, enhanced, your ego feels good. But the problem remains where it was. It doesn't change.

The problem can only be changed if you understand it directly, immediately. Fear is there. Don't bring any cause as to why the fear is there -- of ghosts, of illness, of disease, of old age, of being fat, of falling in love, of being killed, or of being a murderer. Listening to thousands of people, I have come to see all kinds of fears. Somebody is afraid that if he does not control himself enough he will commit suicide. Now that fear is there. Somebody is afraid that if he doesn't control himself he will kill somebody. Somebody is afraid that he is becoming old, somebody is afraid that he is getting fat, or she is getting fat -- people are afraid of a thousand and one things. If you are not getting fat, you are afraid maybe you are getting thin. One HAS to be afraid. It is very difficult to find a person who is not afraid of something or other.

So, to me, those things are irrelevant. Fear is the basic thing. Why is man afraid? Don't go into reasons and causes and explanations -- go directly into the fear. So next time when you are alone in the room, just close the eyes and go into your fear. Don't bother about ghosts -- just go into the fear. Tremble if trembling comes, but don't find any explanation that you are trembling because of the ghosts. That is just an explanation to explain away the fear. Just go into trembling, tremble for no reason at all. If you feel like screaming, scream for no reason at all -- but go into the fear itself; don't bring anything else in between you and the fear. That is a trick of the mind. And if you can go deep down into the fear, you will be surprised: the deeper you go, the more and more fear dissipates, disappears. And when you touch the very core, the very bottom core of it, it has disappeared. You are simply there, utterly silent. There is no ghost there, even you are not there. All is silent, utterly silent, absolutely silent. That silence is joy, that silence is fearlessness.

The last question

ONE OF YOUR OLD SANNYASINS SAYS THAT THERE ARE THREE STEPS TO ENLIGHTENMENT -- WITNESSING, CHOICELESS AWARENESS, SUCHNESS. WHAT DO YOU SAY?

THE QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN SIGNED. I don't like questions which are not signed, because the person who is not signing his question is being very cowardly. You don't want to say that you have a question. You want to hide that fact.

It always happens to knowledgeable people -- they don't want to ask a question because that shows that they are ignorant. But if you are ignorant, you are ignorant! Accept the fact. Through that acceptance, some transcendence is possible.

And what is the fear? If you cannot even ask a question, how will you be able to receive the answer? A question deeply, rightly asked prepares the ground for the answer to be received. When you are committed to a question, when you are involved in it, when it is a life-and-death problem to you, then only will you understand the answer. Otherwise the answer will be cheap, and it won't go deep in you.

So never ask a question if you cannot sign your question.

And secondly, you have not mentioned who this old sannyasin is. You should mention it -- because here I am working with individuals, not with a mass. And I want to relate to you individually. Who is this old fool? You should mention it! because all these three words mean the same thing. And there are not three steps to enlightenment. There are no steps to enlightenment. Enlightenment is an explosion, it is a sudden awakening. It is a quantum leap!

Steps mean continuity -- you remain the same. You become a little more polished. You remain the same; you become a little more decorated. You remain the same; you become a little more modified. There are no steps in enlightenment. Those steps are also created out of fear -- you don't want to jump, so you need steps. But only the jump is needed.

You will have to gather courage and take the jump into the abyss, into the chaos of existence, into the chaos of love, into that illogic that I have been talking about.

You say: THERE ARE THREE STEPS WITNESSING, CHOICELESS AWARENESS, SUCHNESS.

These are the same. What is the difference between witnessing and choiceless awareness?

Witnessing is choiceless awareness. If you choose, you are not witnessing. You have liked, disliked. You have chosen, you have become identified.

For example, in your mind there are a few thoughts moving. Witnessing means you simply stand there seeing that they are moving, like clouds moving in the sky or the traffic moving on the road. You don't have any choice. You don't say, "This is good -- let me keep it. And that is bad -- let it go." If you talk this Way you are not witnessing. You are getting involved, you are getting identified. You are creating love-hate relationships. And when you relate, you cannot be a witness.

Witnessing means choiceless awareness!

And what is suchness? When you don't choose, things are as they are. Then the anger passes by... so there is anger. There is a witnessing and there is anger. You are not angry. If you choose, you are angry. If you choose against it, you become repressive of it. You simply watch. The anger comes, the greed comes, and they pass by. They come and they go, and you watch. You don't choose. So things are as they are! You don't give value. You don't say this is higher, this is lower; this is spiritual, this is material; this is sin and this is a very holy act. You don't bring any valuation. You drop all valuation. You simply see like a mirror, an empty mirror. Whosoever passes by, the mirror reflects. This is witnessing.

And the mirror never chooses, because the mirror is not a photographic plate. The photographic plate immediately chooses. It gets caught, trapped. The mirror remains clean: you have passed -- the mirror is again clean, empty. In fact, when you were passing, then too there was only reflection, but the mirror was not having any content in it. It was only a shadow, a shadow passing by.

When you don't choose, things are as they are. That is suchness -- that is TATHATA. 'Witnessing' comes from the Upanishads -- SAKSHI. That is the word used by the seers of the Upanishads. 'Choiceless awareness' comes from J. Krishnamurti -- a new word for the same old thing. 'Suchness' is a Buddhist word -- TATHATA. It comes from Buddha. But they all mean the same thing! Don't be caught in words. And don't start becoming knowledgeable through words.

But these problems arise because you never go into any practise, you never go into any experience. Everything remains theoretical.

I have heard:

The slightly worried parents inquired of their son how the lesson on sex went that day. They were hoping that the teacher had not been too 'progressive'.

The boy gave a somewhat bored reply, "Oh," he said, "it was useless -- we only had the theory today!"

Remember, only the theory won't help. Something has to be experienced, something has to be practised. Something has to become living in you. Only then will you understand.

If you had witnessed a little bit, you would have known; there would have been no need to ask the question. You would have known that it is choiceless awareness, you would have known that this is suchness, and all distinctions between words would have disappeared. Because you have not experienced any meditateness, hence the question.

And you talk about some old sannyasin. He may be old, but he cannot be a sannyasin. He may have lived here, but he has not lived with me. Otherwise this is impossible.

People go on reading books, go on cramming scriptures, then they become very very efficient with words. And then they start using words without knowing what they are doing.

I have heard:

As the doctor said to his girlfriend: "I love you with all my heart -- and my kidneys, liver, epiglottis, spinal cord, etc., etc."

This is what happens to people who go on cramming words.

Wake up a little. Wake up from your linguistic patterns. Drop your drunkenness with language... and things will become very easy. Things ARE easy. Things are very simple. Truth is simple, only you are complicated. Truth is here-now, only you are far away, lost in words, scriptures, theories, systems, philosophies. Come back home.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #5

... And we are in Love

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OF HEAVEN OR HELL WE HAVE
NO RECOLLECTION, NO KNOWLEDGE;
WE MUST BECOME WHAT WE WERE
BEFORE WE WERE BORN.

RAIN, HAIL, SNOW AND ICE
ARE DIVIDED FROM ONE ANOTHER;
BUT AFTER THEY FALL,
THEY ARE THE SAME WATER
OF THE STREAM IN THE VALLEY.

SHOULD YOU SEEK
THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA
ALL NIGHT LONG,
SEARCHING, YOU WILL ENTER
INTO YOUR OWN MIND.

WHEN THEY ASK YOU,
"WHERE IS YOUR COUNTRY?
WHAT IS YOUR NATIVE PLACE?" ANSWER,
"I AM A MAN
OF ORIGINAL INACTIVITY."

THE FIGURE OF THE REAL MAN
STANDING THERE --
JUST A GLIMPSE OF HIM,
AND WE ARE IN LOVE.

MAN CAN LIVE IN TWO WAYS: THE NATURAL AND THE UNNATURAL. The unnatural has great attraction in it -- because it is new, unfamiliar, adventurous. Hence, every child has to leave his nature and go into un-nature. No child can resist that temptation. To resist that temptation is impossible. The paradise has to be lost. The losing of it is built in; it can't be avoided, it is inevitable.

And, of course, only man can lose it. That's man's ecstasy and agony, his privilege, his freedom -- and his fall.

Jean-Paul Sartre is right when he says: Man is condemned to be free. Why 'condemned'? Because with freedom, choice arises -- the choice of being natural or being unnatural. When there is no freedom, there is no choice.

Animals still exist in paradise; they never lose it. But because they never lose it, they can't be aware of it. They can't know where they are. To know where you are, you will have to lose it first. That's how knowing becomes possible -- by losing.

You know a thing only when you have lost it. If you have never lost it, if it has always been there, you naturally take it for granted. It becomes so obvious that you become oblivious of it.

Trees are still in paradise, and the mountains and the stars, but they don't know where they are. Only man can know. A tree can't become a Buddha -- not that there is any difference between the inner nature of a Buddha and a tree, but a tree can't become a Buddha. A tree is already a Buddha! To become a Buddha, the tree first has to lose its nature, it has to go away from it.

You can only see things from a certain perspective. If you are too close to them, you cannot see them. What Buddha has seen, no tree has ever seen. It is available to trees and to animals, but only Buddha becomes conscious of it -- the paradise is -- regained.

Paradise is only when it is regained. Nature's beauties and mysteries are revealed only when you come back home. When you go against your nature, when you go farthest from yourself, only then one day does the return journey start. When you become thirsty for nature, when you start dying without it, you start returning.

This is the original fall. Man's consciousness is his original fall, his original sin. But without the original sin, there is no possibility of a Buddha or a Christ.

The first thing to be understood is: man can choose. He is the only animal in existence who CAN choose, who can do things which are not natural, who can do things which should not be done, who can go against himself and against God, who can destroy himself and all his bliss -- who can create hell.

By creating hell, the contrast is created, and then one can see what heaven is. Only through the contrast, the possibility to know.

So remember, there are two ways: one can live naturally or one can live unnaturally.

When I say one can live naturally, I mean one can live without improving upon oneself in any way. One can live in trust -- that's what nature is. One can live in spontaneity. One can live without being a doer. One can live in inaction, what Taoists call WEI-WU-WEI -- action through inaction.

Nature means you are not to do anything; it is already happening. The rivers are flowing -- not that they are doing something. And the trees are growing -- not that they have to worry about it, not that they have to consult any guide for it. The trees are blooming -- not that they have to think and plan about the flowers, of what colour, of what shape. It is all happening.

The tree is blooming in a thousand flowers without a single worry, without a single thought, without a single projection, without any blueprint. It is simply blooming! Just as fire is hot, the tree grows. It is natural. It is in the very nature of things. The seed becomes the sprout, and the sprout becomes the plant, and the plant becomes the tree, and the tree one day is full of foliage, and then another day buds have started appearing and the flowering and the fruits... and all is simply happening!

The child growing in the mother's womb is not doing anything. He is in WU-WEI. But it is not that nothing is happening. In fact, so much is happening that never again in life will so much ever happen. Those nine months in the mother's womb contain so much happening that if you live ninety years that much happening won't be contained by you.

Millions of things are happening. The child is conceived only as an invisible cell, and then things start happening, things start exploding. The child is not sitting there in that small cell like a little small man and thinking and planning and worrying, and suffering from insomnia. There is nobody!

To understand this is to understand Buddha -- that things can happen without your ever being worried about them. Things have always already been happening. And even when you become a doer, you become a doer only on the surface. Deep down, things go on happening.

When you are fast asleep, do you think you are trying to breathe? It is happening. If man had to breathe, had to remain constantly aware to breathe, nobody would ever be able to live, not even for a single day. One moment and you have forgotten and it is gone. You forget to breathe in, and you are finished. And how will you go to sleep then? You will have to be constantly alert; you will have to wake yourself up many times in the night to see whether you are still breathing or not.

And you eat food, and then you forget all about it. And millions of things are happening: the food is being digested, broken down, destroyed, changed, transformed chemically. It will become your blood, your bones, your marrow. Great work goes on. The blood is circulating continuously, throwing all the dead cells out of the body.

How much is going on within you without your doing at all?

Doing remains on the surface. Man can live on the surface in an artificial way, but deep down in the innermost core you are always natural. Your artificiality becomes simply a layer upon your nature. But the layer thickens every day -- more thoughts, more plans, more activity, more doing. More of the doer, the ego... and a crust grows. And that is the crust Buddha calls samsara -- the world.

The phenomenon of the doer, of the ego: this is losing nature, going against nature, going away from nature. One day you have gone so far that you start feeling suffocated. You have gone so far that schizophrenia arises in your being. Your circumference starts falling apart from the center. That is the point of conversion, the point when religion becomes relevant. The point when you start searching for a way out. The point where you start thinking "Who am I?" The point where you start looking back: "From where am I coming? What is my original face? What is my nature? I have gone too far and now it is time to go back. One step more and I will fall apart. I have broken all the links; only a small bridge has remained."

All neurosis is nothing but this. That's why psychology itself cannot cure neurosis. It can give you beautiful explanations about it, it can satisfy you, console you, solace you; it can

teach you how to live with your neurosis; it can help you not to worry too much about it. It can give you a pattern of life in which neurosis can exist and you can also exist -- it can teach you a kind of co-existence. But it cannot dissolve it -- only religion can dissolve it. And unless psychology takes a quantum leap and becomes religion, it will remain partial.

Why can religion cure the neurosis? Why can religion cure schizophrenia? Because it can make you one whole. The circumference is no more against the center: they are holding hands, they are embracing each other. They are one. They function in one rhythm, they vibrate as one vibration. That is real health -- and wholeness, and holiness. That's where Buddhahood arises -- a man has become sane again.

Unless you are a Buddha you will remain insane, more or less. Insanity is bound to remain a part of your being. You can manage to live with it somehow, but it is going to be just somehow. It is a management. You cannot relax about it.

Have you not observed? Everybody is afraid of going mad. One keeps oneself in control, but the fear is always there: "If something goes wrong, if one thing more goes wrong, then I may not be able to control myself any longer." Everybody is on the verge of it. People are just nearabout ninety-nine percent on the verge. One percent more, any small thing, the last straw on the camel -- the bank fails, your woman leaves and escapes with somebody else, the business dwindles -- and you are no more sane, all sanity gone. It must have been just a facade, that sanity that goes so easily. It must have been very thin, fragile. In fact, it was not there.

The change between the ordinary man and the insane is only of quantity, not of quality. Unless you become a Buddha or a Christ or a Krishna -- these are all names of the same state of consciousness, where center and circumference function in a dance, in a symphony -- unless that symphony arises, you will remain phony, you will remain false, you will remain arbitrary, you will not really have a soul. And it is not that you cannot have it -- it is always yours. It is just for the asking and you will have it. Jesus says: Knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Ask and it shall be given -- just for the asking, and you will get it

But there is great attraction in the unnatural, because the unnatural is alien, the unnatural is opposite to you, and the opposite always attracts, the opposite always intrigues, the opposite is always there as a challenge. You would like to know....

That's why a man becomes interested in a woman, a woman becomes interested in a man. That's how people become interested and attracted into each other: the opposite. And the same follows deep down. Your natural being seems to be already yours, so what is the point of getting hold of it, of being it? One wants something new.

And that which you have you lose all interest in. That's why you are missing God, because God you already have and you cannot be interested in him. You are interested in the world, in money, in power and prestige -- those things you don't have. God is already given. God means nature. Who bothers about nature? Why think about it when in the first place you already have it? We are interested in that which we don't have, and the unnatural attracts. And one becomes focussed on the unnatural and the artificial, and one rushes into it. From one unnatural style of life into another unnatural style of life.

And remember: not only are the so-called worldly people unnatural, the so-called religious are also unnatural. That is the great understanding that Buddha brings to the world -- and that understanding has become a ripe fruit in Zen. That is the fundamental contribution of Buddha.

A man remains artificial in the so-called world -- earning money, power, prestige. And then one day he becomes religious, but again he is moving into another kind of unnaturalness.

Now he practises yoga, stands on his head -- all stuff and nonsense. What are you doing there, standing on your head? Can't you stand on your feet? But to stand on your feet seems so natural that it has no attraction.

When you see somebody standing on his head, you think, "Yes, he is doing something. Here is a man." And you are attracted -- he must be gaining something that you have not known yet, and you would also like to practise it.

People start doing all kinds of stupid things, but those are all again the same. The pattern is the same, the gestalt is the same. The change is very slight. The quality is the same.

You were earning money, now you are more interested in heaven, the next life. You were interested in what people think about you, now you are interested in what God thinks about you. You were interested in making a beautiful house here, now you are interested in making a beautiful house in paradise, in the other world.

You were being unnatural, you were eating too much, now you start fasting. Just see how one changes from one unnatural attitude to another unnatural attitude. You were eating too much, you were obsessed with eating, you were continuously stuffing yourself, then one day you are fed up with this -- literally fed up with this -- so you start fasting. Now, again, a thrill arises in you. Now again you can hope something is going to happen. And you can go to the extreme of fasting, which IS AS much against nature as eating too much.

To be natural is just in the middle. Buddha has called his way The Middle Way -- because the natural exists just exactly in the middle between opposite extremes.

You have been chasing women your whole life, and then one day you decide to become a celibate and move to a Catholic monastery, or become a Hindu monk and go to the Himalayas. Now, this is the same person who was continuously chasing women; now he is tired of it. Now he wants to drop it absolutely. Now he wants to move into the opposite direction. He escapes into a monastery. Now he enforces celibacy on himself, which is as unnatural as the first attitude. But one unnaturality leads into another and one can go on in circles.... Beware of it.

To be natural has no appeal, because to be natural means your ego will not be satisfied in any way. And Buddha is preaching only one single thing: to be ordinary, to be nobody, to be natural.

The natural man is the enlightened man. To be natural is to be enlightened. To be as natural as animals and trees and stars, to have no imposition upon oneself, to have no idea of how one should be, is to be enlightened. Enlightenment is a state of being natural. It is not something like an achievement.

When you think of enlightenment you always think of it as an achievement. People come to me and they ask, "Osho, how are we going to achieve enlightenment?" It is NOT a state of achievement -- because whatsoever you achieve or you can achieve will be artificial. The natural need not be achieved: it is already there! It has never been otherwise.

You are not to achieve enlightenment, you are simply to drop that achieving mind. You have to relax into it. It is available; from the very beginning it is available. Relax into it.

An enlightened person is not somebody who has reached to the pinnacle, who has reached to the topmost rung of the ladder. You are ALL ladder climbers; you need a ladder. It may be in the marketplace or in the monastery -- makes no difference -- but you need a ladder. You carry your ladders with you. Wherever you can find a place, you simply fix your ladder and you start climbing. And nobody asks, "Where are you going? Where is this ladder going to lead you?" But after one rung there is another rung. And you are curious: "Maybe something

is there!" so you go one step more. Another rung is waiting for you, and you become curious and you start moving.

That's how people move in the world of money, that's how people move in the world of politics. And it is not only that you have to move: because many people are going on the same ladder, you have to push others. You have to pull their legs, you have to make a place for yourself, you have to make space for yourself; you have to be aggressive, you have to be violent. And when there is so much violence and so many people fighting, who bothers where you are going? People must be going somewhere when so many people are interested.

And if you become too much of a thinker, you will lose the race. So there is no time to think about it, to think "What is the point of it all?" Thinkers are losers, so one has not to think. One has just to rush and go on rushing.

And the ladder is non-ending -- rung upon rung, rung upon rung. The mind can go on projecting new rungs. And when you move into a monastery the same continues. Now a spiritual hierarchy is there and you start moving in the hierarchy. You become very serious and the same competitiveness comes in.

This is just an ego game. And ego can play its game only in the artificial. Wherever you see a ladder, beware -- you are in the same trap. Enlightenment is not the last rung of a ladder. Enlightenment is getting down from the ladder, getting down for ever and never asking for any ladder again, becoming natural.

I have to use the word 'becoming' which is not true. It should not be used, but that's how language is -- it is made by those ladder-climbers. You cannot become natural because whatsoever you become will be unnatural. Becoming is unnatural: being is natural. So, forgive me, I have to use the language, the same language, which is not meant to be used for something which is natural. So you have to understand it. Don't be caught by words.

When I say become natural, I am simply saying: stop becoming, and fall, relax into being. **YOU ARE ALREADY THERE!**

And why do people go on moving in circles?

First, they have become very very skillful in it. And nobody wants to drop his skill, because the skill gives you a feeling of confidence, it gives you a feeling of strength. There are millions of people in the world who go on in the same rut again and again because they have become skillful. If they change, in the new space they may not be so skillful -- they will not be. So they go on running in the circle. And they go on becoming bored, more and more bored. But the more they move in the circle, the more skillful they become. Then they can't stop themselves. And they can't stop because of others too, because others are rushing by. If they stop, they will be defeated. It is really a mad world.

And then one feels very good repeating the same thing again and again. Monotony is very consoling. People bewildered and frightened by too much change find relief in monotony. That's why teenagers like the beat, and some mental patients repeat the same act or word over and over.

You can go and see in a mental asylum, and you will be surprised that all the mad people are some kind of mantra doers, they have their mantras. Somebody is washing his hands continuously day in, day out, just washing his hands. It is his mantra. It keeps him engaged, it keeps him occupied, it keeps him unafraid. And he knows how to do it; it is a simple act. If he stops doing it he becomes frightened -- nothing to hang onto. If he stops doing it, he is empty -- nothing to cling to. If he stops doing it, he does not know who he is. He has his identity as the hand washer. He knows himself perfectly well when he is washing his hands, who he is. Once he stops it, difficulties arise.

In the mental asylum, those people who have devised their own mantras -- in action, in words -- are just consoling themselves. This is the whole secret of transcendental meditation and its success in America. America is today a great mental asylum. It needs something to repeat, monotonously, continuously; it helps people. Just the same gesture, the same posture, the same mantra -- you know that territory perfectly well. You go on moving in it. It keeps you away from yourself.

Transcendental meditation is not meditation, and it is not transcendental either. It is just a consolation. It keeps you unaware of your insanity. Only an insane person can be convinced to repeat a mantra, otherwise not.

So people go on doing the same thing that they have done down the ages, in so many lives. Just watch yourself: you fall in one love, then in another, then in another... this is transcendental meditation, the same act. And you know that first time it was frustration, second time it was frustration, third time it was frustration -- and you know before-hand the fourth time also it is going to be frustration. But you don't want to see it, you don't want to look into it, because if you look into it then you are left alone with nothing to do.

That falling in love keeps you engaged, keeps you on the run, keeps you moving. At least you can avoid yourself, you can escape from yourself. You need not look into the deepest question: Who are you? You know that you are a great lover, so you go on counting how many women you have loved. There are people who keep count; they go on keeping count: three hundred and sixty, three hundred and sixty-one, three hundred and sixty-two. They have not loved a single woman. And there are people who keep count of their mantras, how many times they repeat the mantra. There are people who go on writing in their books: Rama, Rama, Rama... they go on writing it.

Once I stayed in a man's house. I was surprised, it was a great library. I asked, "What kind of scriptures do you have?"

He said, "Only one kind of scripture: I go on writing Rama, Rama, Rama -- that's my mantra. From the morning to the evening I do only one thing; I have written it millions of times, and these are all my records."

And that man is respected very much. Now, he is just a madman, utterly mad. If he is stopped from doing this nonsense, he will immediately go mad. This mad activity is keeping him in some way sane.

Ninety-nine percent of your religion is nothing but a device to keep you somehow sane.

Buddha is a totally different kind of person. He is the arch enemy of show-biz. He is somebody who wants to tell the truth, and as it is he wants to tell it. He shatters all rubbish religious ideologies. He simply shocks you to the very roots. And if you become available to him, he can become a door -- a door back home; a door, a threshold, that can make you able to fall back into nature.

In every complicated culture, in every complicated civilization, there are professional liars and professional truth-tellers, but they are not very different; they are the same people. The professional liars are called lawyers, and the professional truth-tellers are known as priests. They simply repeat scriptures.

Buddha is neither a liar nor a professional truth-teller. He simply makes his heart available to you; he wants to share. Hence, the whole Indian priesthood was against him. He was thrown out of his own country. His temples were burnt, his statues were destroyed. Many Buddhist scriptures are available now only in Chinese translations or Tibetan

translations. Their originals are lost; they must have been burnt.

Thousands of Buddhists were killed in this non-violent country. They were burnt alive. Buddha shocked the professional truth-tellers very deeply. He was bent upon it to destroy their whole business. He simply made it an open secret.

Listen to these words of Ikkyu. They describe the Buddhist approach profoundly.

OF HEAVEN OR HELL WE HAVE
NO RECOLLECTION, NO KNOWLEDGE;
WE MUST BECOME WHAT WE WERE
BEFORE WE WERE BORN.

EVERYTHING FINALLY RETURNS TO ITS SOURCE. That's the law of nature. Nature moves in a perfect circle, so everything has to return to its source. Knowing the source, you can know the goal -- because the goal can NEVER be other than the source.

You plant a seed, and then the tree arises. Years it will take, and the tree will spread its wings in the sky and will have dialogues with the stars, and will live a long life... and finally what happens? The tree produces seeds again and the seeds fall into the earth and again new trees arise. It is a simple movement.

The source is the goal!

Your body will fall back into the earth and will become part of the earth because it comes from the earth. Your breath will disappear into air because it comes from the air. Your water that is in your body will go back to the sea; that's where it comes from. The fire that is in you will go into fire. And the consciousness that is in you will move into the consciousness of the whole. Everything goes back to its source.

This fundamental has to be remembered -- because by knowing it, by understanding it, you drop all other goals, because then ALL other goals are arbitrary.

Somebody says, "I want to become a doctor, an engineer, a scientist, a poet" -- these are all artificial goals that you have fixed upon yourself. The natural goal is the innocence that you had in your mother's womb. Or go even deeper... the nothingness from where you came, that is the natural goal. And to live naturally means to know this; otherwise, you are bound to create some artificial goal.

Somebody wants to become enlightened -- that is an artificial goal. I am not saying that people don't become enlightened, but I am saying don't make it a goal. People become enlightened only when they have fallen back to their original source; when they have become natural they are enlightened.

Let me repeat again: Enlightenment is a natural state. It is not some supra-conscious state, supra-mental. Avoid Sri Aurobindo and his terminology; that is all mind game. It is not something very special; it is very ordinary. It is so ordinary that there is nothing to brag about in it.

Everything finally returns to its source, so heaven and hell are arbitrary goals, created, invented by the priests to dominate people. A great strategy -- it worked for thousands of years.

Buddha wants to burn hell and heaven and the whole ideology surrounding it. There is a beautiful anecdote in one great Sufi woman's life, Rabia el Adawiya:

One day she was found running in the marketplace -- she was known as a mad woman. She was carrying a pot of water in one hand and a burning torch in the other. People gathered

together and they asked, "What is the matter? Where are you going? And why are you carrying this burning torch and the water in your hand?"

And she said, "I want to drown hell with this water, and I want to burn your heaven with this torch. Unless these two are utterly destroyed, man will never know what religion is."

Heaven and hell are political strategy to repress people. It is a simple psychological phenomenon -- we know it, that people can be persuaded to do things either by reward or by punishment. This is a simple game. Parents play it with their children. They say, "If you do what we say, you will be rewarded -- you will get more ice cream or more toys or a visit to the movie. And if you don't follow what we say, you will be punished -- you will have to miss one meal."

This is the same strategy: heaven and hell -- just stretched to its logical conclusion. Man has been made very much afraid of hell, and whenever man is afraid you can dominate him. An afraid man is ready to become a slave. make any man afraid and you will become the master; you can dominate him then very easily -- because an afraid man wants to elan on something, an afraid man wants some consolation, some promise, some shelter.

The priest makes people afraid of hell; that's why hell has been painted with such ugliness, with such cruelty, violence. The people who have painted hell and have talked about it must have been great sadists. Their ideas are great. And you have been thinking all along that these people were saints. Either they were sadists or they were very cunning and crafty priests.

And then heaven for those who will follow the line, who will be obedient, who will not disobey the priest and the politician -- for them heaven, the reward. That too has been painted beautifully. And whatsoever was needed at a particular time, in a particular country, has been provided for. And that you can see.

The Indian heaven, obviously, is very cool -- mm? -- you can understand it sitting in Poona. Very cool. Constantly, twenty-four hours, cool breezes blow. The sun rises but it is not hot. In other words, it is air-conditioned. And hell It is all fire. But the Tibetan hell is different, has to be, because it was invented by other people, to dominate another kind of country. Fire is not allowed at all in the Tibetan hell, because Tibetans love fire; they are dying because of cold. So the Tibetan hell is completely, absolutely snow; the snow never melts, it is eternal, and you will be buried in that snow. In the Indian hell you will be thrown into fire, eternal fire; it burns continuously.

Now see the point. The Indian hell is different from the Tibetan hell? If there is a hell, it can't be different.

I have heard:

A man died, an Indian; he reached hell. He was very surprised because no Indian believes that he is going to hell. All Indians are such great religious mahatmas. Seeing himself in hell, he thought, "Something has gone wrong -- that red tape and some official mistake...." He said, "What is the matter?"

But the man on the gate said, "There is nothing wrong. You have been brought to the place where you belong. Now choose! Which hell would you like to have?"

He said, "Which hell? Are there other hells also apart from the Indian?"

"Of course, there are other hells. You can have the German, you can have the Italian, you can have the Indian, you can have the Japanese."

He was puzzled. He said, "I had never thought about it. But what is the difference? What

is the difference between the Indian and the German hell?"

The man said, "There is no difference on the surface. The fire is the same, the burning is the same, the torture is the same."

"Then why do you tell me to choose?"

He said, "But there is a subtle difference: in the German hell things are done with German efficiency. And, of course, in an Indian hell, things are done with Indian lousiness."

The man said, "I will choose the Indian hell!"

Hells can't be different. But priests were trying to dominate different kinds of people in different situations. Heaven is also different, has been taught by the priests differently. Whatsoever people were asking for has been provided. In the Mohammedan heaven homosexuality is provided for. In the Indian heaven you cannot conceive homosexuality, but in the Mohammedan heaven-homosexuality is provided for -- because it has been prevalent in Mohammedan countries, and acceptably prevalent. There has been no condemnation about it.

These are just rewards. Whatsoever YOU like will be given to you. All that you have to do is be obedient to the priest.

Buddha says there is no heaven and no hell. And with denying heaven and hell any reality, he has taken the very ground from underneath the feet of all the priests. Naturally, they were angry; naturally, they were absolutely enraged. They are angry with me, and their anger has a reason. It is not irrational, it is very rational -- because I am also pulling the very earth from beneath their feet.

I also say to you: There is no heaven and no hell; there is no punishment and no reward in the afterlife. There is nobody to punish you or reward you. Each act has its own punishment and reward intrinsic to it. When you are angry, you are punished in your anger, in your being angry. There is no punishment other than that. When you are loving, in that very loving act, love is its own reward. There is nobody keeping accounts, there is nobody writing down what you are doing here -- good and bad, and finally at the last judgement day you will be rewarded or punished. That is stupid.

Each moment, each act brings its own reward or punishment. The priest is not needed. Even God is not needed to punish you or reward you.

Existence is autonomous. Just help somebody and you feel such a joy arising in you. Hurt somebody and you are hurt. It is a natural process. It should not be exploited by the priests.

So Ikkyu says:

OF HEAVEN OR HELL WE HAVE
NO RECOLLECTION...

Ikkyu says: Ordinarily, do you remember anything of hell and heaven before you were born? If you don't remember anything, then know well you will not be going back to them -- because one only goes back to that from where one has come. The source is the goal.

And Ikkyu says: You may not remember much, but I recollect absolutely. In my consciousness, in my awareness. I recollect absolutely -- there has never been any hell or any heaven in the beginning, so it is not going to be in the end.

If you go deep down into your source -- which is easier to go into because you have been there once.... The goal is difficult. Thinking about the goal is going to be imaginary because you have never been there.

See Ikkyu's pragmatic attitude. He says: Don't bother about the goal, because how can you know about it? You have never been there! It is in the future. But you can go into the source; you come from there. You can go deeper and deeper into your being and touch the very source. It is there! Nothing is ever lost. Seeing that, you will know the goal too.

And those who have gone, layer upon layer into their being, and have touched the very ground, they agree with Ikkyu: that very ground has no hell, no heaven. In fact, you are not there -- just pure non-being, emptiness -- SHUNYATA -- nothingness, no-thingness. Become from that no-thingness, and we will be going back to that no-thingness.

If this is understood through meditations, through your own inner search, then you will never choose any artificial goal. All artificial goals lead you astray. Then one starts relaxing into nature; one becomes one's original nature; one becomes one's originality. And in that originality, in that ordinary naturalness, is Buddhahood, is enlightenment.

RAIN, HAIL, SNOW AND ICE
ARE DIVIDED FROM ONE ANOTHER;
BUT AFTER THEY FALL,
THEY ARE THE SAME WATER
OF THE STREAM IN THE VALLEY.

All distinctions are arbitrary -- like rain, snow, ice. All distinctions are arbitrary. The same river can become frozen, the same river can flow and become water, and the same river can evaporate, can become vapour and clouds -- but it is the same river.

Out of the same nothingness, the trees arise and the animals and man and woman. And these are all distinctions, utilitarian, but not true; necessary, but not absolute. When we disappear, we disappear again into that cosmicness, into that oneness, into that simultaneity.

Buddha never uses the word 'God', because God has become so much associated with wrong things -- with the priest, with the temple, with the scripture, with the ritual. So Buddha avoids that word. His word for God is 'nothingness'. And why does he insist on 'nothingness'? Because you cannot pray to nothingness. And when there is no possibility of prayer, the priest will disappear.

You cannot talk to nothingness. It will look so foolish. You can talk to God. You can say, "Father, who art in heaven..." but you cannot say to nothingness, "Nothingness, who art in heaven..." It will look so foolish. You cannot say to nothingness, "Save me!" It will be ridiculous.

You cannot pray to nothingness! You cannot create a ritual. You need not have a priest. You need not go into the scriptures. That's the beauty of the word 'nothingness'. It simply cuts the very root of the so-called religion. It creates a different kind of religiousness -- a religiousness which understands but does not pray, a religiousness which falls in silence but does not start talking with existence, a religiousness which knows no dialogue except silence, utter silence.

See the beauty of it! Buddha has chosen one of the really very potential words -- SHUNYATA. The English word, the English equivalent, 'nothingness', is not such a beautiful word. That's why I would like to make it 'no-thingness' -- because the nothing is not just nothing, it is all. It is vibrant with all possibilities. It is potential, absolute potential. It is unmanifest yet, but it contains all.

RAIN, HAIL, SNOW AND ICE
ARE DIVIDED FROM ONE ANOTHER;

BUT AFTER THEY FALL,
THEY ARE THE SAME WATER
OF THE STREAM IN THE VALLEY.

And so we all disappear into nature when we fall back. In the beginning is nature, in the end is nature, so why in the middle do you make so much fuss? WHY in the middle? Becoming so much worried, so much anxious, so much ambitious -- why create such despair? Nothingness to nothingness is the whole journey.

There is a Buddhist expression for it. Buddha used to say: in a cold night, in a cold winter night, dark night, a bird enters into a palace by one window, flutters in the room for a while -- the coziness of the room, the king's palace, the light, the warmth -- and then is again out of the room by another window. Buddha says so is the life's dream -- just a moment's warmth, a moment's coziness, a moment's palace and the pleasures of it, and again we plunge into nothingness.

From nothingness we come and to nothingness we move... and just in the middle a momentary dream. Why be so much attached to it? Why be so obsessed with it? Seeing it, that we come from nothing and we move to nothing, in the middle also we can be nothing. That is Buddhahood. Just being nothing... nothing special, nothing extraordinary.

That's why the Zen monk is the most ordinary man in the world. Chopping wood, carrying water from the well, and he says, "How marvellous! How wondrous!" He continues doing the small things of life. That is the beauty of it. But people start... people are looking for something extraordinary.

Just the other day I was reading a lecture of U. G. Krishnamurti. He says he went to see Ramana Maharshi. He was not attracted -- because he was chopping vegetables. Yes, Ramana Maharshi was that kind of man, very ordinary. Chopping vegetables! U. G. Krishnamurti must have gone to see somebody extraordinary sitting on a golden throne or something. Ramana Maharshi just sitting on the floor and chopping vegetables? preparing vegetables for the kitchen! He was very much frustrated.

Then another day he went and saw him reading jokes. Finished for ever! This man knows nothing. This man is very ordinary. He left the ashram; it was not worth it. But I would like to say to you: this man, Ramana Maharshi, is one of the greatest Buddhas ever born to the world. That was his Buddhahood in action!

U. G. Krishnamurti must have been in search of a pretender. He could not see the ordinariness and the beauty of it and the grace of it. And this same man, U. G. Krishnamurti, lived with Swami Sivanand of Rishikesh for seven years -- and that chap was just stupid -- and practised yoga with him. And after seven years he recognized that he has nothing; but after seven years, he took seven years. That simply shows that he also has a mighty dull mind. Seven years to see that Sivanand has nothing. Seven seconds are more than enough! And with Ramana Maharshi, seven seconds were enough -- because he saw him chopping vegetables or reading jokes, looking at cartoons. That's how the ordinary mind, the egoistic mind functions.

The ego is always searching for something bigger, some bigger ego. And the true sage has no ego; he is an ordinary man. He is utterly ordinary -- that is his extraordinariness!

SHOULD YOU SEEK
THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA
ALL NIGHT LONG,
SEARCHING, YOU WILL ENTER

INTO YOUR OWN MIND

SHOULD YOU SEEK
THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA
ALL NIGHT LONG...

The ordinary mind is interested in the outside. The outside is intriguing, wondrous, worth exploring. So we explore it for money, for prestige, for other things, and then one day when we are finished with the so-called worldly things and we start looking again for a master, for Buddha, for Christ -- still outside! We start looking for the way, but still outside. And the Buddha is not found outside. And the way is not found outside.

To go seeking outside is to go farther and farther away from the way, because the way is inside, the Buddha is inside.

SHOULD YOU SEEK
THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA
ALL NIGHT LONG...

And you can go on seeking ALL NIGHT long, this dark night of millions of lives, and you will not find anything -- except this truth. If you stumble upon it you are fortunate.

SEARCHING, YOU WILL ENTER
INTO YOUR OWN MIND.

If you can find only one thing out of all kinds of frustrations -- that there is nothing to be found in the outside, nothing at all -- and seeing it, realizing it, you turn in, then your own mind is the whole thing, then inside you is all:

SEARCHING, YOU WILL ENTER
INTO YOUR OWN MIND.

By and by, as you go deeper into your own mind, you penetrate from mind to no-mind. The superficial layer is of the mind, but the inner content is of no-mind. The superficial layer is of the ego, the inner content is of egolessness. If you enter in, first you will come across mind, thoughts, desires, fantasies, imagination, memory, dreams-and ALL that stuff. But if you go on penetrating, soon you will come to silent spaces, thoughtless spaces. Soon you will start coming closer and closer to the innermost core of your being which is timelessness, which is nowhere, which has no time and no space.

When you come to a point where you can't see any time and you can't see any space, you have arrived. But this arrival is arriving back to your own nature. You have not arrived to something new: you have arrived to that which was already given and has been always yours.

WHEN THEY ASK YOU,
" WHERE IS YOUR COUNTRY?
WHAT IS YOUR NATIVE PLACE?" ANSWER,
"I AM A MAN
OF ORIGINAL INACTIVITY."

And when you have arrived at this point, now you can understand that there is no need to do anything -- all is happening. That there was never any need to do anything. That all was already happening. You were unnecessarily worried. You carried all those weights because you were ignorant. Otherwise, things were happening.

The world is running so smoothly and so beautifully and so perfectly, but because we think we are separate from it the problem arises: How to run our lives? If you know that you are part of it, there is no need to worry. This cosmos, such an infinite cosmos, running so perfectly well -- can't you remain in it without any worry? But the separation is there.

You have taken one thing for granted: that you are separate. Going deep inside, that separation disappears.

That is the meaning when I say: Egolessness arises. Ego means separation. Ego means, "I am separate from the whole." Ego means the part is claiming to be the whole in its own right. Ego means the part is claiming, "I have my own center and I have to survive and fight and struggle for myself. If I don't fight for myself, who is going to fight for me? If I don't try to survive, I will be killed."

Insecurity arises because of the ego. When the ego is gone there is simply security. In fact, there is no insecurity and no security; all those dualities have disappeared. To live in that is to live nirvana, is to live enlightenment.

WHEN THEY ASK YOU,
"WHERE IS YOUR COUNTRY?
WHAT IS YOUR NATIVE PLACE?" ANSWER,
"I AM A MAN
OF ORIGINAL INACTIVITY."

It does not mean that you will not be doing anything. For example, I am speaking -- this is doing. But still I say to you: I am not doing it, because there is no doer in it. Speaking is happening just like trees are flowering or birds are singing, just as new leaves are coming to the trees. Seeing you, seeing your questions, new answers are coming into me. Otherwise, there is nothing in my mind. It is a response; you call me, I respond.

What I am saying to you is what you have provoked in me. There is nobody saying it. There is nobody.... While I am walking, there is nobody walking. While I am eating, there is nobody eating. Eating is happening, walking is happening, talking is happening, listening is happening, but there is nobody behind it. There is pure nothingness, a mirrorlike nothingness. Not that activity disappears, but the doer is found no more.

Buddha disappeared when he was forty. Still he lived up to eighty-two years -- forty-two years more he lived. And he did ALL kinds of things, but there was no doer; it was all natural. 'Natural' means that which happens of its own accord.

That's why Zen people say: Zen you feel hungry, eat, and when you feel tired, sleep.

A great master died and his chief disciple, who was known all over-the country as an enlightened person himself, started crying. Many had gathered and it was very shocking to them, because they had been thinking this man was enlightened. In fact, because of this man the old master had become famous; otherwise, nobody would have known him. He was a very silent man, a man of few words, few and far between. Because of this disciple -- this disciple had a charisma, this disciple had a magnetism -- the old master had become known.

And now this disciple is crying? People felt this was not right. They told him, "Please don't cry, otherwise what will people think? So many people are coming to see the old

master, to give him the last send-off, and seeing you, an enlightened person, crying... it will have a very very bad effect on them."

But the enlightened person said, "But what can I do? Tears ARE coming and I am no more there to prevent them. When laughter comes, I laugh. And when tears come, tears come! When it happens, it happens. I am not there to prevent, I am not there to create -- the doer is no more there."

This state, this natural state, this utterly ordinary state -- Ramana Maharshi chopping vegetables, or this Zen man crying, or Bodhidharma laughing -- there is nobody behind it! You just watch... you also do a few things when there is nobody behind it, and those are the only things which bring bliss to you.

Have you not observed some moments in your life when you are not there? The morning, the sun is rising, and it is cool and the birds are singing... and suddenly you lose track of yourself, and you become so absorbed in the rising sun and in the beautiful morning that for a moment you forget that you are. Immediately there is beauty.

The beauty does not arise out of the sunrise, because there will be many who are passing by the same road and they are not looking at the sunrise. It has happened to you because you are not there.

Making love, sometimes you disappear. When you disappear there is orgasm, there is great beauty and great joy and great blessing, ecstasy -- but only when you disappear. If you are looking for orgasm then there is no beauty, then there is no grace, because you are there continuously hankering. How can orgasm happen when you are there? Orgasm is when you are not. Ecstasy is when you are not. Beauty is when you are not. God;is when you are not. Love is when you are not.

But these moments come to everybody, because this is a natural phenomenon. You can avoid, but not always. Sometimes in spite of you it happens. A child giggling, and suddenly something opens in you. Doing nothing, sitting in your room, and suddenly something drops like a weight from the head -- and it is there!

Yes, I call it 'it' -- it is there. The benediction.

This is original inactivity. Ikkyu says: Let this be your land. This is where you really belong, this is from where you come, and this where you should relax and be.

THE FIGURE OF THE REAL MAN
STANDING THERE --
JUST A GLIMPSE OF HIM,
AND WE ARE IN LOVE.

A TREMENDOUSLY BEAUTIFUL SUTRA. THE FIGURE OF THE REAL MAN: this is the figure of the real man -- original inactivity, doing without the doer, being there without being there. Action flows but it is natural; it is a happening, not a doing. This flow, this spontaneity, this responsiveness, this oneness with the total, with the whole, is what Ikkyu calls the original man or the real man.

You are unreal -- as you are you are unreal. Let me remind you. Man can live in two ways: real, unreal; natural, artificial. Unreal everybody has become. It takes great effort to remain-unreal; hence, unreality is agonizing. It is very arduous to remain unreal. It is a constant work, because you have to go against nature. It is going up-current, it is pushing the river; with your tiny hands pushing the gigantic river. You feel tired, you feel washed out, you feel dissipated. And sooner or later you will feel defeated -- the river will possess you

and you will be thrown with the current of the river.

Being real means going with the river, flowing with the flow, allowing the flow to flow through you.

THE FIGURE OF THE REAL MAN
STANDING THERE...

And once you have seen the figure of the real man in you... and it is always standing there, waiting for you to look back.

THE FIGURE OF THE REAL MAN
STANDING THERE --
JUST A GLIMPSE OF HIM,
AND WE ARE IN LOVE.

JUST A GLIMPSE OF HIM... and suddenly all hatred, all anger, all aggressiveness, all violence, disappears. JUST A GLIMPSE OF THE REAL MAN... of your reality, of your authenticity, of your naturalness... AND WE ARE IN LOVE. In fact, we are love. Then life takes a new colour, a new aroma, a new fragrance, a new flavour. The flavour is called love.

Buddha has said that when a man attains to the insight, from the outside there is only one indication to know whether he has attained or not -- that is love.

I would like to say to U. G. Krishnamurti: he should have looked in the eyes of Ramana Maharshi. He looked only at the hands which were chopping vegetables. He should have looked into his eyes -- with what love he was chopping the vegetables. He should have looked into his eyes to see what love he was. He was the Real Man.

There is only one indication and that is love. But to understand love you have to be a little silent, a little loving, a little open. If you are full of prejudices about how the enlightened man should be, then you will go on missing. You should not have any prejudices.

Just look into the eyes of a real man, and suddenly something will start stirring in your heart too. Tears will come to your eyes, your energy will have a great delight, your heart will throb with new vigour. Your soul will spread its wings.

JUST A GLIMPSE OF HIM,
AND WE ARE IN LOVE.

A single glimpse transforms the whole life. Once you have looked into your innermost core, you are never the same again. Then your life is nothing but love. Then you live love, then you are love.

And that love is not the love that you know. What you know is nothing but lust camouflaged as love. What you know is a kind of exploitation, a mutual exploitation, of two persons who are not capable of being alone. They exploit each other and help each other to be together. Real love arises only when the real man has been looked into, when the real man has been encountered. Then love is a state of being, not a relationship. Then you give because you can't do anything else. Then you share -- not that you DECIDE to share -- then you find sharing happening. Then you bloom in love. Then great lotuses open up and the fragrance is released.

Buddha has said two words: PRAGYAN and KARUNA. PRAGYAN means samadhi, wisdom, enlightenment; and KARUNA means love, compassion. These two are two aspects

of the one phenomenon of encountering the real man.

Look in! Enough you have looked out. Enough you have searched out. You have lived in the dark night for many many lives; it is time, it is ripe time, to look in. You have become VERY artificial, very unnatural.

Let me introduce you to yourself... become acquainted again with who you are. And a single glimpse transforms, and transforms for ever.

And again I would like to repeat: this transformation is not something special -- it is very ordinary because it is just your nature. Knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Ask and it shall be given to you. Seek and ye shall find....

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #6

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The first question

YOU SAID LIFE AND EXISTENCE HAVE NO GOAL, THEY ARE A PURPOSE UNTO THEMSELVES. OTHER MASTERS, FOR INSTANCE, SRI AUROBINDO, TEACH EVOLUTION AS THE AIM OF THE WORLD, EVOLUTION IN ALWAYS REACHING FOR STILL HIGHER LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS -- FROM THE KINGDOM OF MINERALS TO THE KINGDOM OF VEGETABLES, ANIMAL, MAN, FROM PRESENT MAN TO ENLIGHTENED MAN.

ARE THESE TEACHINGS WRONG? OR IS THERE A BRIDGE TO PURPOSELESSNESS?

SAT BODHI, SRI AUROBINDO IS A GREAT PHILOSOPHER but not a master at all. Very intelligent, very scholarly, a great intellectual, but not an enlightened master. He talks about God and talks beautifully, but it is all talk, it is all abstraction. It is not a realization.

If it is a realization, then there can't be any goal. For example, if the world has evolution as the goal, then what will be the goal of evolution? Why evolution at all? Why in the first place? You will have to create another abstraction, and it will be a regress AD INFINITUM.

Whatsoever you fix as the goal, the question will remain relevant about that. Why?

If this is the goal of evolution, to realize God, then what is the goal of realizing God? Just ask that question -- and you are back to the same place. If enlightenment is the goal of life,

then what is the goal of enlightenment? And then you can see the point -- enlightenment will have no purpose. And if the ultimate itself has no purpose, then what is the point of saying that life has purpose and the world has purpose? If the ultimate is purposelessness, then that ultimate permeates all.

This goal-orientation comes from the ego. The ego cannot accept that there is no goal. The ego cannot accept that there is no hierarchy. The ego cannot accept that minerals and trees and animals and man and enlightened people ALL exist in a great simultaneity -- there is no gradation. You would like to be higher, you would like to be somebody special -- you are man, not a mineral. But what is so great in being a man? What is so great in being an animal? or a man or an enlightened man? Why create the hierarchy?

And finally the whole thing falls flat -- then in the end God has no purpose, and God is all.

Those who have experienced, those who have not just been thinking about God, but those who have experienced will say God is nothing but the cosmic simultaneity of all. Minerals are exactly where man is -- in their own way, in a different form. Trees are exactly where enlightened people are, in their own way, in their own form. Nobody is higher and nobody is lower. The ego cannot accept that because if there is nobody higher, nobody lower, the ego can't exist at all. It can exist only through comparison. It has to put somebody lower and it has to put somebody higher. It can exist only in the middle of these two falsities. It has to put somebody lower so it can feel, "Good, so I am special." And then it has to put somebody higher so it can go on striving, so that it can go on achieving, so that it can go on ladder-climbing.

But if the ultimate has no purpose... what purpose is there in enlightenment? Buddha is purposeless -- just think of it -- and you are purposeful; God is purposeless, and you are purposeful. If God is purposeless, you are purposeless -- because you are not separate from God. Who is existing in the trees? Who is treeing in the trees? Who is hidden in the rocks? Who is singing in the birds? Who is speaking in me and who is listening in you? It is all one. The speaker and the spoken to are one, the knower and the known are one, the lover and the beloved are one.

Once this becomes comprehensible to you, you relax -- you relax in the cosmic simultaneity. That's what I mean when I say be natural. Ego brings unnatural desires in you; it drives you crazy. Life is simple, but to be simple one has to be purposeless. Any goal, and you can't be simple. Any goal and you can't be herenow. Any goal and the desire will rock you. Any goal, and you are on the way, again moving -- you cannot enjoy this moment, the grace of this moment, the benediction of herenow.

Once you understand this, all goals disappear and with all those goals, you disappear -- then what is left is enlightenment. To know that there is no purpose is to become enlightened, to know that all is good as it is. And we are all participating into the same reality. Nobody is higher and nobody is lower. There is no comparison needed.

Which is higher? -- ice is higher or water? Vapour is higher or ice? We know that there is nothing higher or lower -- ice, water, vapour, are all manifestations of one reality called H₂O. H₂O has these three forms. God has these millions of forms: man, woman, beautiful, ugly, stupid, intelligent, sinner, saint. Nobody is higher, nobody is lower. To see it is to be transformed. From that very moment you start disappearing, you start melting.

People like Sri Aurobindo will give you a new kind of ego, a spiritual kind. You start striving for supra-mental states, supra-conscious states, and you are again in the same rut. The race has started again. First it was for money, power, prestige; now it is for supra-mental

states. And ALL that comes as a shadow to it will be there. Then there will be competition, then somebody is going higher than you, then you are lagging behind, or you are going higher than somebody else. And everybody has to prove that he is higher, and he has to continuously fight those who are competing... then the whole nonsense has entered again. Then you are in a marketplace again -- in a spiritual marketplace, of course, but what is the difference? In the ordinary marketplace somebody was richer than you, now somebody has more satori quality in him, now somebody is more meditative, now somebody is more enlightened.

If there is a goal, then even enlightenment will be in degrees -- more or less. If there is no goal, you can become enlightened this very moment -- YOU ARE! You just need the courage to recognize it, the courage to be it. It hurts because the ego will have to be left -- and ALL that you have tried in your life has been because of the ego. You may even be meditating because of the ego and for the ego. You want to have that attitude of 'holier-than-thou' so you can condemn the whole world and you can say, "I am a spiritual person -- you all are materialists."

You can go around India and you can see: every Indian thinks that, that the whole world is materialist except Indians -- holier-than-thou. And then people have to invent ways so they can prove that they are holier-than-thou. They will eat this and they will not eat that; they will live according to a certain pattern, they will have a certain style. All these are mind games. Beware of people like Sri Aurobindo!

MY approach is not that of evolution. Nothing is going anywhere -- all is here. Things are changing, certainly, but there is no evolution. Things are moving, certainly, but nothing is going higher and nothing is left behind as lower. Drop those categories. And dropping them you will immediately be entering into a new world. Suddenly you will find friendship with trees, because they are no longer lower. Suddenly you will find a great affinity with birds, because they are no longer lower. Suddenly you will look into the eyes of your dog, and you will find a Buddha there too. Then the sheer joy of it is infinite. You will look into the eyes of your woman, and a Buddha is hiding there too.

I make all things divine. I don't want you to go to God -- I bring God to you. And not only to you -- I bring God to the whole existence. It is really there. There is no other reality; this is the only reality there is. This is the only dance there is. Don't miss this dance! Don't get obsessed with ideals, otherwise you will be losing an opportunity.

Sat Bodhi asks: YOU SAID LIFE AND EXISTENCE HAVE NO GOAL, THEY ARE A PURPOSE UNTO THEMSELVES.

Yes, it is so. It is not a philosophical statement. I am simply sharing my experience. I am not saying anything which I have not seen, felt, lived. I am simply opening my heart to you. It is so.

It is not an argument. I am not trying to convince you of anything at all. I am simply making it clear to you what has happened to me. And I say to you: this is available to you too -- and THIS very moment. Not a single moment's postponement is needed, because enlightenment is a state of nature.

Relax, don't be tense about goals, because all goals make tension, create tension, stress, strain, because you always have to look ahead, you have to look far away. You have to think of future things, you have to plan for them. And you have to strive. Naturally, tension arises, anxiety arises, anguish arises. You are torn apart -- your reality is here and your heart is

somewhere else. You become schizophrenic.

When I say relax, I mean drop all goals -- drop ALL ideals. Relax into this moment... listen to this moment, live this moment, have a taste of it. Be surrounded by the reality that is already here, and suddenly you will also have the same taste I am talking about. It is an experience, existential. It is not speculation.

You say: OTHER MASTERS, FOR INSTANCE, SRI AUROBINDO, TEACH EVOLUTION AS THE AIM OF THE WORLD...

I DON'T TEACH YOU ANYTHING AS THE AIM OF THE WORLD. I teach you only life, love, joy. I don't want you to become obsessed with the future. NOW is my teaching -- if it can be called a teaching. Rather than calling it a teaching I would like to call it a sharing. I am not a teacher in that sense. I am not giving you a doctrine so that you can adapt yourself to the doctrine and you can become a follower. I want you to become me, not a follower.

But you are so miserly. Not only in giving: even in taking you are so miserly. To hide that miserliness you philosophize in so many ways -- these are strategies. You are afraid to relax. So first you were tense for money, for a better house, for a better job, for a more beautiful woman. Now you are tense for evolution -- how to become enlightened, how to become a Buddha?

You need a good kick in the pants. That's exactly what happened...

A great seeker, a philosopher, a thinker, came to Ma Tzu. Ma Tzu is one of the rare Zen masters. And the philosopher asked -- he was a professor in a university -- he asked how to become enlightened, how to become a Buddha. Ma Tzu said -- he was sitting in the temple just by the side of a great Buddha statue -- he said, "To talk about such solemn and serious things, let us start by the right approach: you first bow down to Buddha."

It looked so right that to talk about Buddhahood, to talk about enlightenment... and Ma Tzu said with great seriousness, "You bow down to Buddha." So the philosopher bowed down -- and Ma Tzu gave him a good kick, a terrific kick in the pants. And something happened... not only that you are laughing: the philosopher started laughing, seeing the whole ridiculousness of it. His first satori -- he had some taste of Buddhahood in that moment.

What really happened? He was not expecting such a kick from such a great man, such an enlightened sage. You never expect such things. It was such a shock. For a moment, his thinking stopped. For a moment, he could not think at all. This was so unexpected.

In that very moment, bowing down TO the statue of Buddha and Ma Tzu kicking him so unexpectedly -- it was like an electric shock. It must have gone to the deepest core of his mind. For a moment, all thinking stops, all time stops... and he is looking at Buddha's statue. In that very moment, that meditative moment, he started laughing.

And years later on, he was again and again saying to people -- people would ask him, "What happened to YOU? because you have never been the same man again" -- and he would say, "Something strange happened. The day Ma Tzu kicked me, I have not stopped laughing since then. Whenever I bow down to Buddha again, I again remember Ma Tzu and the kick is again there. For a moment my thinking stops and I can see what this man means. He taught me without using a single word."

That's exactly what you need: a kick in the pants -- a terrific kick. YOU ARE Buddhas! simply forgotten. You need only a remembrance -- no evolution! It is NOT that you have to

become a Buddha. You ARE a Buddha, fallen asleep. Somebody needs to kick you. Somebody needs to SHOUT at you. Somebody needs to hit you. And that is the purpose of a master. Ma Tzu is a master.

Sri Aurobindo is not a master; Sri Aurobindo is just philosophizing, giving a consolation to people. Many people came to him, thousands became interested in him -- because it is so cheap to become interested in philosophy. Nothing is lost, nothing is at stake, and you learn beautiful words, and you start dreaming about things, and somebody systematizes the whole thing. He was a great systematizer: he labels things, categorizes them; he goes with such a system that he has a great appeal for the logical mind, for the modern mind. But just because he has the appeal, that simply shows that he suits the modern mind, and anything that suits the modern mind is not going to change it.

You need somebody who can possess you unexpectedly, who can shatter your ideas -- who can shatter you, who can take the very earth from beneath your feet. Only very courageous people become interested in a master. To be with a master is dangerous. One never knows what he is going to do, one never knows what he is going to say. He himself does not know! Things are happening. He is in tune with the whole, so whatsoever happens happens.

Remember, Ma Tzu has not kicked this man -- if Ma Tzu had kicked this man there would have been nothing, maybe a fight. God has kicked through Ma Tzu. Ma Tzu functioned only as a hollow bamboo.

The ways of a sage are strange, illogical, paradoxical. Sri Aurobindo can't be a sage -- he is so systematic, so logical. His very logicalness is enough of a proof that he knows nothing. He is clever with words, a genius with words. I don't think anybody else in this century was so capable with words, with such talents of logic, scholarship, reading, research. But behind all that jargon there is nothing.

Another man was alive in Sri Aurobindo's days, Ramana Maharshi. He had the experience. Very few people went to him, very few, but those who went were benefitted. But to see Ramana Maharshi needs a totally different kind of approach. He will not speak much; he will not try to convince you. He will be sitting there -- if you are available, he is available. And his ways will be very simple. Unless you have a heart to feel that vibe, you will miss him.

It is not always so. J. Krishnamurti is there. He talks; talks very intelligently. Remember, I will not say logically: talks very intelligently; goes into the analysis of any problem as deeply as is humanly possible. But he is not a philosopher either. All his talk is just like uprooting weeds from the garden. He destroys your problems through his analysis. He does not give you anything; he simply takes away all that you have been carrying in your mind. For a moment you are utterly lost -- and in that very moment you can see his reality. His experience starts flowing in you. People can miss him also.

People used to miss Sri Ramana because he was silent; he would not say much. Just the other day I mentioned U.G. Krishnamurti. When he saw Ramana Maharshi reading joke books and looking at cartoons, he was very much frustrated. Not only that: a man asked a question about God and U.G. Krishnamurti was present there -- very seriously, bowing at his feet, a man asked about God. And what did Sri Ramana do? do you know? He gave him a joke book and said, "Read it!"

Naturally, U. G. Krishnamurti was very much offended. Is this a way? This seems to be disrespectful to the man who has asked such a serious question -- to give him a joke book. This is again a kick in the pants, in its own way.

What he is saying is, "What nonsense are you talking about! God? It is not a thing to be talked about -- better read a joke book and have a good laugh.

"If you can laugh, maybe you can know God -- not by what I will say. But if you can laugh a hearty laugh, a belly-laugh, in that moment thinking stops."

Now, he has given a great message without saying a single word. Have you not watched it? When you laugh you are off mind. For a moment you are no more in the mind. Laughter takes you somewhere else. Where does it take you? It takes you to the same place where meditation takes you. So if you see a very serious and sad man and he claims that he is meditating, know well that he is not meditating. Meditation is always dancing. It is never serious, sad -- it is sincere, of course, but never sad. It is joyous, it is gay.

You must have heard the old proverb: "Laugh and the whole world laughs with you; weep and you weep alone." They have changed this proverb a little bit in the modern times. Now they say: "Laugh and the whole world laughs with you; weep and you sleep alone." But it is the same.

In the moment of laughter, suddenly you are one with the harmony of existence. Weep... you have fallen apart, you are no more part of it. In sadness, in seriousness, in despair, you are not in rhythm with existence. In laughing, in dancing, in singing, in loving, you are in rhythm with existence.

There is no evolution -- only rhythm or no rhythm. These are two states, and they are available right now. You can be in rhythm, you can be not in rhythm -- that is the freedom of man. Trees are continuously in rhythm, birds are continuously in rhythm. Man can choose. These are different manifestations. Because you can choose, you have chosen the wrong. And the wrong has an appeal -- because by choosing the wrong, you become important; by choosing the right, you disappear. And you have been taught from the very childhood to be important, to be the first in the world. You have been taught ambition, you have been poisoned to the very core. So always you want to be important.

Now, this U. G. Krishnamurti missed Sri Ramana -- and something great was happening. Almost like Buddha giving his flower to Mahakashyap, Sri Ramana giving a joke book to a man who is asking about God, or Ma Tzu giving a terrific kick in the pants. U. G. Krishnamurti missed Ramana. Then he missed J. Krishnamurti too. He lived for years with J. Krishnamurti.

Now, J. Krishnamurti is totally different in his expression, very logical, very rational. The beginning of his work is always with the mind; then slowly slowly he leads you beyond the mind, But there U. G. Krishnamurti thought it was all abstraction, philosophy. He stopped going there because "It is all abstraction." He left Sri Ramana because there was no philosophy. He left Krishnamurti because there was too much philosophy. In both the cases he missed.

And he lived with Sri Sivananda of Rishikesh for seven years doing yoga postures. There for seven years he thought, "Something is here." And there was nothing! Sivananda is a very ordinary teacher. You can find dozens of them all around this country teaching people how to stand on their heads, teaching people stupid things. There he remained for seven years, became a disciple.

Now, he missed two pinnacles... and this is what goes on happening. You have a mind, a certain mind. When you go to a master, you look from your mind. If it fits, you are happy; you start clinging. But that is not going to help -- because it fits, it will strengthen the same mind that you had brought with you. If by chance you come across a real master, nothing is going to fit. He is going to disrupt all your ideas about how a master should be; he is going to

sabotage you. He is going to take all expectations. He is to frustrate you, he is to disappoint you in every possible way -- because that is the only way real work can start. And if you still can be with him, then... then you are going to be awakened.

Sleep is easy, cheap; awakening is arduous. You will have to renounce your dreams and you will have to re-nounce much comfort, much convenience. You will have to renounce many ideas that you have always thought very valuable.

My approach is that there is no evolution happening. The world is exactly where it always has been, and will remain there. And I don't mean that things are not changing -- bullock-carts have disappeared and cars have come, and cars are on the way to disappearing sooner or later; some private flying machines will soon be around.

Many things have changed, but really nothing has changed. At the core, everything is exactly the same. Do you think that if you become enlightened today you will be more enlightened than Buddha because twenty-five centuries have passed and man has evolved? Do you think the people who were there in Buddha's days were more unenlightened than you are? Or go still further back... Moses... or still further back... Krishna. Do you think in the days of Krishna, five thousand years ago, there were less enlightened people, more unenlightened people than there are today? It is exactly the same.

Time makes no difference! When you become enlightened, on what date, will not be a decisive factor. When you become enlightened, you become enlightened! You simply become aware. You are no more asleep. You remember, you recognize your reality, and you are in tune. Cars may be passing by, or bullock-carts -- do you think it makes any difference? Would Buddha have been more enlightened if cars' had been passing by in Bodhgaya and trains had been shrieking and aeroplanes had been rushing from one airport to another? What happened to Buddha in Bodhgaya twenty-five centuries ago would have been the same -- bullock-carts or cars or aeroplanes or spaceships make no difference. And the people who were unenlightened were as unenlightened as the people are today.

At THAT depth nothing ever changes, there is no evolution. Otherwise, Buddha will have to Come back to become more enlightened this time... and then there is no end. Then every time you become enlightened, after a few centuries you have to come back and become more enlightened be-cause now more sophisticated enlightenment is available.

At the deepest core nothing is changing. Only on the periphery do things change.

OTHER TEACHERS, FOR INSTANCE, SRI AUROBINDO, TEACH EVOLUTION AS THE AIM OF THE WORLD...

These people appeal because you want some longing, ambition, desire, you want some passion, and these people supply you with it. Whatsoever is demanded is supplied. Because you want something to cling to, they give you spiritual commodities. You can't remain without desires, so you say, "Now I am no more interested in the world" -- and they give you other-worldly desires.

They say, "Okay, take this. Now worry about this. You have worried enough about the world -- now worry about meditation, now worry about enlightenment. You have competed enough to reach to Delhi, now forget about Delhi -- reach moksha, nirvana, paradise... but go on reaching!"

And you feel very happy -- a new toy has been given to you and you start playing with the new toy. Sooner or later you get fed up with that toy, then some other toy has to be given to you.

Just the other day, somebody had written a letter to me. In Germany, somebody has invented a new kind... far superior to enlightenment -- it is called 'transformation'. Now you have played with the word 'enlightenment' too long -- now somebody is bound to come and say, "That is nothing. Take transformation. Enlightenment is simply enlightenment -- we transform! We take you to another, a new formation. Enlightenment means you remain the same and light comes to you. Transformation means you become totally new."

Now this appeals. A new toy. Then somebody will come and will give some other word. People go on playing with words. Beware!

I really want to do work here. I don't want to give you any more toys -- I want to destroy all toys. It is going to be hard work. It is going to be painful. But if you can move with me just one step, I ask only one step: your dreams, your sleep, will have gone for ever... and then real life starts. Real life is with the whole. Unreal life is alone.

ARE THESE TEACHINGS WRONG? Sat Bodhi has asked.

They are not right or wrong -- they are simply illusory. You cannot call them wrong even. They are not right, they are not wrong -- they are simply illusory. They have nothing to do with truth. They have something to do with your mind. Your mind demands those things; somebody comes and supplies you. It is a con game.

The second question

DOES ANYTHING OR ANYONE NEED CORRECTION? IT PUZZLES ME.

PREM TUSHEER, NOBODY NEEDS CORRECTION. And who is going to correct? The moment it is said that somebody needs correction, sooner or later somebody is needed to dominate you, to manipulate you, to make a slave out of you.

That's why leaders down the ages have been calling and shouting from the housetops that everything needs to be corrected, everything needs to be changed? improved. If nothing needs to be corrected, they won't be leaders any more. They live on the idea that things need to be improved, revolutions have to be done -- then they are great leaders.

And nothing is ever improved, nothing can ever be improved. You can either be fast asleep or awake. And awakening is not a correction, remember. It is not correcting your sleep. If sleep is corrected that will mean a few more tranquillizers are injected in you so that you can sleep better. This is correction. New pillows, more comfortable; a new bed, more convenient; a better bedroom... these are corrections so you can remain asleep in a better way, so you can almost remain in a coma.

Sleep does not need correction. Awakening is not a correction in sleep -- it is simply dropping sleep. It is moving into another kind of reality, having a totally different kind of relationship with existence.

Moralists, politicians, puritans, priests, they are always after you, calling for correction. Everything needs to be corrected, every person needs to be corrected -- that is their power. The world is dominated by politicians because of it. They always go on finding what has to be corrected, and they always go on deluding you that now the correction can be done. But there is only one way: if THEY are in power then the correction can be done.

First they convince you that the correction is needed; then naturally when you become convinced, the correction is needed. And why do you become convinced? Because you are

suffering -- suffering because of sleep, not because of immorality; suffering not because of sin, but because you are unconscious. And they come and they say, "This is why you are suffering. A better morality, a better code of conduct, better behaviour, a better character, and your suffering will disappear."

And you start correcting yourself, and you cannot correct -- you need help, you need a priest, a guide to guide you. You need a leader! First they convince you correction is needed, and then naturally they come by the back door with all the paraphernalia to correct you. You become slaves. That has been the trick down the ages. People have been dominated; people have been reduced into things. People have been condemned, people have been praised -- but all the same they have been dominated through condemnation, through praise.

This is the great conspiracy. I would like to tell you once and for all: there is no need for any correction. You are not to be improved upon. Then what is needed? Awakening is needed, not correction. Not better morality, not better ethical conduct -- no. Just consciousness. And with consciousness, morality comes of its own accord.

In deep sleep, unconscious, how can you correct yourself? At the most, you can have a little better dreams. Maybe not in black and white -- technicolour dreams, psychedelic dreams, but you can only have better dreams in sleep. You cannot have reality in sleep. I have heard:

It was a dark, cloudy night and the drunk staggered into the cemetery and fell into a hole which had been dug in preparation for a burial the following day. The drunk hiccupped and fell asleep.

Half an hour later another drunk swayed into the cemetery. He was singing loudly and his raucous voice woke up the drunk in the grave who suddenly started to yell that he was cold.

The singing drunk tottered to the edge of the grave and peered blurrily down at the complaining drunk. "It's no wonder you are cold," he shouted down to the drunk, "you have kicked all the soil off yourself!"

This is what has been going on. You are asleep, your leaders are asleep; you are asleep, your priests are asleep. The problem is not that the man has kicked all the soil off himself... And if this other drunk starts helping, what do you think he will do? He will throw the soil on him again... "No wonder he is feeling cold!"
You need only one thing.

And corrections are millions, and still they never suffice. You put one thing right on this corner, and something else goes wrong on another -- because your sleep keeps a certain balance. Have you not watched? You stop smoking and then you start chewing gum. You stop one thing and you have to start another. And it is the same old game! YOU only go on changing things; you remain the same.

Corrections are millions. There is no end to them; you can go on correcting and Correcting and you will never be correct. You will never be right. You can put ALL the wrongs right, and you will find yourself still wrong -- because deep down you are still un.conscious, you don't know who you are.

The first and the only step is to know who you are, is to become aware.

Timothy was on holiday in Ireland and staying at a small country inn. One evening in the bar he was amazed by the following conversation: "That's a beautiful hat you've got there," said an old man to a young fellow who was standing next to him at the bar; "where did you

buy it?"

"At O'Grady's," replied the young man.

"Why, I go there myself!" commented the old man. "You must be from around these parts then?"

"Aye. From Murphy Street."

"Gracious!" exclaimed the old man. "I live there too!" "Quite amazing," commented Timothy to the barman. "that those two folk over there live in the same street and have only just met."

"Don't you believe it!" said the barman. "They're actually father and son but they're always too drunk to recognize each other."

No correction is needed, just awareness is needed. Become more alert. No character is needed, because all character is false if you are not conscious, and all character is a bondage if you are not conscious. And all character is nothing but chains -- it doesn't bring freedom. All morality is hypocrisy -- if you are not aware, if you are not conscious.

So, to me, religion means only one thing: to be more conscious, to live more consciously.

DOES ANYONE OR ANYTHING NEED CORRECTION? IT PUZZLES ME.

It has puzzled everybody down the ages. Forget about correction. Put your total energy into awakening. There are only two ways to be: unconscious or conscious. Choose....

The third question

"ENLIGHTENMENT IS MY TRUE NATURE; THERE IS NO NEED TO DO ANYTHING."

"ONLY WHEN EFFORT IS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED AND ONE FEELS UTTERLY USELESS DOES GRACE COME."

WHAT IS ALL THIS? I AM CONFUSED. WHAT SHOULD I DO? SHOULD I CONTINUE WITH MEDITATION OR SHOULD I JUST SIT AND LET THINGS HAPPEN?

PLEASE GUIDE ME.

SHIV-PRIYANAND, IF YOU ARE CONFUSED then you will have to continue meditations. Confusion is the illness: meditation is medicinal. Both the words -- meditation and medicine -- come from the same root. If you are confused, you will have to go on meditating. When you see the point without any confusion, then there is no need. But meditation will prepare you, meditation will force you to see the point that there is no need to do anything. Only meditation can do that.

Just listening to me... I have told you that to be natural is to be enlightened. Now you think, "So, that is great! I can sit silently and do nothing." But can you really sit silently and do nothing? If you can really sit silently and do nothing, then this question would not have arisen. You would have sat and known and you would have bowed before me and thanked me. There would have been no question. You would have come dancing to me, not with a question and a confused mind.

If you can sit silently doing nothing, what else is needed

That's what Buddha was doing under the Bodhi Tree -- sitting silently doing nothing... and then it happened. That's how it happened to me! That's how it always happens!

But not to do is not so easy. Because you have become so accustomed to doing something or other, even sitting will be a doing to you. You will have to force yourself in a yoga posture and you will sit strained, still, in control, holding, trying to sit silently and not do anything -- and boiling within, to do a thousand and one things, and thousands of thoughts will clamour around, will distract you.

Can you just sit and do nothing? That is the ultimate. That's what nirvana is, samadhi is.

It can happen; just listening to me also it can happen, but great intelligence is needed then. Then, simply, you have seen the point -- that to be natural is all. Then where is the confusion? From where can it come? Then what is the confusion? You have SEEN it, or you have not seen it. If you WILL sit silently, you will walk silently, you will eat silently, you will talk silently. You will become a non-doer, you will become a natural being.

But if you have not seen it, then you will need a few more crazy things; you will have to go through them. Those meditations will force you to see the point. Either you see just by listening and sitting by my side, or you will have to see the hard way.

Buddha meditated for six years, and meditated intensely, totally. Then this realization arose in him: "What am I doing? Trees are perfectly happy, birds are perfectly happy -- what am I doing? And these trees are not meditating, and these birds have never thought about meditation, and they have not read Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, and they don't do yoga asanas and they don't chant any mantras. And the whole existence is so tremendously ecstatic! What am I doing standing on my head and fasting and all that nonsense?"

He SAW it, but six years it took for him to see this. And he was no ordinary man. He was tremendously intelligent. It took six years for him to see the point. But the moment he saw it, he relaxed under the Bodhi Tree. He fell asleep and the next morning he was awakened. Not only physically he opened his eyes -- spiritually his eyes were opened. Next morning when he opened his eyes, he was totally a different man -- the real man had arisen. And just a glimpse of the real man, says Ikkyu, and you are in love. And the moment he saw his real man, he started living a life of compassion and love. There was no other way now, no choice. He became a natural man.

So, if you feel confused, then go on meditating. Meditation is not for enlightenment: meditation is for confused people. Meditation does not lead you to enlightenment; it simply makes you fed up with your confusion. Just see the point: meditation is not a way to enlightenment -- it is just a way to get rid of confusion. And when there is no confusion, enlightenment comes of its own accord.

Meditation's work is negative. It takes things away from you. It does not give you anything; it simply goes on taking things away from you. Anger disappears, greed disappears, desire disappears, and you start losing whatsoever you had. You become every day poorer and poorer.

That's what Jesus means when he says: Blessed are those who are poor in spirit.

Anger is not there, greed is not there, ambition is not there. Slowly slowly, chunks of your being are cut from you. And one day suddenly nothing is there -- or, ONLY NOTHING IS THERE. That very moment, light penetrates. All those things greed, anger, passion, lust, hatred, ambition, ego -- they were hindering the path. They were not allowing the light to penetrate in you. They were functioning like a rock between you and God. All those removed... suddenly God enters into you and you enter into God.

If you understand me, there is no need for any meditation. But if you don't understand me... to understand me meditation will be needed. Then go on doing it.

I understand your confusion, your trouble. You can do it only if it leads to enlightenment.

That's what your problem is. You have not said it so clearly, but that's exactly where the problem is. You can do it if I emphasize that it will lead you to enlightenment -- that I cannot do, because that is not true. You want me to promise you so that you can go on doing meditation. You want me to hypnotize you, you want me to go on supporting your desires, your goals, that you want to become enlightened, that you want to become natural... now look at the whole absurdity of becoming natural! How can one become natural? NATURAL YOU ARE! All becoming will lead you towards unnatural structures. Becoming cannot bring you to being natural. Becoming means becoming unnatural.

Natural you are, but you want me to support you because you cannot sit silently. You cannot sit, really; you need something to think about, something to do. You want some goal. And if I take the goal away you ask, "Then why should I do meditation if it is not needed?" It is still needed. Needed, not for enlightenment -- needed just to destroy this constant restlessness in your mind.

It is like this: if you live in a room with closed doors the sun will not penetrate, although opening the door is not creating the sun. By opening the door you don't create the sun -- the sun is there. But by opening the door, you become available to the sun. Meditations are just like opening the door.

So right now if you sit, you will be sitting in confusion, and the confusion will grow more and more if you sit. You will gather it; it will become almost impossible to bear it. And you will have to go to the movie or to the radio or the TV or to the club -- you will have to go somewhere.

Meditations are cathartic. They throw all the rubbish that you contain inside. They simply cleanse you. They open the doors, they open the eyes -- the sun is there. Once you are available, it starts penetrating you.

Then you will never say, "I became natural." You will say, "I was natural. The problem was not how to become natural -- the problem was how not to go on becoming unnatural."

The fifth question

YESTERDAY YOU SAID THAT THERE IS NO GOAL, NO PATH, NO ONE TO LEAD AND NO ONE TO FOLLOW. IS THIS STATEMENT A LIE AGAIN? WERE YOU KIDDING US YESTERDAY?

That's what I am doing every day. That's the only possible thing to do. ALL statements are lies. Truth remains unstated. Truth cannot be reduced to a statement, it cannot be reduced to a formula. It is vast! How can you reduce it to a statement? The moment you state anything about truth, the very expression becomes a barrier. Words cling around truth like chains.

Truth can be transferred only in silence. So those who really listen me, they don't listen to what I say -- they listen to what I am. They listen to the gaps, they listen to the intervals. Words are not important, but there are small gaps between words and the meeting between you and me happens in those gaps.

Those gaps are of meditation. Slowly slowly, words move on the periphery and my meeting, my communion with you becomes the center phenomenon. Words are there, just distant, on the periphery. Silence starts happening.

If you fall silent listening to me, then you have listened to me. If listening to me your mind stops and there are moments when there are no thoughts, all is still and quiet, then you

have been listening to me.

Hearing me is one thing; listening to me is quite another. Those who come near to me for the first time, they hear. And those who stay with me for a longer time, slowly slowly the transformation happens. Hearing starts changing into listening.

Listening is non-verbal. Then my presence is listened to -- then something is bridged between me and you. Then my heart and yom heart start beating together in one rhythm. Then it is a song, a dance of energies.

This is what in the East is called SATSANG -- to be in the presence of the master. It is not a verbal communication at all. Then why do I go on speaking? Why can't I sit silently here? That much silence you will not be able to absorb. You can absorb it only in homeopathic doses, only once in a while.

And my words help. They don't state the truth, but they help, they indicate; they are fingers pointing to the moon. They are not the moon themselves, just fingers pointing to the moon, arrows. Don't be obsessed by the fingers, don't start clinging to the fingers, don't start worshipping the fingers -- because that is how you will miss the moon. Forget the fingers and look at the moon.

That moon is silence, utter silence, where not even a single word has ever been uttered.

You have that space inside you. I have become one with it; you are not one with it. But once in a while, moving with me, flowing with me, hearing my words, listening to my silences, once in a while it happens. And those moments are of grace. In those moments you have the first taste of God. Slowly slowly, you will become more and more capable. That's why I go on speaking.

And then new people are always coming. For them I have to speak. For the older ones, slowly slowly they will not be bothered by my words. Hearing will disappear completely. They will listen to my words just as they listen to the sound of a waterfall. They will not search for any meaning in them. They will not search for any truth in them. They will not search even for any coherence in them. They will not be constantly looking into consistency, contradiction, logic, illogic -- no, all these things by and by disappear. They will listen to my words as they listen to the songs of the birds, or the wind passing through the pine trees. You don't ask what the meaning is. You simply listen... and in that listening you become that sound passing through the pine trees, you become that wind.

Whatever I say is a device so it is a lie. Truth has never been said, cannot be said. Truth is unutterable. But you can listen to it. It is unutterable, it can't be said, but it can be listened to.

Let me repeat: it cannot be uttered, but it can be listened to. You can catch hold of it -- in silence, in love, in communion. I am not able to say it, but you are able to listen to it. Hence this device of talking to you every morning, year in, year out. This is just a waterfall... listen to it, don't remain just hearing.

And I am so contradictory by arrangement. I manage it, because if I am very consistent, you will never be able to listen to me, you will go on hearing me. I am so contradictory -- sooner or later you are tired. You say, "What is the point? because this man is going to say one thing this morning and tomorrow he is going to contradict it." Seeing it happening again and again.... You will cling to my statement and then tomorrow I contradict it, I have to contradict it. Whenever I see that somebody is clinging somewhere to any of my statements, I have to contradict it immediately -- to relieve him of the burden, to relieve him of his clinging, to relieve him of the words that he has accumulated inside himself.

So I will go on, zigzag, contradicting myself a thousand and one times. Slowly slowly,

the understanding dawns on you that there is no point in clinging to any words of this man, there is no need to bother about what he says. But by that time you have fallen in love with me. By that time you are in a totally different kind of relationship with me than you have ever been with anybody else. By that time, you have started enjoying my presence. By that time you have started imbibing me. By that time you have started feeling the nourishment. Now you don't care what I say: now you care more that I am. Then listening has started.

And you will understand me only by listening. You will understand me only when you have forgotten all about understanding what I am saying. All statements are lies. Lao Tzu is true. He says: Tao cannot be said, and the moment you say it you have betrayed it. He is absolutely true.

Truth is so infinite and words are so finite. Only when you have something infinite in you... silence is infinite, unbounded -- it can contain truth. Love is infinite, unbounded -- it can contain truth. Trust is infinite, unbounded -- it can contain truth.

Be natural, spontaneous here with me. Be in the moment, as if all time and space has disappeared, as if the whole world has stopped. The mind has stopped... and suddenly there is truth in all its radiance, grandeur, splendour.

It is here, right this moment. If you have ears, hear it. If you have eyes, see it. And if you cannot see it, and if you cannot hear it, then don't go on clinging unnecessarily here. I am in a hurry -- I don't want any weeds here. I will find every possible means and ways to drop people who are just sitting there like rocks. Either throb with me, or get lost. Either be with me, or don't be here. Because I MEAN to do business!

The last question

I SEE I DON'T TRUST LIFE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT. NOTHING FEELS POSSIBLE UNLESS I DO. THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN TRUST HAPPENS, BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO AT OTHER TIMES WHEN I DON'T FEEL IT? PRETENDING TRUST SEEMS EVEN WORSE. LIVING IN FEAR FEELS NO GOOD EITHER.

Rupa, that's how we go on creating new goals. I go on taking goals from you and you go on creating new goals. Now one hundred percent trust -- now that becomes the goal. Ninety-nine percent and you are worried.

Can't you simply be as you are? Why bother about one hundred percent trust? Trying to be one hundred percent when you are not is bound to create hypocrisy. You will become artificial, you will become unnatural.

And do you know what one hundred percent trust means? One hundred percent trust means trusting even in your mistrust -- that's what one hundred percent trust means. If there is a moment of untrust, you trust that moment too! What can you do? One moment you trust me, good; another moment you don't trust me, good. This is one hundred percent trust. When ALL is good it is one hundred percent trust.

Now you are again trying to create trouble and anxiety for yourself. One moment you trust me -- good, you feel very good. Then another moment comes distrust -- now you are worried, now somehow you have to change this distrust into trust. Now you are again starting a new ladder.

Now you will compare: "Somebody has one hundred percent trust -- this moment never

comes to him. And somebody has even less trust than me" -- and you are becoming part of a hierarchy, you have started comparing. And you are creating ambition and fever. And when it does not happen, what are you going to do? And anything DONE by you will be unnatural. So you will become artificial: when it is not there you will pretend. You will at least believe that it is there -- at least on the surface. You will become afraid of going deep into yourself, because if you go deep into yourself you will know that it is not there.

One hundred percent trust means: Accept life whatsoever it brings -- trust, mistrust, love, hate, God, Devil, good, bad. You don't try to change anything, don't try to correct anything. Be in a let-go -- that is one hundred percent trust.

And let me remind you again, otherwise next day Rupa will be here saying, "I can allow let-go sometimes, but sometimes it doesn't happen. The let-go is not one hundred percent." LET-GO AGAIN MEANS THE SAME: when it happens, it happens; when it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen. You are not supposed to do a thing.

Do anything and you become artificial -- and people have become so artificial. It is very rare, very rare, to see even a small part in a person which is not artificial. And it has all happened, this calamity has happened, because you are such a great improver -- continuously improving upon yourself, correcting and correcting. From your very childhood your parents were correcting you, then your teachers were correcting you, then your professors were correcting you, your priests were correcting you -- the whole society has just been correcting you. And, naturally, after twenty-five years of correction by everybody, you yourself become a great correcter. Then you start correcting yourself.

In fact, you are allowed to leave the university only

when you start doing the work of the parents and the teachers and the professors and the priest on your own -- then they allow. Then they say, "Right, now there is no danger. This man will do whatsoever we were doing, and will do it far better because he will know from the inside, he will know the inside story."

Have you not observed it? Sometimes doing something, suddenly you hear your mother's voice: "Don't do it!" If you have not heard it, try to hear, and you will find your mother still saying, "Don't do it!" ACTUALLY your mother's voice you can hear, or your father's, saying, "This is wrong. This is not the way to do the thing. Correct it!" Or your teachers correcting. They have created such a rift in you that you have become two.

This WHOLE society exists in a kind of schizophrenia. Every person is split. This society has tried the trick of divide and rule. It has divided every person into two: the correcter and the one who has to be corrected. So everybody has become like a small student and the headmaster -- both are there! And the headmaster with the cane shouting and threatening, and the small child always being corrected. And of course the small child also takes revenge. Whenever the headmaster is not looking at the child, it does something -- at least it can show his tongue or laugh or joke. Or there are moments when the small child will take possession of you and will force you to do something that you never wanted to do, and will make you repent. It always says, "Yes, sir," but it never means it. It says, "Because I am afraid I am saying yes, but I will show you."

This constant conflict goes on within you. And then everything becomes false, pseudo, phony.

I have heard:

Groom: "Would you be very annoyed with me if I confess that all my upper teeth are false?"

Bride: "Not at all, darling. At least I can now relax and take off my wig, inflatable bra, glass eye and artificial leg."

Now what is left? Just watch what you are carrying around yourself, what you think is your personality. What is it?

An American tourist, visiting England, had just enjoyed a delicious dinner in a Winchester restaurant.

"Would you like coffee, sir?" inquired a waiter.

"Certainly," replied the American.

"Cream or milk?"

"Neither," said the American firmly. "Just give me what I'm used to back home: a pasteurized blend of water, corn syrup solids, vegetable oil, sodium caseinate, carrageenan, guar gum, disodium phosphate, polysorbate 60, sorbitan monostearate, potassium sorbate, and artificial colour."

Now what is left? Slowly slowly, everything becomes false, artificial, synthetic, plastic. Then you lose the taste of life. And when you lose the taste of life, you lose contact with God. When you become inauthentic, you become uprooted.

Please don't try anything upon yourself Stop trying. Let things be. Let things be as they are. They are utterly beautiful. All ugliness is created by you. Yes, sometimes mistrust is perfectly beautiful. Sometimes doubt is good; it protects you from many foolishnesses. It protects you from gullibility. Sometimes trust is good, sometimes no trust is good. But whatsoever the case, THIS I call one hundred percent trust -- that you always say, "Good, so this is the thing in this moment. So this moment God wants me to be trustful and this moment God wants me to be doubtful." Leave it to God, and you simply be at the receptive end, a receptacle, and you will be surprised. Life will start happening to you and God will start happening to you.

But we are trained very deep down from the childhood to be false, to be untrue, to be formal.

An Englishwoman and her young son were travelling in a taxi in New York. As the taxi passed a particularly seedy part of the city, the small boy was fascinated by the garishly made-up ladies who were walking along the streets accosting some of the male passers-by.

"What are those ladies doing?" asked the boy.

His mother blushed and said, somewhat embarrassed, "I expect they are lost and are asking people for directions."

The taxi driver overheard this, and said in a loud voice, "Why don'tcha tell the boy the truth -- in udda woids they're prostitutes."

The woman blushed even deeper red, and her son asked, "What are p... p... pros... what the driver said? Are they like other women? Do they have children?"

"Of course," replied the mother. "That's where New York taxi drivers come from."

Truth is not accepted anywhere. People are annoyed with truth. False pretensions are very very acceptable. We have lived in lies so long that truth simply annoys. It is not just an accident that Socrates is poisoned -- his only sin was that he was trying to make people aware

of the truth. His sin was nothing else. He was a simple, innocent man, harmless, utterly harmless. He did not harm anybody in any way, but still Athens was angry. Why were they angry? He was trying to make people feel uneasy about their lies. He was trying to force them to see the truth.

Whosoever tries to make you aware of the truth is going to be thought an enemy by the society. The society lives in lies, it depends on lies.

I am not here to help in your lies. I can't say to you to be one hundred percent in trust or at least the way you mean by one hundred percent. Then what will happen to those moments when you can't trust? What will you do? You will simply cover them up. You will pretend that they are not there. You will throw them into the unconscious, in the basement of your being, and will never look there. And they will accumulate there and one day they will explode. No, that is not to be done. When distrust comes, allow it to come, and know that it is there. Accept it. It must have some meaning. If it is there, it must have some meaning.

It is like a thorn in the rosebush -- not all are roses, a few thorns are there. They protect the roses. There must be some deep harmony between the thorn and the rose; so is there between trust and untrust. Accept the harmony of polarities. This I call one hundred percent trust -- from my side. Trust everything that happens. Mistrust is included, doubt is included, nothing is excluded.

I teach you totality in life. And sometimes when you are not total, that too is included in totality. Accept that too. And this will be a liberation. Then there will be no more creation of chains, no more creation of lies, no more repressions. And a man who is not repressed is bound to have the glimpse of the real man.

One glimpse of the real man, and Ikkyu is right, you are in love.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #7

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IF IT RAIN, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT RAIN NOT, LET IT NOT RAIN;
BUT EVEN SHOULD IT NOT RAIN,
YOU MUST TRAVEL
WITH WET SLEEVES.

LOOK AT THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS!
THEIR COLOUR AND SCENT FALL WITH THEM,

ARE GONE FOR EVER,
YET MINDLESS
THE SPRING COMES AGAIN.

BUDDHISM
IS THE SHAVED PART OF THE SAUCEPAN,
THE WHISKERS OF THE PEBBLE,
THE SOUND THAT ACCOMPANIES
THE BAMBOOS IN THE PICTURE.

THE PUPPET-PLAYER HANGS THEM
ROUND HIS NECK, NOT HIS HEART;
HE CAN TAKE OUT A DEVIL,
HE CAN TAKE OUT A BUDDHA.

IF HE SAYS,
"THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT,"
ALREADY HE HAS TRANSGRESSED,
AND CAN SAY NOTHING ELSE,
THIS DARUMA IKKYU.

WHAT IS RELIGION? It is not the howling of the wolves at the moon, but that's what it has become to the masses. If the masses are right, then animals have a great religious sense -- wolves howling, dogs barking at the moon, at the distant, at the faraway.

Paul Tillich has defined religion as the ultimate concern. It is exactly the opposite: it is the immediate concern, not the ultimate concern. In fact, the immediate is the only ultimate there is.

Religion is not a desire for the distant, a curiosity for the faraway. It is an inquiry into one's own being.

That's why Buddhism is not concerned with God at all. It is concerned with you, with your reality. It's whole process is like peeling an onion. Buddhism continues to peel your reality; layer upon layer, it goes on destroying the illusions, the dreams. And just as happens when you peel an onion, ultimately only nothing is left in your hands.

That nothing is the source of all. Out of that nothing all arises and slowly slowly disappears back into that nothing.

Now physicists are coming very close to it. They call that nothing 'the black hole' -- matter disappears into black holes, is utterly annihilated, becomes nothing. Now, after black holes, there is talk in scientific circles about white holes too. Out of white holes, matter arises. It seems black holes and white holes are just two aspects of the same reality -- like a door. On one side of the door is written 'Entrance'; the other side of the same door is called the 'Exit'.

When things appear out of the womb of nothingness, the door is called the white hole -- white because it gives birth, white because life comes out of it. By calling it white we are appreciating it, we are valuing it. One day every-thing disappears back into the same door -- then we call it black. We have always called death black. Man has always been afraid of the black, of the dark, of death.

But it is the same reality! From one side it is 'black hole', from the other side it is 'white hole'. Buddha calls it SHUNYATA.

There is every possibility that modern physics will come every day more and more close

to Buddha. It has to come. It has to recognize Buddha's insight into reality, because nobody else ever dared to call nothingness the source of all. How did Buddha stumble upon the fact? He was not a physicist. He was not working into the deepest reality of matter, but he was working into the deepest reality of his own psychology.

You have to be reminded of that also: Buddhism is not a metaphysics. Metaphysics is always a concern with the ultimate. 'Meta' means beyond -- beyond physics, beyond that which can be seen; beyond the earth, beyond the visible, the tangible, the sensuous. Metaphysics means always the faraway, the distant reality, the God.

Buddhism is basically purely a psychology; it is not concerned with metaphysics. Its concern is with the reality of the mind, how the mind functions, what constitutes the mind. And it goes on penetrating deeper into the layers of the mind, and finally comes to the realization that deepest, at the bottom core, there is nothingness.

Buddha was not believed by people, because who can believe in nothingness? Who wants nothingness in the first place? Modern physics is also puzzling people, driving them crazy. But reality is as it is; whether you like it or not is not the question. Your liking or not liking is not going to change it. Your liking and disliking can only keep you in illusions. Reality has to be seen as it is. And to be capable of seeing that is all that is needed to become religious: the courage to see reality in its naked truth, in its nakedness, undisguised, uncovered, undressed.

And once you have seen reality as it is, once you have had a glimpse of the real man, a great transformation happens of its own accord -- that very insight transforms you, transmutes you. You are neVer again the same, because all illusions disappear. Seeing the reality, how can you continue to delude yourself? How can you continue to dream? How can you continue in your prejudices? How can you go on keeping false opinions? How can you carry on with doctrines and philosophies and scriptures? Seeing the reality, all simply disappears, only reality is there. And to be with that reality is liberation.

Jesus is right when he says: Truth liberates. Truth is liberation. There is every possibility that Jesus learnt the secrets of the truth through Buddhist masters. There is every possibility that before he started his work in Israel, he was in India, in Nalanda, with Buddhist masters. Nalanda was one of the most ancient Buddhafields, a great university of monks. Never before and never after has something like that ever existed again.

I am hoping to create something like that again, on a wider scale, a bigger scale. Nalanda was a great experiment, an experiment with truth, an experiment to see truth as it is. Ten thousand monks continuously meditated, worked, penetrated, with no prejudices, with no a priori ideas. They were not bent upon proving anything; they were REAL seekers.

The unreal seeker is one who is bent upon proving something from the very beginning. The unreal seeker is one who, says, "I am in search of God" -- one thing he has accepted, that God exists. Without knowing? If he knows, then why search? If you don't know, then how can you search for God? Who knows? -- God may exist, may not exist. The search is already based on an a priori belief.

In Nalanda, those ten thousand monks were not searching for God, they were not searching for any heaven. They were not searching in reality for something a priori. They were simply searching into their own being with no idea of what they were searching for. Their search was pure. They were just LOOKING into reality... to see what is there. And because they were not preoccupied by any idea, they stumbled into nothingness, they came to know nothingness.

If you are preoccupied by some idea, then you are bound to create the illusion of your own idea in that nothingness, and that nothingness is capable of supporting any idea. Any

dream that you are carrying in you can be projected on the screen of nothingness. If you are searching for Krishna, YOU WITH find him, and it will be just a projection. If you are searching for a Jewish God, you will find. If you are searching for a Hindu God, you will find. Whatsoever you search for you WILL find, but it will not be truth and it will not liberate you. It will be your imagination.

Remember, this is one of the most important things in life, that if you start a search with a fixed idea, a fixed attitude, you are bound to find it -- and then there is a vicious circle. When you find it you think, "Of course, it is because I have found it." Then it enhances your belief even more, then you start finding it more, and so on and so forth... it becomes a vicious circle. The more you believe, the more you find it; the more you find it, the more you believe. And you go on pouring reality into a dream, and one can go on wasting lives together.

Search without any idea -- that is Buddha's message. Look, just clean your eyes and look. Don't look for some-thing in particular, just look, a pure look into things, into the suchness of things. The eyes have to be clean and pure, otherwise they can project; even a small particle of dust and it will show on the screen of nothingness. Just a little liking, disliking, a little choice, and you will create reality.

Buddha's approach is such an absolute experiment -- simple once you understand, not complicated. But if you don't understand, you can go on deluding yourself.

There is every possibility Jesus lived in Nalanda. That's why in the New Testament his whole life is not accounted for. You see him when he was nearabout twelve, once he is mentioned, and then you see him when he is thirty. Eighteen years are missing in the New Testament story of Jesus. Where was he for these eighteen years? What was he doing? Why are those days not accounted for? It seems to be a big gap. And in a small life -- thirty-three years only he lived. More than half his life is missing.

The story is fragmentary; something consciously, deliberately has been dropped. It is impossible that those who were writing the story would not have become aware of the fact that eighteen years are simply missing -- and the MOST important years. Because up to twelve a child is a child. When at thirty he suddenly appears with John the Baptist, he is already a mature man, enlightened, arrived, a SIDDHA -- one who has known, one who has seen, accomplished, attained. The painting is complete.

The three years that are related in the Bible story are just about his work on others -- but what about his work upon himself? Where did he meditate? With whom? What was he doing? How did he become what he became? The most important years are missing. And by the thirty-third year he is crucified. So only three years' story is available really. First his birth story; then he is seen arguing with the rabbis in the temple of Jerusalem when he is twelve; and then these three years. The most important part, his preparation, his work upon himself, seems to be deliberately dropped. But his teaching in those three years is ample proof that he must have come in contact with Buddhist groups.

He had travelled to India, there are ample proofs; he had lived in India, about that too there are ample proofs. And whatsoever he is saying in those three years time, his ministry, is absolutely in tune with Buddha. Of course, he is translating it into Jewish terms -- he talks about love, about compassion. The Jewish God was not a God of love, not at all -- a very jealous God, a very angry God; ready to punish, ready to destroy. He was not at all a God of love! From where did this idea of a God of love arise in Jesus? He must have come in contact with people who had worked hard and had come to know that when one becomes enlightened, one's whole energy becomes love energy.

And if this happens to man, then this must be so about the ultimate reality too. God can

only be love.

And then Jesus talks about if somebody slaps you on one cheek -- give him the other cheek too. That is an utterly Buddhist approach: Forgive! That too was not a Jewish concept at all. If somebody throws a brick at you you have to throw a rock at him -- that was the Jewish approach, tit for tat. If somebody has destroyed somebody's one eye, both his eyes have to be destroyed -- justice, not compassion.

Jesus brings compassion. Instead of justice he brings the value of love.

And Jewish ideas were much too moralistic -- those Ten Commandments have been haunting the Jewish mind since then; thirty-five centuries have passed. Jesus brings a new Commandment. He says: I give you a new Commandment -- just as I have loved you, you love everybody else. Love is a new Commandment. But that is the flavour of Buddha.

Remember again, Ikkyu says: One glimpse of the real man, and you are in love. You are love.

The Buddhist approach has been to look into reality without any idea so that reality can reveal itself. Allow reality to reveal itself; don't enforce anything upon it. All other religions have been enforcing something or other -- hence they go on missing. Their work becomes metaphysical; in fact, their work becomes a kind of autohypnosis. Buddhism de-hypnotizes man. Buddha's work is de-hypnosis: how to drop all kinds of hypnosis, all kinds of suggestions given by the society, by the people. And when you are utterly silent, with no conditioning, truth becomes known. That truth liberates.

Now the sutras:

IF IT RAIN, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT RAIN NOT, LET IT NOT RAIN;
BUT EVEN SHOULD IT NOT RAIN,
YOU MUST TRAVEL
WITH WET SLEEVES.

ONE VERY PRECIOUS WORD in Buddha's approach towards life is SAMATA. SAMATA means equanimity, equilibrium, balance, choicelessness. Don't move to the extremes, avoid extremes. Pain and pleasure are two extremes -- don't choose. Don't avoid either and don't cling to either. Just remain in the middle of it, watching, looking at it, unattached.

Pain comes, let it come -- you just be a watchful consciousness. You just be awareness. There is a headache, you just watch it. Don't say no to it, don't start fighting with it; don't deny it, don't avoid it. Don't try to engage yourself somewhere else so you are distracted from it. Let it be there: you simply watch. And in watching it, a great revolution happens.

If you can watch it without like and dislike, suddenly it is there but you are out of it, you are no more in it. You are standing there unbridged to it. Choicelessness unbridges you from all kinds of moods, from all kinds of minds. That IS SAMATA.

Pleasure comes, let it come. Don't cling to it. Don't say, "I would like to have you for ever and ever." If you cling to pleasure, then you will avoid pain. And don't go to the other extreme: don't start denying pleasure, don't start escaping from pleasure, because that is the same. If you start escaping from pleasure, you will start clinging to pain. That's what ascetics do.

The indulgent person clings to pleasure, avoids pain. And the ascetic person avoids pleasure and clings to pain. Both approaches are wrong; in both you lose balance. Buddhism

is neither indulgence nor asceticism. It does not teach ANYTHING -- it simply says WATCH!

And that's what Jesus goes on repeating again and again: Watch! Be watchful! Keep alert, keep awake.

You try it! This is an experiment in psychology -- nothing to do with God. And you will be surprised and immensely benefitted. The day you can see that you are neither pain nor pleasure is a great day, is the greatest day -- because from then onwards things will be different.

IF IT RAIN, LET IT RAIN...

If there is pain, let it be so.

IF IT RAIN NOT, LET IT RAIN NOT...

If there is no pain, let it be so. If there is pleasure, let it be so. But you don't get identified with anything.

BUT EVEN SHOULD IT NOT RAIN,
YOU MUST TRAVEL
WITH WET SLEEVES.

But remember one thing: even if your life has been of convenience, comfort, pleasure, and there have not been great pains, great miseries, then too YOU MUST TRAVEL WITH WET SLEEVES. Why? Because still you will become old, still you will have to die one day. So one can live a very pleasant life, but old age is coming, and death is coming. Death cannot be avoided; there is no way to escape from it; it is inevitable. So whether you lived a painful life or you lived a pleasant life will not make much difference when death comes. And death is coming.

Death has come the day you were born. In the very idea of birth, death has entered in you.

I have heard a very beautiful anecdote about one of the most famous Zen masters, Bankei:

Bankei had a terrible fear of death from his earliest age. When he was a small child, his mother created the fear of death in him. He says that at the age of three, his mother, as a punishment, constantly frightened him with death. Not only that: sometimes, because Bankei had committed something which was not right, she pretended that she had become dead. She would lie down with closed eyes and stop her breath, and the small child would cry and weep around her and would call her, "Come back! And I will never do such a thing again." Only then would she start breathing.

So from the very childhood the fear of death had entered into him. He was constantly afraid. Maybe that's why when he was young he became interested in Zen -- because Zen people say there is no death. He entered a monastery and way overdid the austerities. Whatsoever was said, he overdid it, out of the fear of death. He wanted to see that there is no death; he wanted to overcome death, he wanted to conquer it. He practised za-zen sitting for such long periods at a time that the places where he sat became covered with sores and boils. He became so ill, he nearly lost his life! Then he withdrew for a few months to recuperate.

It was during a feverish period of his convalescence that he had his first satori. And this consisted of an instantaneous realization that he could not die for the simple reason that he had NEVER BEEN BORN! The crux of the matter was that he had never been born.

Now, Bankei knew as well as you know and everybody knows that his body emerged from his mother's womb, that his body had been born. Yet he realized that HE had never been born.

With the idea of birth, the idea of death arises. They go together, aspects of the same coin. Unless you get rid of the idea of birth, you will not get rid of the idea of death.

That's why Zen people insist: Go deep into your being and see your face that you had before birth. If you can have one small glimpse of that original face which you had before birth, then death has disappeared. Attached to birth you are going to die -- don't be attached to birth, then you need not be afraid of death. Watch birth and you will be able to watch death too.

And the greatest experience of life is to die watching death. But you have to prepare for it. If you cannot even watch a headache, if you cannot even watch a small pain in the stomach, if you cannot watch these small things, you will not be able to watch death.

Buddhism says: Watch! Let every moment of life become an experience in watchfulness -- pain, pleasure, every-thing; love, hate, everything; good, bad, everything. Go on watching. Let one taste spread on your being: the taste of watchfulness, and SAMATA arises out of it. One becomes utterly balanced in the middle of the polarities.

In that balancing... just like a tight-rope walker walks balanced on the tight-rope. He remains in the middle, does not lean to the left or to the right; or whenever he finds himself leaning to one side, he immediately balances him-self. Between pain and pleasure, day and night, birth and death, go on balancing... and then that very balancing will give you an insight of the reality you are.

That reality has never been born. This body has been born, this body is going to die....

Another Zen master, Bokoju, was asked by a man... Bokoju was ill, old, just on the verge of death, and this stranger came and asked, "Master, where will you be when you are dead?"

And Bokoju opened his eyes and said, "I will be in the grave! All my four limbs raised towards the sky."

A strange answer. And you will miss the point if I don't remind you. When Bokoju is saying, "I will be lying in my grave with all my four limbs raised to the sky," what is he actually saying? He is saying, "The body will be in the grave and I will be watching it lying in the grave with four limbs raised to the sky. I will still be watching, I will still be a watcher. I have always been a watcher. The body was born and I was watching. The body became young and I was watching. And the body became old and I was watching. And one day it will die and I will be watching. I am my watchfulness."

This Buddha calls SAMASATI -- right awareness.

IF IT RAIN, LET IT RAIN;
IF IT RAIN NOT, LET IT NOT RAIN;
BUT EVEN SHOULD IT NOT RAIN,
YOU MUST TRAVEL
WITH WET SLEEVES.

So don't be deceived by your comfortable, convenient life -- because death is coming to disrupt all, to destroy all. Prepare yourself!
And the only preparation is balance.

LOOK AT THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS!
THEIR COLOUR AND SCENT FALL WITH THEM,
ARE GONE FOR EVER,
YET MINDLESS
THE SPRING COMES AGAIN.

LIFE REPEATS ITSELF MINDLESSLY -- unless you become mindful, it will go on repeating like a wheel. That's why Buddhists call it the wheel of life and death -- the wheel of time. It moves like a wheel: birth is followed by death, death is followed by birth; love is followed by hate, hate is followed by love; success is followed by failure, failure is followed by success. Just sec!

If you can watch just for a few days, you will see a pattern emerging, a wheel pattern. One day, a fine morning, you are feeling so good and so happy, and another day you are so dull, so dead that you start thinking of committing suicide. And just the other day you were so full of life, so blissful that you were feeling thankful to God that you were in a mood of deep gratefulness, and today there is great complaint and you don't see the point why one should go on living. And tomorrow again that blissful moment will come. The cherry blossoms will come again, and there will be fragrance and the singing of birds, and the sunlit days... and AGAIN the cloudy days, and the dark nights of the soul. And it goes on and on, but you don't see the pattern.

Once you see the pattern, you can get out of it. Once you see the pattern, that it goes on and on mindlessly, it does not need you.... People ordinarily think that when they are angry, somebody has created the anger in them. That is utterly wrong! Even if you were alone and there was nobody, you would have been angry in that moment. That has something to do with your inner wheel, with your inner periodicity, inner rhythm -- it has nothing to do with somebody outside.

The outside is just an excuse, because it is so ugly to think, "I am creating my anger myself." The excuse feels good, it relieves you of a burden. Then some day, meeting a friend, you feel so happy and you think, "The coming of the friend has made me so happy" -- that too is false. Even if you were sitting alone in that moment, you would have been happy.

That is one of the great realizations that comes to people who move into isolation for a few days. That's a good meditation, to move into isolation for a few weeks and just to be alone for a few weeks. You will be surprised! Out of nowhere... one day you are feeling good -- nobody is there and nobody has done anything to you. And one day you are feeling so bad. One day you are dancing, another day you are crying. And then you can see that you create your own states.

Once this is seen you stop throwing responsibilities on others and life becomes a different life. Otherwise, we are all throwing our responsibilities on others. We are making others feel guilty: "It is because of you that I am angry or sad." And naturally the others have to accept it because they are doing the same thing themselves. And they have to accept it for another reason too, because sometimes they are praised because they make people happy too.

Once you know that you can't make anybody happy, you have never made anybody happy, and nobody can make you happy and nobody can make you unhappy -- once this insight has become settled in your heart, you will never be throwing responsibility on

anybody. All struggle, futile struggle, disappears. Then you know that you have an inner wheel that goes on moving. Sometimes one spoke is on top, sometimes another spoke comes on top.

And it moves MINDLESSLY, remember. So the only way to get out of it is mindfulness. It is a robot; it is a mechanical thing; it is an automaton. So ALL meditations are nothing but de-automatization. All the processes that have become automatic in you have to be de-automatized. Anything that de-automatizes helps immensely.

For example, you walk at a certain pace. Buddha told his disciples: Walk slowly; change the pace. Just walk very slowly. And suddenly you will be surprised: if you walk slowly, you become aware of your walking. In fact, you can walk slowly only if you remain aware. The moment you lose awareness, you will gather speed; then you will become again an automaton.

Buddha's meditations are to make you aware about life's activities. Eating, eat with full awareness; chew with awareness of what you are doing. Walking, each single step has to be taken with full awareness of what is happening, what you are doing. Not verbally! but there has to be a consciousness behind: "I am raising my left foot" -- not that you have to repeat it, "I am raising my left foot." That is stupid. There is no need to repeat it. But you can watch it: "I am chewing. I am standing under the shower. The water is cool. It is too hot and the body is perspiring." Not that you have repeat these words: you have just to be watchful. Then slowly slowly a new integration happens in you, a mindfulness arises. That mindfulness can take you out of the wheel -- nothing else.

LOOK AT THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS!
THEIR COLOUR AND SCENT FALL WITH THEM,
ARE GONE FOR EVER,
YET MINDLESS
THE SPRING COMES AGAIN.

And how many times has it not happened to you? You had fallen in love with a woman or with a man, and then there was great frustration and great misery, and you suffered and there was anguish, and you thought you were finished for ever -- never again! And after just a few days, again the spring comes, again you are feeling love blossoming in you, again you are falling into the same rut and routine. Again you are saying the same stupid things to another woman. Again you are whispering those sweet nothings, and you are hearing those sweet nothings. And again you are in a dreamworld, and you have completely forgotten the old experience.

And this will happen again and again! The spring goes on coming. Don't think you are very much different from a cherry tree. You are angry -- and this is so about all your moods -- you are angry and you feel the fire of it and the poison of it and the destructiveness of it, and you suffer. And you decide, "No more again. It is ugly and it is foolish and it is a sheer wastage of energy. So why should I be in anger again?" And you decide, and you decide very strongly, "This is the last time. Now I am going to avoid." And one day, mindlessly, it comes again. Just a small thing triggers it, and you are again on fire, again red, again doing destructive things. And later on you will remember. You will become mindful, but always later on. Then it is of no sense, no meaning. It is impotent.

Mindfulness means in the moment. Everybody is wise when the moment has passed, remember this. Really wise are those who are wise in the moment. When something is happening -- you are sad -- this is the moment to become so watchful that you are unbridged

from sadness, that you are disconnected from sadness; that sadness is there, you are here, and there is no connection. You are no more identified. You are simply seeing it.

You are not sad, you are the seer. Then you are wise.

When sadness has gone, then you think, "It was not good to become sad. It was so trivial, so foolish; there was no meaning in it. Next time I am not going to become so sad. There is no point." But you will become sad again because awareness can be practised only in the moment. This repentance is not on the right track.

Everybody repents, and things go on happening the same way they have always been happening. There is such a vicious circle that sometimes you think you are doing the opposite and you are not really doing the opposite but the same thing.

An angry person can decide, "I will never be angry," and can go on repressing anger. Then by repressing anger, one day he has so much anger that it is uncontrollable, it explodes. If he had not repressed, he may not have been so angry. Now he is more angry because he tried not to be angry.

And man moves in such a mindless way that you cannot imagine. Just the other day I was reading a story by Raymond M. Smullyan:

Once upon a time there was a hippy. His philosophy of life was that one should NOT amount to something. More specifically, he believed that the three greatest evils which can befall a man are: acquisition of fame, acquisition of wealth, acquisition of prestige. His parents always insisted that he SHOULD amount to something. For years and years they pleaded, cajoled, threatened, argued, and did everything in their power to rid him of this 'childish' notion that one should not amount to something. But the hippy was as adamant and stubborn as his parents -- he simply refused to amount to anything.

He was not content that just HE should not amount to something -- others too needed salvation. And because he knew the secret of salvation he became a great missionary. His mission was to save the whole world from amounting to something. He became a passionate preacher of his gospel, and soon he was considered to be a great prophet by other hippies. He travelled much and delivered speeches On why people should not amount to something, and his speeches were utter masterpieces of eloquence. His ideas spread further and farther from home, and finally a great book publisher knocked on his door and he said, "Your ideas are so unique -- why don't you write a book?" The idea appealed to him and then he wrote a book: **WHY YOU SHOULD NOT AMOUNT TO SOMETHING.**

The book spread like wildfire throughout the entire world. Not only were copies bought by all the world's hippies, but also by all parents who were afraid their children might become hippies. After all, the arguments in the book were so ingeniously clever and persuasive that the parents had to master them thoroughly so they could provide counter-arguments for their children.

At any rate, in a matter of weeks the boy became a multi-multi-millionaire. Then one day the entire horror of the situation stabbed him like a knife. He exclaimed, "My God! My God! What has happened? of all people, I, I have suddenly amounted to something?! More specifically, I have acquired enormous fame, enormous wealth, enormous prestige. I have betrayed my entire life! Oh, dear God, what can I do? What can I do?"

This happens. You can go on thinking that you are doing something else, something contrary. But if you are mindless, something ELSE is going to happen.

Your life is not lived by you -- it is lived by a very mindless process. You are not really

living it: you are being lived by a mindless existence. You are born, you are young, you become old; you have emotions, ideas -- and they all are happening in you just like the cherry blossoms. And you go on repeating the same, year in, year out; you go on moving in a wheel. To see it, to see it totally, to see it as it is, is Buddha's way of becoming aware.

The vicious circle of birth and death has to be broken, but it can be broken only if you start looking into things which happen to you in a detached way, in a non-passionate way. What scientists call 'a detached observation' is really a Buddhist discovery. Scientists have been trying this only for three hundred years -- in their labs they simply watch, without any prejudice, without for or against. They simply note down the facticity of it. But this is an ancient Buddhist meditation: the same way one has to watch one's own mind, one's own mind's functionings, structures, and slowly slowly you start becoming aware of a wheel that goes on moving inside you. And you are not moving the wheel; it moves on its own. The spell can be broken only if in this mechanical process of life something of awareness penetrates.

De-automatize yourself.

BUDDHISM
IS THE SHAVED PART OF THE SAUCEPAN,
THE WHISKERS OF THE PEBBLE,
THE SOUND THAT ACCOMPANIES
THE BAMBOOS IN THE PICTURE.

STILL BUDDHISM IS NOT AN ISM, it is not a philosophy. It does not give you any idea of what reality is -- because once the idea is given to you of what reality is like, you immediately jump upon it, you start clinging to it. And you will make reality like your idea, you will create it.

Buddhism simply takes all ideas away from you, it is negative. It does not give you any positive notion. It does not say what truth is: it only says what truth is not. It eliminates, it goes on eliminating. It is very severe. It does not allow you any nook and corner to cling to. It takes all, everything that you possess away from you. Only then one thing is left, which cannot be taken away -- that is your awareness. Then uncontaminated awareness is left; you become a mirror. In that mirror the reality is reflected. So Ikkyu says:

BUDDHISM
IS THE SHAVED PART OF THE SAUCEPAN,
THE WHISKERS OF THE PEBBLE,
THE SOUND THAT ACCOMPANIES
THE BAMBOOS IN THE PICTURE.

So Buddhism as an 'ism' is as false as THE SOUND THAT ACCOMPANIES THE BAMBOOS IN THE PICTURE, or as false as THE WHISKERS OF THE PEBBLE. As an 'ism' Buddhism is false. Then what is it? If it is not a philosophy, then what is it?

It is just an approach towards reality, an opening. It is not a belief system. It is utterly devoid of beliefs; it negates beliefs. It is not a positive philosophy. And that is the beauty of it -- because all positive philosophies are nothing but creations of the mind.

And people are very much interested in positive philosophies. They appeal -- because they enhance your mind, they nourish your mind. They give you great ideas how to live your life, how to achieve more, how to become more, how to be enlightened, and all that.

Buddhism simply says: Just drop your ideas and you are enlightened. Just drop your mind and you are divine.

But Buddha was very very careful even about saying that, because people are hankering so much to cling to something. He was very careful about making even a single statement positively. If you ask him, "What will happen when all has disappeared and one has become a mirror?" he says, "There will be no pain"; but he never says, "There will be bliss." Never for a single moment, for a single time does he become positive.

People used to insist to him, because they had heard it down the ages that when the ultimate happens you will be blissful. And Buddha says, "You will not be miserable" -- that's all. "Why don't you say," they would ask him, "that we will be happy and blissful?" And he would say, "If I say that you will be happy, then it is never going to happen -- then you will search for happiness! And you will fall into new dreams and new imaginations, heaven and paradise and so on and so forth. And you will create your own ideas of what happiness is. And ALL that you know is misery. So I say only: There will be no misery -- and let me keep absolutely quiet about what there will be. You just drop misery and see what is."

It didn't appeal to ordinary, mediocre minds. The mediocre mind wants something to possess; he wants some keys which can open new doors to new treasures. Buddha simply takes all the keys out of your hands. He leaves you utterly alone... but in that utter aloneness, something immense happens, something infinite happens, something unimaginable happens, something inexpressible happens. And the first condition for it to happen is that you should not think about it, that no idea should be given to you about it -- otherwise it will never happen because the idea will prevent it.

BUDDHISM
IS THE SHAVED PART OF THE SAUCEPAN,
THE WHISKERS OF THE PEBBLE,
THE SOUND THAT ACCOMPANIES
THE BAMBOOS IN THE PICTURE.

Then what is Buddhism? Just a gesture, just a painted picture. There is no sound in it, no wind is blowing. Just Indian ink is there and nothing else -- no sound, no wind. You just imagine sound and wind, you imagine movement -- nothing is moving there. So people have created Buddhism out of their own imagination.

The religion that eXists in the name of Buddhism is just a painted religion. Buddha never delivered this thing to the world. It is a creation of the people; because people cannot live with nothingness they created something.

What I say to you, you may not hear it, it may be too much for you. You may hear something which I have not said at all, because that you can manage. You may hear a few fragments. You may delete something, you may add some-thing; you may create something out of what I am saying; you may create something out of it which is absolutely yours.

That's how Buddhism has happened. That's how Christianity has happened. That's how all the religions have happened. The original expression has been lost in interpretations. What exists in the name of Buddhism is not what Buddha had said. What Buddha had said can be experienced only if you become a Buddha -- there is no other way.

What I am saying to you can be experienced only in the SAME state of mind, in the same state of awareness. It is impossible to convey it. Once it leaves one state of con-sciousness and enters into another kind of state, it is transformed, it is translated, it becomes polluted, it is never the same again.

If you can also become silent, quiet, unprejudiced, with no opinion in your mind, then things can happen. But people carry opinions in their minds -- such opinions! amazing opinions!

Just the other day I was reading an article by Ashoka. Now he feels doubtful about my enlightenment because sometimes I look at the clock. "How can an enlightened person look at a clock? Can't he know what time it is? And if he can't even know what time it is, what else can he know?" And this type of thing continues. It is not only in Ashoka's mind -- in many people's minds, because minds are minds.

But you have not looked at it without prejudice. You have some idea of how an enlightened person should be. You have some idea -- in that idea it is implied that he will know without looking at the clock what time it is. The reality is just the contrary.

You may be able to know what time it is without looking at the clock, but an enlightened person cannot -- because for him time has disappeared. For him there is no more time! For him there is only eternal now. Nothing moves. All has stopped. His clock has stopped! Now there exists no calendar in him any more. He HAS to look to know what time it is. You can feel the time because your clock, inside clock, is working; you can have a certain inference about what time it must be. And within minutes you will be right; at the most, within ten minutes you will be right. Your mind can calculate. You know what time is; you know how much it feels when one hour passes by.

But to the enlightened consciousness, nothing passes. All simply is... and always is. There is no way to infer what time it is. Hence, I have to look at the clock again and again.

Sometimes Vivek becomes very much puzzled, because just five minutes before I had looked at the clock and I look again. And she says, "Just five minutes before you had looked, and you are looking again." And I can understand her puzzlement: anybody can infer, any child can infer, that only five minutes have passed. But nothing is passing for me. Even for the day I have to inquire what day today is, what date today is.

But you have your mind, your idea, and naturally you can look only from your mind and from your idea. You will go on missing that way. You have to drop your prejudices; you have to drop ALL ideas. Why bother how an enlightened person should be when an enlightened person is with YOU? Why not LOOK directly? Rather than having an idea, why not look directly?

You have a certain idea how a rose should be. Maybe you have never seen a black rose, and you think that a rose has to be only red. And there is a black rose, and you will say, "This is not a rose because a rose has to be red, has to be rosy. This is not a rose! It is not rosy -- it is black. How can it be a rose?"

Drop the idea. Come close. Smell the flower. Sit silently with the flower. Let its fragrance give you the message. Let it have a communion with you! and you will know. And that will be far better, far truer. Otherwise, this goes on happening.

Buddha was there, and what he was saying people were not listening to -- they were listening to something else. They were translating. Please, don't translate me; otherwise, sooner or later I will be just THE WHISKERS OF THE PEBBLE, THE SHAVED PART OF THE SAUCEPAN, THE SOUND THAT ACCOMPANIES THE BAMBOOS IN THE PICTURE.

Don't create a picture! While the reality is here, why can't you have a contact with the reality? Why can't you bridge yourself? What is preventing you? A priori prejudices, opinions that you have gathered.

A Christian comes, and he looks at me and he wants to find Christ in me. And if he can't

find Christ he says, "This man can't be enlightened!" A Buddhist comes, he looks for Buddha in me. A Jain comes, he looks for Mahavir in me. And if he can't find... and he CANNOT find, because I am myself.

This roseflower is black, that roseflower is yellow, another roseflower is red -- there are thousands of rose-flowers. Don't be too much concerned with the colour, with the shape, with the form. But the roseness is the same, that flowering is the same.

There were people in Buddha's time who followed Jain philosophy. They would look at him, and because he was not naked they would think he was not yet enlightened -- because Jains have the idea that when a person becomes enlightened he drops all clothes. It is a beautiful idea, but clothes don't mean clothes literally. He drops all clothes, he becomes nude, utterly nude, but not literally. But who is going to prevent people from being literal? And Buddha was not nude, so he was not an enlightened person.

Buddha was one kind of roseflower. Jesus was another kind. Bodhidharma, Buddha's disciple, was a third kind. Buddha was silent and Bodhidharma was laughing. But I say to you: the taste of Bodhidharma's laughter was the same as Buddha's silence. But if you have seen Buddha sitting silently under his Bodhi Tree, you will not believe in Bodhidharma because he will be rolling on the floor. Such mad laughter! And you will say, "What is happening? This man must be mad -- how can he be enlightened? An enlightened person always sits under a Bodhi Tree and never looks at a clock!"

Your ideas continuously interfere. You can miss this opportunity, It all depends on you. You can use this opportunity. You can be transformed by this opportunity....

THE PUPPET-PLAYER HANGS THEM
ROUND HIS NECK, NOT HIS HEART;
HE CAN TAKE OUT A DEVIL,
HE CAN TAKE OUT A BUDDHA.

BUDDHA HAS SAID THAT MIND IS A MAGICIAN. All that it creates is magic work. You must have seen our sannyasin magician, Avinash. He can produce things out of empty boxes.... Mind is a conjurer. Once you have a certain idea in the mind, it becomes a seed and the seed starts growing, and soon it will become a reality for you.

Just the other night, Nirgrantha had a heart attack. Now, he says that for six months he was feeling that this heart attack was coming. The situation is just vice versa: because for six months he was thinking that it is coming, it has come. Not that he was knowing it, that it was going to come. It was not an insight into the future. He has CREATED the future. Six months continuously thinking that it is coming, it has to come. Mind is a conjurer. It creates. It can create anything!

Now much research is going into this phenomenon. A new kind of therapy is arising they call placebo therapy. A placebo is a false, pseudo medicine, with no medicinal qualities in it, but it has to be given in such a way that the patient thinks it is medicine. Not only that the patient thinks it is medicine, even the doctor has to think it is medicine, otherwise his gestures may show, may reveal the truth. The doctor is kept in ignorance; he is given just water to inject, or given just sugar pills with all the marks and names and labels of the true medicine. He knows that this is medicine. The patient knows this is medicine. And the miracle is that it works -- and there is no medicine in it. The patient is healed. The very belief of the doctor that it is medicine creates an atmosphere, a psychology, a hypnosis, and the whole paraphernalia of the hospital.... And the patient WANTS to get rid of his illness. And when a famous doctor gives the medicine it is bound to help; whether it is medicine or not

doesn't matter much.

It has been found that medicine or no medicine functions almost in the same proportion. If seventy percent of patients are cured by medicine, real medicine, then seventy percent of patients are cured by unreal medicine, placebo medicine. It is creating a great stir in the medical world. What is happening?

What is really happening is this, that in the first place the illness has been created, it is a mind phenomenon. And in the second place, if the mind is convinced that it is going to be cured, then it is going to be cured. That's why if the doctor's fee is not really big, medicine is not going to affect you much. The bigger the fee, the better the medicine. If the therapist has a big fee and you are paying fortunes, then it is going to affect you more, because then you WANT to be affected. When it is free, who bothers whether it works or not? "If it works, good; if it doesn't work, okay -- because we have not paid for it." When you pay for it you are intent that it should work -- then it works!

Buddha says mind is a conjurer; it creates illnesses, it can create cures. Mind creates ALL kinds of illusions -- beauty and ugliness, success and failure, richness and poverty... mind goes on creating. And once the idea settles in you, your whole life energy functions to create it, to make it a reality. Every thought becomes a thing, and every thing in the beginning was only a thought and nothing else. You live in a kind of hypnosis.

Buddha says this hypnosis has to be broken, and no other religion has tried so hard to break this hypnosis. Man has to be de-hypnotized. Man has to be made aware that ALL IS mind: pain and pleasure both, birth and death both. All is mind.

And once this has been seen absolutely, the conjurer disappears... and then what is left is truth. And that truth liberates.

THE PUPPET-PLAYER HANGS THEM
ROUND HIS NECK, NOT HIS HEART;
HE CAN TAKE OUT A DEVIL,
HE CAN TAKE OUT A BUDDHA.

A tremendously important statement. You can become a Devil, you can become a Buddha -- it is all mind game. You can become a sinner, you can become a saint; you can become a criminal, an Adolf Hitler, or you can become a great mahatma -- and it is all mind game. In both the ways it is mind playing.

Then who is a real Buddha? If the Devil is a mind thing and the Buddha is a mind thing, then who is a real Buddha? The real Buddha is one who is no more the mind, who has come to see all the games of the mind and has retired from all the games of the mind. That is renunciation, that is sannyas: retiring from all games of the mind, playing no more new games.

Zen people say Buddha was never born, never lived, never uttered a word, never died, never attained enlightenment -- and they are right. And obviously wrong too, because Buddha was born, he lived for eighty-two years, he is a historical person, he is not a myth only. He has left immense marks on the sense of time. He was born, he became enlightened, and he uttered millions of words. For forty-two years continuously he was teaching. These are obvious facts.

When Zen people say: Buddha was never born, never lived, never uttered a word, never died, never attained enlightenment, they are not denying these historical facts. Remember it. They are uttering something of more value. They are saying: Yes, he said many things but he never uttered a word -- his REAL reality remained silent. Yes, he was born to a certain

mother, to a certain father, in a certain place, but that birth was only a mind phenomenon, a dream that he lived through. But in his reality he was never born.

And, in reality, you are not born either. And in reality he never died, because how can you die if you are not born? Who can die? Who is there to die? And, of course, when you are not born and you cannot die, how can you become enlightened? Who is there to become enlightened? There is no one; there is nobody to become a Buddha.

This is Buddhahood, this is enlightenment: seeing the fact that there is nobody, that the house is utterly empty, that there has lived nobody ever, that we were only playing games of the mind, that we were creating shadows, that we were fast asleep and dreaming things... then all disappears.

When in the morning you wake up, it is not only that the bad dreams were wrong or false -- the good dreams were also false. Whether you dream in the night that you were a thief or you dreamt that you were a yogi doesn't matter in the morning -- both are false. Whether you dreamt that you were Adolf Hitler or you dreamt that you were a Gautam Buddha doesn't matter in the morning -- when you are awake, all is finished. Gone is Adolf Hitler, gone is Gautam Buddha -- all is gone. And what is left has always been there as the substratum. That eternal, that formless, that attributeless, that nirguna, that conditionless, is your reality. On that conditionless all kinds of conditions have been imposed; on that unconditional a thousand and one conditions have been put together. Those conditionings together are called the mind. And the only way to get out of the mind is to SEE the mind, to be aware of it.

Slowly slowly, the more you become aware of the dream, the dream starts dissipating, the dream starts receding back. When awareness is perfect, dream has disappeared. Then you are neither a Buddha nor a man nor a woman, neither this nor that. Who are you then? -- nothing can be said about it. Only one thing can be said about it: A glimpse of the real man, and you are in love, and you are love.

IF HE SAYS,
"THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT,"
ALREADY HE HAS TRANSGRESSED,
AND CAN SAY NOTHING ELSE,
THIS DARUMA IKKYU.

AND IKKYU SAYS: I have said that Buddhism is nothing but the sound that accompanies the bamboos in the picture. I have said that Buddhism is nothing but a dream. I have said that there is nothing special about it, that it is utter ordinariness, that it is nature. But he feels: Even to say that, I have transgressed -- because even that must not be said.

Nothing can be said about it. Say it, and you have done something wrong. Say it, and you have betrayed.

IF HE SAYS,
"THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT,"
ALREADY HE HAS TRANSGRESSED...

It cannot be said that Buddhism is a special religion, a great religion. It can't be said that there is nothing special in it.

There are two schools of Buddhists. One school that says that Buddhism is the greatest religion, the most profound, the highest that has ever happened. Just as Christians say and Hindus say and Jains say -- everybody claims his religion, really claims his ego through the

religion. So there is the greater mass of Buddhists who say Buddhism is the greatest religion, and Buddha is the greatest man.

And then there are Zen people who say there is nothing special about it, it is very ordinary; nothing to brag about it, nothing to claim about it. But Ikkyu says: Even to say there is nothing special about it, you have said something special about it. This is making it special!

Christians say Christianity is special, Hindus say Hinduism is special, Mohammedans say Mohammedanism is special -- and Zen people say there is nothing special about it. You are making it too much special. All others claim that they are special and you say, "We are not special" -- you become special. That's how you have become special. This is a way of claiming speciality. When everybody is claiming "I am extraordinary," the man who says "I am ordinary" is REALLY claiming extraordinariness.

Just think: ten thousand people claiming, everybody claiming "I am extraordinary," and then you are standing there, a humble person, and you say, "Sir, I am very ordinary." What are you doing? You have claimed real extraordinariness. You are saying, "You fools, ten thousand fools! You are all claiming you are extraordinary -- this is all ego. Look at me, this humble person, this nobody -- can only say that I am just ordinary." But only this man is extraordinary. All those are ordinary because they are claiming the same thing. Everybody is claiming it.

Ikkyu is right:

IF HE SAYS,
"THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT,"
ALREADY HE HAS TRANSGRESSED,
AND CAN SAY NOTHING ELSE,
THIS DARUMA IKKYU.

Daruma is the first founder of Zen Buddhism in China from India, the first who travelled from India to China to deliver this message beyond words, this religion which is religionless. So all the Zen masters feel greatly indebted to Daruma. Bodhidharma's Japanese name is Daruma.

Ikkyu says: THIS DARUMA IKKYU -- this follower of Daruma, this disciple of Daruma -- can't say a thing. I can't say Buddhism is special; I can't say there is nothing special about it. I simply can't say anything.

In that silence he is saying something immensely beautiful. When you can't say something, that means something of such enormous gravity is there that no word can be adequate to it. And Buddha has that -- that vastness that cannot be contained in any word.

No disciple can ever say anything about his master. If he can say something about his master, and feels that he is able to say it correctly, and feels that he has expressed it adequately, then he is not a disciple and he has not understood the master at all -- because to understand the master is to lose all language and all capacity of expression, because you face such a huge reality you simply become dumb.

The disciple is always dumb before the master, and only he knows who is dumb. One who can say has not known, and one who cannot say knows.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #8

Chapter title: In Search of a Ghost

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The first question

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I USED TO FEEL A CERTAIN PULL NEAR OPEN WINDOWS, HIGH UP IN BUILDINGS. MANY OF THE PEOPLE WITH WHOM I WORK NOW ALSO DO. THE FEELING IS: "IF I GO ANY CLOSER, I MAY HAVE TO JUMP."

MY EXPERIENCE IS THAT IT IS NOT SUICIDAL. WHAT IS IT? CAN YOU SAY MORE ABOUT IT?

YES, DEVABHAKTA. I CAN SAY MORE about it because I have felt that same fear in you when you come close to me. You keep a certain distance. You are afraid. The fear is not suicidal -- or is suicidal in a very different sense, in a spiritual sense.

You are not afraid of the ordinary death; you are afraid of what Zen people call 'the great death'. You are afraid of disappearing, you are afraid of melting. You are afraid of losing your hold upon yourself. And everybody is afraid of that in one way or other.

That's why we live always in control. Control is not only imposed by the society; even if the society removes all control, people will continue to live in control, they will create their own control, their own discipline. Even if society decides to make everybody absolutely free, people will not be free, people will not accept freedom. They will create their own bondage, they will create their own imprisonments, they will create their own chains. They will become their own jailors.

Freedom is frightening, because freedom simply means you will not be there. It is not that you are going to be free: you are going to be free from yourself. You are the bondage -- when the bondage disappears, you disappear.

And sometimes that fear can come to you when you are close to a window on a high building, or close to an abyss in the mountains. That feeling can take possession of you. That physical situation can become a triggering inside your psyche. It can give you the idea that it is possible to disappear.

And remember, there is both fear and there is attraction -- it is always so. Whenever you

are attracted by something, you are also afraid of it. That's why man is attracted towards women and IS afraid of women.

That's why I say your so-called saints who are still afraid of women are still in love with women. Certainly they are -- they are obsessed, because fear and love go together. They may have moved to the Himalayan caves; sitting in their caves they may not be thinking at all that they are in any way interested in women, but they are frightened. If the rumour comes that a beautiful woman is coming to the mountains to visit, something will stir inside them. Fear it will be! But fear shows attraction; fear shows that you are still involved.

The scriptures that say anything against women are scriptures written by people who were obsessed with women. They may have renounced but they have not changed; they are the same people. One day they were rushing towards women, another day they start rushing away from women, but it is the same game played in a different way. The woman remains their attraction, their fear.

And so is the case when you are attracted to a man. When a woman is attracted towards a man, there is fear. ALL love creates fear, immediately brings fear.

So these two things go together. You are attracted to the open windows, because there is great attraction in being free from this cage that has become your life. But this is the only life that you know of. Then there comes fear -- who knows? is there another life or not? You may simply disappear as you are and you may not appear on another plane, in another existence -- then what?

Making love to a woman or man, the same fear grips you. That's why orgasm is so impossible, so difficult. And don't think that only women find it difficult to have orgasm -- it is exactly as difficult for men as it is for women. With man one simple thing helps him to pretend: his ejaculation helps him -- he thinks he has attained the orgasm because he can see something visible happening. The woman has no visible ejaculation, so she is puzzled, worried whether she had the orgasm or not.

Ejaculation is not orgasm. Orgasm means you use the other's being as a window and you leap into the unknown; the other uses your window and leaps into the unknown... then there is orgasm. When you disappear, orgasm happens. Orgasm is a state of IMMENSE expansion. It is expansion of consciousness, it is a state of unboundedness. You become one with the sky. You are no more tiny, you are no more in limitations.

YOU ARE NO MORE! Because as long as you are, there are limitations, boundaries, definitions. When all definitions have been broken and you are simply there, indefinable, inexpressible, something of the grandeur of God has happened to you... for a moment you have melted and you have known and you have tasted.

The same happens to a disciple coming to a master -- the fear. Hence, down the ages, so much has been talked about trust. What is trust? Trust means simply the courage to take the jump. It is risky, it is a gamble, because there can be no security. What security is there to be with me? What security is there to surrender to me? I don't guarantee you anything! I can't say what is going to happen, because it can't be said. You have to move in darkness and you have to move in great trust -- only then can you move.

You would like some objective proof of God. That's why people ask about proofs of God. You would like some objective proof of samadhi, of Buddhahood. You would like something tangible that you can touch and see and hold in your hands, and you can feel and you can judge. Then trust will be easy -- but then trust will not be needed.

You don't trust in the sun, you don't trust in the moon they are simply there. Nobody asks any proof for the sun or for the moon. They are simply there, they are facts. Trust is not

needed. That's why in science trust is not needed, because science searches for the facts.

In religion trust is needed because trust makes you available towards the ultimate and makes truth available to you. Trust is the door, a window to truth. But courage will be needed.

Devabhakta, that fear, that attraction to the windows, that you were pulled also, was showing one thing: that from your very childhood you have been in a search. Maybe the search has been carried down the ages through other lives -- that's my feeling about you. You have been groping and searching; you have been continuously searching. Hence the fear and the attraction. Attraction because the search is there, and fear because who knows? -- if you go too close to the window, in a sudden mad moment you may be so much thrilled, you may be so much possessed by the idea, you may take the jump. Then what? So it is better not to go very close.

And that I have been watching in you when you came to me.

Even in Germany you were not wearing orange and the mala -- that too is part of that fear. You don't want to get too much involved with me; you want to keep a safe distance. When you come here you allow a little bit of closeness, but when you go away you start avoiding me. And I have been trying to contact you, but you were not available. I can contact you only if you remain involved with me. I wanted to help you, but you were disconnected.

So if somebody is trying to cheat me, he is really cheating himself. I go on trying to contact my people, and I can contact only those who are REALLY with me -- in thick and thin, in joy and in misery, in ecstasy and agony, in life and death. I can contact only those people.

So now become a little more alert. Much is possible. I am also a window. There is no need to be afraid -- fear is natural, still there is no need to be afraid. In spite of the fear, come close to me. One kind of suicide will happen: the ego will commit suicide. That's what sannyas is all about.

Attraction is there, so you have become a sannyasin; and fear is there, so you are trying to avoid still. Hesitantly, you take one step towards Me and one step away from me. This hesitation can destroy this opportunity. Jumping from a high building from a window is not going to help. But now the window is available for which you have been hankering, and you can jump, and you can die and be reborn.

The second question

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU SAY, OSHO, BUT WHILE SITTING ALONE OR IN DISCOURSE SOMETHING HAPPENS TO ME AND TEARS START COMING OUT OF MY EYES. WHAT IS THIS ALL, OH MY MASTER?

SO YOU HAVE STARTED LISTENING TO ME. Shivananda, that's the way to listen to me -- through tears. That's the way to listen to me -- through love, through the heart. Pulsate with me. Let my words be drowned into your tears. You will not be at a loss, because what I am saying is not important. Far more important is some other energy that goes surrounding those words that reach you.

Don't pay too much attention to the words. If your heart is open, the energy will be released into the heart. My words are just carriers, they are containers. The content is utterly different. The content is diametrically opposite. The container is the word, but the content is a

wordless silence. It is my love. The word is just a capsule. The capsule is not the medicine; the medicine is inside it. Forget about the capsule. Drink me -- and the best way to drink is to be with tears, because then you participate, then you come very very close.

Those tears are indicative that your heart starts pulsating with me, that there are moments when you start breathing just in tune with me -- then suddenly those tears will arise. Those tears are symbolic. They are like flowers. Rejoice!

The third question

WHY ARE YOUR TEACHINGS NOT ACCEPTED AS RELIGION OR RELIGIOUS BY THE SOCIETY?

THEY ARE NOT RELIGIOUS OR RELIGION in the ordinary sense of the term. They are far more... they are far deeper and higher. The so-called society has no vision; it consists of blind people. It has always been happening.

When Buddha appeared, they didn't believe that his teachings were religious. When Jesus appeared, they crucified him. When Mansoor declared, "I am God," they killed him. Mohammedans thought Mansoor was one of the greatest irreligious persons who has ever been on the earth -- to declare oneself God? This is KUFUR; this is irreligion, this is anti-religion.

Whenever it happens that something of the pure truth is expressed, is sung, the society starts becoming uneasy about it. It is natural, because the society has a very pseudo kind of religion -- comfortable, convenient, consolatory. It has false temples to worship in, false gods to worship, false priests to follow. And it is very convenient because they don't disturb your life. You can remain a Christian. In fact, it never disturbs your life -- on the contrary, it helps your life. The so-called society, the so-called society's rules, moralities -- you fit better if you are a Christian. But to follow Christ is dangerous.

No Christian ever follows Christ -- cannot follow. In fact, being a Christian is a way of avoiding Christ. To be a Buddhist is a way of avoiding Buddha. If you really love Buddha, then you would like to become a Buddha, you would like to become a Buddhist. Why should one want to become a Christian? Either be Christ or forget all about it! But Christ is dangerous. He was not killed by immoral people, bad people; he was killed by good people, respectable people. Remember it always.

Buddha was not attacked by the criminals. He was attacked by those who you can never think of as criminals -- good people, moral people, puritans. Why does it happen? Jesus is killed by rabbis, religious people, scholars, priests -- in every way good. Their lives are completely clean, people who have character. And he was loved by people who have no character -- a Magdalen.

Just a few days ago, a young woman came from Switzerland; her name is Magdalena. I didn't change her name -- she took sannyas. I love that name, Magdalena. A prostitute followed Jesus, and rabbis killed him! Thieves and drunkards and gamblers followed Jesus, and rabbis killed him. All the so-called saints were against him and the so-called sinners were for him -- what kind of world is this? What paradox? Why has it been happening always? There is a certain reason in it.

Whenever a new religion, a new dispensation arrives on the earth, whenever a new glimpse of God arrives on the earth, whenever a new window or door opens to God, it is

accepted first by those who are not very respectable. Why? Because they have nothing to lose; they can accept. They can even accept truth -- they have nothing to lose. What did Magdalen have to lose?

But the chief rabbi had much to lose. He had an investment in the old religion, the rotten religion, which was dead and had been dead for long, was stinking; it was just a corpse -- but he had an investment in it. He was the chief priest of it! If he follows Jesus he will not be the chief priest any more, and all the prerogatives that one has by being the chief priest will be lost. He has the most beautiful house, he has the best salary. He was the most respected person -- why should he follow this vagabond, Jesus? It would have been just a loss for him.

Magdalen could follow Jesus. She had nothing to lose but to gain. A gambler, a drunkard, have nothing to lose but to gain. ALL great religions start with rebellious people. All great religions start with young people, because old people have investments. Their whole life they have been praying, worshipping, now suddenly they can't stop it. If they stop that means that their whole life has been wrong. To accept that goes against the grain, against the ego. So only a few rarely courageous old people can follow a Jesus, a Buddha -- those who are so courageous that they can see the point and they can say, "Okay, so it was wrong and I drop it. My whole life was wrong and I start anew." To start anew in old age is very difficult, very difficult, because ahead there is only death, no time left -- and you are starting something new? Great trust is needed -- great trust in life, great trust in God, and adventurousness.

All great religions start with adventurous people, young people, the downtrodden, oppressed, criminals, sinners. And all religions die when they become respectable and saints arrive and churches evolve -- they die.

A new flower is opening up here. All the so-called religious people will be against it -- they are against. They have to be against. All their investments, all their privileges, all their consolations -- how can they risk so much? They will cling, they will fight with me -- they are fighting with me. They are creating ALL kinds of troubles for me. You may not be aware because I never talk about it, because what is the point? I never say anything about it -- you may not be at all aware of what kinds of troubles continuously go on being created.

For one year continuously I have been trying to find a place to move to, but they go on creating troubles -- some legal troubles, some other troubles. And the politicians are with them, and the priests are there and all the respectable people are with them. And they have power; they can create a thousand and one troubles. They don't want the commune to be established because they are very much afraid: once the commune is there and the work really starts -- because this is just an introduction -- when the real work starts, then all those who are courageous anywhere in the world are going to come. Thousands and thousands of people are going to come and BE transformed. I just need a right situation, a Buddhafield. So they are creating in every way, every kind of trouble.

And the more my work spreads, the more troubles will be coming, because the more they will become apprehensive, afraid.

You ask me: WHY ARE YOUR TEACHINGS NOT ACCEPTED AS RELIGION OR RELIGIOUS?

How can they be accepted as religion and religious? It is pure religion -- that's why it cannot be accepted as religious. I am not Hindu, otherwise they would have been very happy. They would have loved you all if I had been Hindu. They would have said, "Look! Our religion is so great -- so many people from all over the world, from all the races, are being

converted to Hinduism." They would have worshipped you. They would have invited you to stay in their houses. They would have bragged about it in their papers, magazines, books, radio stations, TV. They would have bragged, "Look! See the beauty and the grandeur of Hinduism -- so many people are being converted to Hinduism!" But I am not a Hindu.

They have to repress everything that is happening here; it should not reach to anybody. Nobody should hear about it, what is happening here. Or if somebody hears, then some wrong information has to be given, in such a way that nobody becomes attracted to come here.

I am not a Mohammedan, I am not a Jain, I am not a Christian, I am not a Buddhist, so naturally all those people are against me. They are all joined at least in one thing: they are all against me. About that they have no differences. The Hindu and Mohammedan, the Christian and the Jain, they are all together about one thing, at least about one thing they agree, at least I have given them one thing to agree about: that this man is wrong.

What I am saying is rebellion. It is going to destroy their very foundation. Hence, they cannot accept it as religion. They will deny, they will fight. They will try to crush this opening bud. They will be against you. You will have to face a thousand and one difficulties. That's the risk you take by being with me, and that is the challenge too. And that challenge is going to become a blessing to you.

Those who will be able to accept the challenge and be with me, and those who will be so much in love with me that they can suffer for me, they will grow. They will grow to infinite heights. They will know something which is not ordinarily known by human beings. It is not available in the churches, it is not available in the temples. It becomes available only when a master lives and when a disciple allows himself to be so open to the master that the master starts living in the disciple too, when this transfer of energy happens....

They think they know what religion is; they have certain definitions. I don't fit in any of their definitions. Naturally, how can they call it religion?

And just see, then it will be clear to you: Christianity cannot believe that Buddhism is a religion, because they have a definition and Buddhism does not fit in it. How can there be a religion without God? So Christians cannot call Buddhism a religion. At the most, they can accept it as a morality, but not as a religion. HOW can there be a religion without God? And ask the Buddhist, "Is Christianity a religion?" and he says, "No -- how can a religion be there when people are so stupid that they believe in God? They have not known anything. How can a religious person BELIEVE in God?" Buddhism has its definition. To believe in God means a deluded person, a person in hallucination, a person who is pathological, who needs psychiatric treatment.

Ask the Jains and they will not agree that Christianity is a religion or Buddhism is a religion. And ask the Mohammedans... nobody will agree that the other religion is a religion. What is the problem? They have a certain definition, a fixed idea. If something fits with that idea, it is religion; if it doesn't fit, it is not religion.

So whenever a new insight arises... and new insights continuously arise. They have to arise because old insights slowly slowly become so much rusty, so much dusty, become covered with so many interpretations, jargon, that they lose aliveness. New insights have to go on coming. When a new insight comes, certainly it will not fit with any definition available -- then it cannot be called religion.

EACH new religion has to create itself and its definition. Remember it. When my orange people have spread all over the world, and we have millions of orange people, then it will be a religion because we will have created our definition of what religion is.

Definition comes later on. First the religion has to come; first the religion has to penetrate people's hearts, then slowly slowly definition arises. Definition is not there ready-made beforehand. Each Buddha has to create his religion, the definition, the following, the field, and it always has to be started from ABC, from scratch. No old temple can be used for it -- the new temple has to be raised.

And not only that, but the old temple has to be erased, destroyed, because only when the old temple is no more a temple in people's eyes do they start searching again, do they start groping for the new again.

So it is very natural that my approach will not be thought of as religion, as religious. It depends on you: if you start living what I am saying, you will be creating the definition. It depends on you. It solely depends on you! What I am saying, if you become one with it and you start living it in its totality, sooner or later the definition will follow. But who cares about it? Live what I am saying! Don't be worried what people think about it.

The fourth question

WHY DO YOUR STATEMENTS SEEM TO ME TO BE ARROGANT?

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO. It will always be so. When Jesus said, "I and my father are one," do you think people thought he was a very humble man? When Jesus said, "I am the truth, the way, the door," do you think the rabbis came rushing and fell at his feet and said, "Such a humble man! Never seen before." They said, "This man is arrogant. This man is egoistic."

And logically, they look right -- this looks like arrogance! When Krishna said to Arjuna, "SARVA DHARMA PARITYAJYA MAMEKAM SHARANAM VRAJA -- leave all the religions aside and come and fall unto my feet," do you think people thought this a humble statement? "Leave all religions aside and fall unto my feet!" This is pure arrogance.

And you will be surprised. It is said that the first words of Gautam the Buddha were... the legend has it that when Buddha was born he exclaimed, "Above the heavens and below the heavens, I alone am the honoured one -- I alone am the honoured one." When he was born, just a child, the first assertion -- not that he became Buddha, then he declared this. The legend is beautiful! The first-day child, the first moment's assertion, expression, he declared to the world, "Above the heavens and below the heavens, I alone am the honoured one."

What do you think about it? That it is sheer arrogance?

Truth is truth. It is neither arrogant nor humble. It has to be declared as it is. It can appear humble to you if you understand; it will appear arrogant to you if you don't understand. And if you don't understand, then there is no need to go to such statements which apparently look arrogant. People who don't understand or don't want to understand can find arrogance anywhere.

Once it happened, I read these words of Lao Tzu to a professor: "When the superior man hears of the Tao, he practises it; when the ordinary man hears of the Tao, he ignores it; when the inferior man hears of the Tao, he laughs at it. If it were not laughed at it would not be the true Tao."

And do you know what the professor said? He said, "How arrogant of Lao TZU -- who does he think he is to know? He thinks himself the superior man? the sage? that he knows? How arrogant of him to claim that he knows Tao! So Lao Tzu thinks," he said, "he is one of

the superior who really understands the Tao, while lesser people ignore or laugh at it? How arrogant!"

Now it is not very apparent. You could not have thought this way, but it can be interpreted this way.

Just to see the resistance of the professor, I quoted Jesus to him. Jesus said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And what did he say? He said, "These words are also arrogant. Who does this guy, Jesus, think he is, taking such a superior, condescending, arrogant, forgiving attitude?"

Now, it is not apparent, but it can be found. If you search, you can say this man is arrogant -- who does he think he IS? "Father, forgive them...." Who are you to forgive?

That's exactly what Friedrich Nietzsche used to say against Jesus, "He was the most arrogant man. He is saying to God: Forgive these foolish people because they know not what they do -- they are all foolish, forgive them! He is insulting them. He does not even allow them the dignity of knowing what they are doing; he does not think them human beings. He is treating them as if they are worms -- forgive them -- this holier-than-thou attitude."

Friedrich Nietzsche used to say that Jesus has said that when somebody hits one of your cheeks, give him the other. And Nietzsche said this is very very inhuman, because that makes you look very superior. Looked at from Nietzsche's viewpoint, when somebody hits your face and you give him the other cheek, this is inhuman. The human way is: Hit him back! At least give him that much respect that "You are also a human being, as much as I am; we are equals." Giving him the other cheek means you have reduced the man to a worm. This is really insulting. This way it can be interpreted.

My statements are neither arrogant nor humble, because they can't be arrogant and they can't be humble. Ordinarily you think humbleness is opposite to arrogance. It is not. Humbleness and arrogance are both the same. They are like hot and cold -- degrees of the same energy.

The humble person has as much ego as the arrogant person. The arrogant person claims the ego, the humble person denies the ego -- but the ego is there. The arrogant person says, "I am special," and the humble person says, "I am nobody, sir -- just the dust underneath your feet." One is claiming, the other IS ALSO claiming in a different way.

When you really see your nature, ego disappears, and with ego disappear arrogance and humbleness -- BOTH disappear. Jesus is neither humble nor arrogant. Buddha is neither humble nor arrogant. They simply state the fact. Now, it depends on you how you interpret it.

You say: WHY DO YOUR STATEMENTS SEEM TO ME TO BE ARROGANT?

There must be something in you that is creating the trouble, something in you that is resisting, fighting. Look deep inside yourself. And once you have seen what is creating this idea in you, you will be free of it. Then things will be very simple.

Just similarly, another question is there:

WHY DID YOU ATTACK SIVANANDA? HOW DO YOU KNOW HIS METHOD DOES NOT WORK? WHAT RIGHT HAVE YOU TO JUDGE HIM?

To call a spade a spade is not to attack it. I have not attacked any Sivananda; I have

simply said whatever is the case. But you must have some attachment with Sivananda. Your attachment is feeling hurt. It has nothing to do with Sivananda! Something inside you is feeling hurt. Look into your own wound.

And you say: HOW DO YOU KNOW HIS METHOD DOES NOT WORK -- because no method ever works. It is not a question of HIS method -- even my methods... no method ever works! And because he believed that methods work, that's why I say he was a stupid person.

Methods we use, because there are people just like you who need methods, who cannot go easily, simply into reality, who can only go the hard way. If you tell them to sit silently, they can't understand it. They say, "Then, just by sitting silently? Is something going to happen just by sitting silently?" They cannot sit silently -- and all happens only when you sit silently.

SITTING SILENTLY, DOING NOTHING,
THE SPRING COMES
AND THE GRASS GROWS BY ITSELF;

This is the ultimate truth. But you cannot let it grow. You say, "I cannot just sit and let the grass grow -- I have to pull the grass upwards!" So I say, "Okay, then follow Sivananda, then do something. Then jump, do Kundalini. Or if that does not feel enough, then do Dynamic, Chaotic. Or if you have some other karmas to suffer, then go to Encounter."

These methods are used here just because of your stupidities. Their whole function is to make you so tired of doing that one day you come to me and say, "Osho, can't I sit silently?" That's all. I go on sending you into groups and meditations and tortures and go on waiting... some day you will come crying and weeping and crawling and you will say, "Enough is enough! Can't I sit silently?" And I will say, "I have been waiting for this moment.

SITTING SILENTLY, DOING NOTHING, THE SPRING COMES AND THE GRASS
GROWS BY ITSELF;

No method ever helps. How can a method help? A method can help to create something unnatural. Nature has not to be created -- it is already there. It has to be lived, enjoyed, danced, sung. It is already there! You need not do anything. The grass is already growing. The spring has come! But you cannot sit silently. You have so much restlessness -- that restlessness needs methods.

I give you methods, not because through methods you will become enlightened, but through methods you will come to know how stupid you are -- and that is great enlightenment!

I have heard about a politician: He went to a master, a Sufi master, and asked, "You had told me to meditate, to pray, this and that, and I do, but no revelation ever happens."

The master looked at him and said, "Go outside and stand in the street for ten minutes." It was raining hard.

The politician said, "Stand in the street when it is raining so much?"

The master said, "Just go and a revelation is going to come."

And the politician thought, "When the revelation is going to come then it is worth trying. Ten minutes just standing in the falling rain is not such a big problem."

He stood there. He looked stupid, because people were passing and they thought, "What

is our Prime Minister doing?" But he kept his eyes closed, and he looked again and again at his watch -- ten minutes was a long time because a crowd gathered and people started laughing. They were puzzled, "What has happened to the Prime Minister?"

And then he rushed into the house and told the master, "Nothing happened! You deceived me."

The master said, "But just tell me how you felt?"

He said, "I felt like a very stupid person standing there, absolutely stupid!"

He said, "This is a great revelation! What do you think? In just ten minutes' time to come to know that you are a very stupid person -- don't you think it a great revelation?"

This is what happens in meditations, in yoga, in therapy groups -- slowly slowly this understanding penetrates your heart: "What am I doing? Shouting, screaming, fighting -- what am I doing?" Just that very revelation and you can see the point, and then you can sit silently. And ALL that you need is already available.

That's why I said that his methods don't work -- not that somebody else's methods work. No method ever works.

AND WHAT RIGHT HAVE YOU TO JUDGE HIM?

I have not judged him. I have simply said what he is! What judgement are you talking about? I have not condemned him. To call a spade a spade is not to condemn it. I am simply factual.

But the question is from Mark. He must be a new person here. He can't understand me; he has no participation with me yet. He must have felt offended. He may be following things like Sivananda's, something like that. His ego is hurt. Rather than saying, "My ego is hurt," he has changed the question. That is a camouflage; that is utterly meaningless. If something is going to happen between me and Sivananda, that is my business -- don't you be worried. If you meet some time, then it is for us to decide whether I should have judged him or not, or why I called him stupid. He can ask me, but why should you be worried?

You must have something else inside; this is just a rationalization. You may be doing those kinds of methods. But ego is so subtle, it protects itself. You have made a question in such a way that you can hide -- but you cannot hide from me. Mark, mark it! you cannot hide from me. And remember, I never miss the mark. You are going to be caught. Now you cannot escape, because if you have been doing these things, then how long will it take for you to realize, how long will it take for you to allow the revelation to happen? And I have made ALL kinds of methods available here, all kinds of nonsense that you can get anywhere in the world. Even people are coming from Californialand -- HERE!

The sixth question

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING TOTALLY SURRENDERED AND BEING A BRAINLESS ROBOT?

VADAN, A BRAINLESS ROBOT CANNOT SURRENDER. And those who find it very difficult to surrender are brainless robots. To surrender, great understanding is needed, great intelligence.

You will be surprised to know that the more stupid a person is, the less possibility of surrender. Idiots can't surrender, although those who can't surrender think they are very intelligent and that's why they are not surrendering. But have you ever heard of any idiot surrendering? Imbeciles cannot surrender, retarded people cannot surrender.

The highest intelligence is needed to surrender -- to see the point that "I have been running in circles. If I go on depending on myself, I will go on running in the same circles again and again." The only possibility to get out of the wheel is to take somebody else's hand, somebody who is outside the vicious circle. To take that support is what surrender is.

Down the ages it has been thought that the intelligent person can't surrender, that it is the gullible who surrenders. That is not so. Modern research says something else: it is only the very very intelligent who can surrender. The gullible believes, but does not surrender. The intelligent surrenders, does not believe. And the difference is great.

You can believe without surrendering; then the belief is just a lip-service. You say yes on the surface, and deep down you go on doing whatsoever you are doing.

To be surrendered means you have said yes from the circumference to the very core. You have become a yes from the center to the circumference. There is only one quality of consciousness: yes. And immediately, in this yes, you come out of the ego -- because ego exists on no, ego feeds on no. The more you say no, the more ego is strengthened. No is the food for the ego: yes is the food for egolessness.

It is a simple phenomenon! But only very very intelligent people can understand it.

Have you observed? Whenever you say no, you feel very clearly that you are. That's why people enjoy saying no. When there is no need, even then they will say no. The child asks the mother, "Can I go out to play?" and she says, "No!" Now there is no need to say no. And she knows perfectly well that the child is not going to listen either. And the child also knows perfectly well that if he creates some tantrum she is going to say yes, so he creates some tantrum. But the mother says no. She feels good by saying no. And then the child starts saying no to the mother, because that is how he creates HIS ego.

That's why parents and children are always in conflict. Teachers and students are always in conflict. The universities are not just accidentally burning all over the world -- the conflict is that the teacher says no and the student says no. Two no's fighting. Husbands and wives are fighting continuously -- two no's fighting. And each HAS to say no. And ego feels very hurt. Watch: whenever you HAVE to say yes, it feels that you are defeated, the other is a winner. Then you try to find a situation where you can again say no and remain with your no and force the yes on the other.

This is how the ego exists. The day the child learns to say no is the beginning of the ego. Before that there was primal innocence. Before that the child was in trust; he had no idea of who he is. There was utter silence and peace and joy and celebration. The day he says no, something closes up; he becomes defensive, he creates an armour. And now he starts saying as many no's as possible.

If the parents say, "Don't smoke," he will smoke. If the parents say, "Don't do this," he will have to do it. The rebellion has started. He HAS to become an ego.

Surrender means: you have lived through the ego and you have seen the futility of it, you have seen the utter misery of it. You have lived through the ego and you know that you have not been able to live through it. It does not allow you to live, because it does not allow you any expansion. It makes you smaller and smaller and smaller; it engages you deeper and deeper. It puts you into a windowless state, all openings disappear. You start living in a kind of grave. To surrender means to see this! and then to find a person with whom it will be

easier to say yes, a person who has had a glimpse of the real man and to whom love has happened, who has become love.

If you can find a man with whom you can say yes easily, you have found your master. This is the criterion for how one has to decide that one has come across a master: if you can say yes easily, simply, innocently. The presence of the man makes you feel to say yes. No becomes difficult -- even if you want to say no out of old habit and structure, you hesitate, you find it hard to say. And yes comes easy, like a flood. And whenever you say yes, great joy arises; and whenever you say no, you feel great misery, as if you have harmed yourself.

Whenever you have found a person with whom this starts happening, you have found the master. Then forget about the whole world, what they say about the master! You have found the master. He may not be the master for others, but he is the master for you. Disappear into him.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING TOTALLY SURRENDERED AND BEING A BRAINLESS ROBOT?

A robot can never surrender, not even partially. Only an utterly intelligent person can surrender. And, of course, in the beginning it is partial; slowly slowly, one gathers more and more courage. The more one tastes the joys of it, the more one adventures, explores into it. And the man of utter intelligence surrenders totally.

In that surrender, the ego disappears. Not that in that surrender you become a slave to the master -- there is nobody to make you a slave. In fact, because there was nobody to make you a slave, that's why you were feeling so beautiful in saying yes to the man. If there was somebody to make you a slave you would have naturally felt it impossible to say yes. His ego would have offended your ego. There is a subtle interaction between egos.

If the man has helped you to surrender, that simply means that there was nobody to offend you. There was pure love, there was nobody trying to possess you. You were not being cowed down. And once you have surrendered the ego, you will be surprised that there is nobody to take possession of you -- the ego has disappeared. The master and the surrender was just a device. You have attained to primal innocence. Now you can move on your own.

When the master sees that you have surrendered totally, he makes you absolutely free. He says, "Now there is no need, now there is no question of surrender." Once surrendered, then there is no need for any surrender. The need for surrender is because of the ego -- once the disease has disappeared, the medicine has to be thrown. The master takes it himself.

And then you are free of ego and free of egolessness. That's what Ikkyu calls REAL emptiness: you are empty of everything and empty of emptiness too. Ego has gone and egolessness has also gone. Now there is nobody... absolute nothingness. And the purity of it and the benediction of it are such that if you don't taste it in this life, you have wasted it again.

The seventh question

IF I DISAPPEAR, WHO WILL PAY THE RENT?

LET THE OTHER PARTY BOTHER. Why should you be worried? But my feeling is that you have not asked the question rightly. You must be worried about those who have to pay the rent to you -- if they disappear.

It happened: A man came to a psychoanalyst and he was very much worried and going berserk. The psychiatrist asked, "What is your problem really?"

He said, "I am worried. The worry is that I have to pay ten thousand dollars I owe to people. And there seems to be no way! And I am thinking to commit suicide, because this is becoming too heavy and I cannot live with this heaviness."

And the psychoanalyst said, "Don't you be worried. Just look at me: I had to pay one thousand dollars to a man. I simply dropped the idea of paying and all worry disappeared."

And the man said, "I know it -- I know about it. You tell me something else."
The psychoanalyst asked, "How do you know it?"

He said, "I am the man to whom you were going to pay \$1000 -- that too is part of my worry. This won't help! You give me some other idea."

Why are you worried: IF I DISAPPEAR WHO WILL PAY THE RENT? Is rent so very important? Are you here only to pay the rent?

I have heard:

The Scotsman was visiting London for the day and called upon a lady of pleasure in Soho and, after he had partaken of her bodily delights, he gave her a hundred pounds.

"Why, that's incredibly generous of you!" exclaimed the surprised lady. "No man has ever given me so much. And yet, from your accent you sound Scottish, which makes it even more incredible for you to be generous. Which part of Scotland do you come from?"

"From Edinburgh," replied the Scotsman.

"How fantastic! My father works in Edinburgh."

"I know," said the Scotsman. "When your father heard was coming to London he gave me a hundred pounds to give to you."

Do you come from Scotland?! What part? Thinking of paying the rent? There is nobody to pay the rent, there is nobody to be paid -- there is really no rent either, no house either. That's what Ikkyu says -- all is dream.

Have you not heard this: A madman was asked, "What are the differences between psychoanalysts, psychologists and psychiatrists?"

The madman said, "Psychologists build castles in the air, psychoanalysts live in them, and psychiatrists collect the rent."

What are you talking about? Forget all about it! Disappear!

And remember, when you disappear as an ego, that does not necessarily mean that you disappear from the world -- the world continues. Kabir disappeared as an ego but continued to remain a weaver, continued to work, but now it is no longer serious, now it is just a dream. If others are enjoying, why disturb them? You can disappear and still pay the rent. Don't be worried about it -- unless you don't want to pay the rent and only for that you want to disappear. That is another matter. Otherwise, what is the problem? You disappear and still pay the rent!

IF I DISAPPEAR, WHO WILL PAY THE RENT?

YESTERDAY YOU TALKED OF NATURAL AND UNNATURAL. MONEY, IT SEEMS,

MUST COME INTO THE UNNATURAL CATEGORY. WITH THE EGO AND THE MIND, IT IS RELATIVELY EASY TO DEAL WITH IT. BUT IF WE ARE TO LIVE IN THE MARKETPLACE AND TO LIVE NATURALLY, WILL MONEY NOT BECOME PROBLEM?

Money is not a problem at all -- unless you want to make it a problem. Down the ages, the so-called religious people have been very much worried about money. Such a foolish thing like money! and so much worried. Play with it! If you have it, enjoy; if you don't have it, enjoy. What else can you do when you don't have it? Enjoy! When you have it, what else can you do? Enjoy! Don't make unnecessary problems about it. Money is a toy. Sometimes you have it -- play with it.

But my feeling is: people who can't play with money, they renounce money -- they are very serious about it. Then they become very much afraid about money, because deep down clinging is there.

Do you know? The chief disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, can't look at money. If you bring a one rupee note -- which is worthless, which has no money in it, not at all -- he closes his eyes. Now what kind of attitude is this? And this is thought to be very saintly; it is praised all over the country, that he is so free of money. If you are really free of money, why do you close the eyes? Is that one rupee note so attractive that you have to close your eyes? Is there some fear that if you don't close your eyes you may jump upon the man? Something must be there. This looks a little obsessive. There is great fear -- otherwise why close your eyes? So many things are passing and you don't close your eyes -- just poor money.

And money is nothing -- just a device to exchange things. But people who are really misers deep down, clingers, because of their clinging, their miserliness, they are very much in despair, in misery. Finally, one day, they think that it is money that is causing their misery. It is not money that is causing your misery. How can money cause your misery? It is miserliness that is causing your misery. Thinking that it is money that is causing misery, they renounce money, they escape from the world of money. Then they are continuously afraid; then in their dreams they must be entering into banks and opening treasures and things like that -- and making love to money. That is bound to happen.

Money is not a problem! It can be used! If you have it, use it; if you don't have it, then use that freedom that comes when you don't have the money. This is my approach. If you are rich, enjoy; richness has a few things which no poor person can enjoy. I have been both rich and poor, and I tell you honestly, there are a few things only rich people can enjoy. Enjoy when you are rich. And I tell you again, I have been both rich and poor, and there are a few things which only poor people can enjoy. And there is no way to enjoy both together.

So, whenever, whatsoever is happening, enjoy it. A poor person has a kind of freedom. Poverty has a kind of cleanness, a relaxedness, contentedness. Mind is not very much worried; there is nothing to worry about. You can sleep perfectly well; insomnia is impossible for a poor man. So sleep well and snore, and enjoy the freedom that comes from poverty.

And sometimes when you find yourself rich, enjoy richness, because there are a few things only a rich person can enjoy. You can have the greatest paintings on your walls; a poor man cannot have that. You can have the best music in your house; the poor man cannot have that. You create a Zen garden around your house; the poor man cannot have that. You can read poetry, you can paint, you can play on the guitar, you can sing, you can dance, you can

meditate -- a thousand and one things that become available.

My approach is: whatsoever is the case, just see what you can make out of it. If it is poverty, become a Buddha, start wandering; take a begging-bowl -- and enjoy that beauty that only a beggar can have. He belongs nowhere. Today he is here, tomorrow he is gone. He is a flow; he clings nowhere, he has no home. He need not worry that the rains are coming and the roof has to be fixed. He need not worry that somebody may steal something from him -- he has nothing.

Enjoy poverty when you are poor, and enjoy richness? then become a JANAKA, an emperor, and enjoy all the beauties that become available through money.

My approach is total. I don't teach you to choose. I simply say: whatsoever is the case, the intelligent person will make something beautiful out of it. The unintelligent person suffers. If he has money he suffers because money brings worries; he does not enjoy the music that money can bring, the dance that money can bring, the painting. If he has money, he does not go to the Himalayas for a rest, to meditate and to sing and to shout in the valleys and to talk with the stars. He worries, loses his sleep, loses his appetite -- he chooses the wrong when he has money. And this man, if somehow he becomes poor, by God's grace if he becomes poor, then he suffers poverty. Then he is continuously worried that "I don't have this and I don't have that." You have POVERTY! Enjoy it!

But there are people who are wrong in every situation: wherever they are, they will always chose the negative part of it, and they will suffer. And there are people, and I call those people intelligent people, and I would like my people to be INTELLIGENT people... wherever you are, try to enjoy it.

In my childhood it happened: once my father was very angry, so he locked me into the bathroom. I meditated! -- what is the point...? After three, four hours, he became worried. He was at the shop, but he was restless. He became worried about what had happened to me, and no message had come from the home -- mother had not sent any message, no servant had come to say what had happened to me. Have I disappeared? or what? Or has somebody opened the bathroom? So he could not do his work there; he had to come.

He came close and he listened and there was silence. He knocked and I told him, "Don't disturb me." That was the last time he punished me that way. It is pointless! He said, "I became so worried I could not do my work in the shop -- I had to come." I said, "This is nonsense! -- I enjoyed it."

In my school when I was small, second grade, my teacher was a very strict one and he used to punish by giving: "Go running seven times round the school, run!" And he gave me this punishment -- go seven times -- I said, "Why not seventeen?" He said, "Are you mad?" I said, "This is such a good exercise and every morning I would like to do it."

And I started doing it every morning. He would see me and he would beat his head -- he would say this.... I destroyed his punishment by making it an exercise. I USED it! Then he stopped giving me punishment.

Why not use an opportunity, whatsoever it is? And if you are alert you can find opportunities everywhere -- even if you are imprisoned you can use that as a great opportunity. And there are people who are under the sky, free, and not using that opportunity.

Money or no money, house or no house... the question is not what you should have: the question is what you should do, whatsoever you have.

See, my emphasis is totally different. You disappear... and then let things happen. If you

feel good to be in the marketplace, then that is natural, because there are born shopkeepers. Don't think that there are only born poets -- that is wrong;. There are born shopkeepers too. Whatso-ever you make of them, they will become shopkeepers; wherever they are they will open a shop. They cannot avoid it.
Have you not heard about the Jew?

A ship was moving and it was attacked by a crocodile -- a great crocodile, a very great crocodile. And they started throwing things in her mouth -- chairs and things, tables and a bag of oranges, and finally the Jew. But again and again the crocodile came to attack. Finally they decided, "This is not going to help. We go on giving it things; just for a few moments the crocodile becomes engaged, and again it comes." So all together they attacked and cut open the belly of the crocodile -- and what did they see? Do you know? The Jew was sitting on the chair, the table was in front of him, he had opened the bag of oranges and he was selling to other people who had been swallowed by the crocodile before.

You cannot escape... where will you go? There are born shopkeepers. So if you are a born shopkeeper, even when you have disappeared you will be in the marketplace. But then it will have a totally different quality to it -- you will enjoy it. It is God's world! a beautiful dream. You will know those customers are dream customers, and the thing? that you are giving to them are just dream, and the money that you are collecting is just dream -- but why not enjoy it? That enjoyment is not dream.

Let me remind you again: everything is dream, but if you can consciously enjoy it, that joy is not dream -- that joy is the goal of all religions. And you can enjoy more if everything is a dream. Then there is nothing to be worried about. If success comes, good; if failure comes, good.

The last question

I KNOW THAT I AM NOT MY BODY, BUT STILL I WANT TO LOVE AND BE LOVED. IS SPIRITUAL LOVE POSSIBLE IN THIS ROTTEN WORLD?

THIS WORLD is NOT ROTTEN. This world is full of God -- or, in Buddha's words: full of nothingness, which is the same. If anything is rotten, it is your mind. And, yes, it is very difficult with a rotten mind to find love.

And never think in terms of spiritual and material love -- love is simply love. It is neither material nor spiritual. How can love be material or spiritual? Love is simply love. Love means the joy of sharing your life with somebody. Yes, your body can be shared, your being can be shared -- but sharing is love, not what you share. Sharing is love. So all love is simply love.

But I can see the problem must be coming from your upbringing: I KNOW THAT I AM NOT MY BODY... who told you? You are more your body than your mind. You are more your body than your so-called self. That's what Ikkyu is saying: that self is a false entity, rotten. And the mind is just a phenomenon conditioned by the society. Your body is truer than your mind and than your self; your body belongs to existence.

But you must have been contaminated by the priests that you are not the body. They have created a dichotomy in everybody that "You are the soul, and how can a soul fall so much as to love a body?" And you will not find ghosts around here -- you will find people who live in

their bodies, who are their bodies.

That's why you cannot find somebody to love and by loved by -- you are in search of a ghost. And I don't think if you really come across a ghost that you will like it. But that's what you are hankering for. You have been told to condemn your body; and if you condemn your body and if you don't like your body, do you think somebody else is going to like it? If even you don't like it, who is going to like it? By liking your body, by loving your body, you create a situation in which somebody else can also love your body. But you create that milieu, that climate.

A man or a woman who hates his own body... and that's how you hate deep down, because from the very beginning you have been told to hate the body -- body is something ugly, body is something unspiritual. You have been taught that the body is the enemy. The body is the temple of God. In this body lives that nothingness Buddha talks about; in this body lives that seed of enlightenment I go on talking about. This body contains your greatest joy, this body contains God. Don't condemn it, otherwise it will be impossible.

You say: I KNOW THAT I AM NOT MY BODY, BUT STILL I WANT TO LOVE AND BE LOVED.

That desire is natural! -- to love and to be loved. That is part of human consciousness, an intrinsic part of it, built in. The society can contaminate your ideas about the body, but it cannot destroy your desire to be loved and to love. So that desire continues. But now it becomes impossible because that desire can be fulfilled only through the body. So you ARE in a fix.

Either drop the idea of love... which you cannot do, which nobody can do, because we are made of the stuff called love. It is impossible to drop it. Just let me remind you again: a single glimpse of the real man, and you are in love. Even at the ultimate stage, love explodes, love remains; you really become totally loving.

So you cannot drop that. That is your destiny; that has to be fulfilled. But if you condemn your body, it is very difficult. You want to go to the other shore and you condemn the bridge. You want to go to the other shore and you condemn the boat. Now, how are you going to manage it? The bridge can take you to the other shore. The bridge can take you beyond the bridge. The boat can take you beyond the boat, but only the boat can take you.

Love your body. Accept yourself as your body. Receive it with gratitude, it is a gift. Otherwise it will be impossible. And even if somebody falls in love with you -- the question is from a woman -- if somebody falls in love with you, you will not allow him to love you. If he wants to hold your hand, you will shrink back. You will think, "Here comes a hedonist, a materialist. He wants to hold my hand! He should only hold my ghost hand, spiritual hand, not my real hand. This is just the rotten body." And he wants to hug you and you will escape because this is that same rotten lust. You won't allow anybody to approach you.

And, naturally, when a person wants to have communion with you, he would like to hold your hand. It is not that he wants just to hold your hand -- it is through the hand that something else is contacted. It is not necessarily so that it will be contacted, but there is no other way to contact it either. When he holds your hand, he is holding something of you -- and there is no way to hold it without holding your hand. If he hugs you, he is hugging your soul; but the body is the visible part of the soul. It is through the body that you communicate.

Even if silence has to be communicated, words have to be used. Words are the body of the silence; silence is the soul. Even I have to use words, Buddha has to use words.

Drop that conditioning. And drop the idea that this world is rotten, because if it is rotten then nothing is going to happen in it. You have already become prejudiced.
Meditate over this anecdote:

Cuthbert married a very refined virgin from an impeccable background, and took her away to Tunis for their honeymoon.

On the first night in their hotel, Cuthbert quickly stripped off all his clothes and jumped into bed and then watched while his wife slowly removed all her garments.

But Cuthbert was rather surprised when she clambered into bed completely naked except for her white gloves.

"Why don't you take your gloves off?" he asked.

"Because mummy said that I might actually have to touch the beastly thing," she replied.

Now, this type of mind is not going to know what love is. This type of mind is closed, absolutely closed. And this type of mind is there in everybody, more or less. Drop this mind.

All is good and all is divine -- body is included. The whole body is included. Never make any distinction between body of the lower and the higher -- there is nothing lower and nothing higher. The whole body is one, it is a unity. Accept it, welcome it, and you will start blooming, and you will start radiating love. And that radiating love will attract others towards you.

You must not be attracting; you must have become very very repulsive. The idea that this world is rotten, that "I am not my body," that "I want some spiritual kind of love," are all wrong ideas. They will poison your whole life.

And I know there is a love that goes far beyond the ordinary forms, but that love is not against the ordinary forms -- it is based, rooted, in the ordinary forms. The tree goes very high in the sky and starts whispering with the stars, but it remains rooted in the earth. The tree blooms into beautiful flowers, but it remains rooted into the earth, in the dark earth, with a thousand and one roots, invisible.

God is rooted in matter, the spirit is rooted in matter. Never be against matter. Once you create this dichotomy -- matter and spirit -- you are forever going to remain a schizophrenic.

Bridge yourself. Come together! Become one piece. And out of becoming one piece, peace arises, love flows, life becomes a fragrance.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #9

Chapter title: Do you smell the mountain laurels?

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MY ABIDING PLACE
HAS NO PILLARS;
IT IS ROOFLESS --
YET THE RAIN DOES NOT WET IT,
NOR THE WIND STRIKE IT.

WHEN IT BLOWS,
THE MOUNTAIN WIND IS BOISTEROUS,
BUT WHEN IT BLOWS NOT,
IT SIMPLY BLOWS NOT.

THOUGH IT HAS NO BRIDGE,
THE CLOUD CLIMBS UP TO HEAVEN;
IT DOES NOT ASK AID
OF GAUTAMA'S SUTRAS.

RIPPLES APPEAR
ON THE UNACCUMULATED WATER
OF THE UNDIG WELL,
AS THE FORMLESS, BODILESS MAN
DRAWS WATER FROM IT.

THE MIND:
SINCE THERE IS REALLY
NO SUCH THING AS MIND,
WITH WHAT ENLIGHTENMENT
SHALL IT BE ENLIGHTENED?

A story:

ZEN MASTER: "I have here a staff, and yet I don't have a staff. How would you explain that?"

Jewish novice: "I wouldn't!"

Master: "Now, don't be impertinent! It is incumbent on you -- if you really wish to attain enlightenment as you claim -- to make every possible effort to answer this."

Novice: "All right, I guess that looked at one way you have a staff; looked at another way you don't."

Master: "No, that is not what I mean at all! I mean that looked at exactly the SAME way, I have a staff and I don't have a staff. Now how do you explain that?"

Novice: "I give up!"

Master: "But you SHOULDN'T give up! You should strain every ounce of your being to unravel this."

Novice: "I won't argue with you as to whether I should give up. The existential fact simply is that I do give up."

Master: "But don't you wish to attain enlightenment?"

Novice: "If attaining enlightenment means considering such damn-fool questions, then to hell with it! I am sorry to disappoint you, but goodbye!"

TWELVE YEARS LATER

Novice: "And so I return to you, oh master, in a state of absolute contrition. For twelve years now I have been wandering about feeling terrible for my cowardice and impatience. I now realize that I can't keep running away from life. Sooner or later I have to face the ultimate problems of the universe. So now I am ready to steel myself and try to work in earnest on the problem you gave me.

Master: "What problem was that?"

Novice: "You said that you have a staff and yet you don't have a staff. How do I explain that?"

Master: "Is that what I really said? Why how silly of me!"

ZEN HAS NO TEACHING, Zen has no doctrine. Zen gives no guidance, because it says there is no goal. It says you are not to move into a certain direction. It says you are already there, so the more you try to reach there, the less is the possibility of reaching. The more you seek, the more you will miss. Seeking is the sure way of missing it.

Getting it simply means getting the point that it is already available, that it has already happened, that it is the very nature of existence.

Enlightenment is not a goal but the quality of being herenow. How can it be a goal? because the goal is never herenow -- it is always therethen, it is always somewhere else. It is like the horizon: it is always distant and yet looks close by. And one feels that "If I travel a little bit, I will reach the horizon." But one never reaches, because the more you reach towards the horizon, the more the horizon goes on receding back -- because in fact there is nothing. Just an illusion.

The earth and the sky are not meeting anywhere. They can't meet because they are not two, they can't meet because they are one. The earth is just a materialization of the space of the sky; it is a wave in the ocean of the sky. How can they meet? For meeting, at least two are needed. And they are not two. The horizon exists only in the mind of man; it has no existential truth in it. But you can go on searching and searching. And the more you feel that you are not getting it, the more and more anxious you can become to find it. You can become mad after it.

Zen says: There is nowhere to go, so no guidance is needed. Then what is the purpose of a Zen master? His purpose is to bring you herenow. His purpose is to hit you so hard that you awake herenow. You have fallen asleep and you have started living in dreams.

Another story:

Zen student: "So, master, is the soul immortal or not? Do we survive our bodily death or do we get annihilated? Do we really reincarnate? Does our soul split up into component parts which get recycled, or do we as a single unit enter the body of a biological organism? And do we retain our memories or not? Or is the doctrine of reincarnation false? Is perhaps the Christian notion of survival more Correct? And if so, do we get bodily resurrected, or does our soul enter a purely Platonic spiritual realm?"

Master: "Your breakfast is getting cold."

That's the way of Zen: to bring you herenow. The breakfast is far more important than any paradise. The breakfast is far more important than any concept of God. The breakfast is more important than any theory of reincarnation, soul, rebirth, and all that nonsense. Because

the breakfast is herenow.

For Zen, the immediate is the ultimate, and the imminent is the transcendental. THIS moment is eternity... you have to be awakened to this moment.

So Zen is not a teaching but a device -- a device to disturb your dreaming mind, a device somehow to create such a state that you become alarmed, that you have to get up and see, to create such strain around you that you cannot remain comfortably asleep.

And this is the beauty of Zen and the revolution that Zen brings to the world. All other religions are consolations; they help you to sleep better. Zen tries to awake you; it has no consolation at all. It does not talk about great things. Not that those great things are not there, but talking about them is not going to help.

People have a very stupid idea. They think... one of our favourite tricks is to pretend that by talking about a problem we are doing something about it. That is why psychoanalysis has become so important -- and it is nothing but talking. The patient goes on talking about his problems and he thinks that by talking about his problems he is solving them.

People go on asking questions, AND getting answers, and they think that by asking a question and getting an answer they are doing something about their real problem. Answers that are given by others are not going to help you; they may help you only as consolations.

You ask somebody, "Is there survival after death?" and he says, "Yes." And you are freed of a fear -- the fear of death. And you start thinking the soul is immortal.

Just see the people who believe in the immortality of the soul: you will find they are the greatest cowards there are. In this country it has happened. Down the ages, at least for five thousand years, this country has been believing in the immortality of the soul, and for one thousand years this country remained in slavery. People had become so cowardly they could not rebel against it. Not a single revolution has ever happened in India.

People who believe in the immortality of the soul should be absolutely courageous; they can face death because they are not going to die. But the case is just the opposite. In fact, their belief in the immortality of the soul is nothing but a protection, is just an armour around their cowardice. They are afraid of death, hence they believe in the idea that the soul is immortal. They go on clinging to the idea -- against death. They don't know.

If you ask a Zen master, "Is the soul immortal?" he will not answer, because he knows it is your fear that is asking for the answer. Your fear wants to be calmed; you need a solace. You need somebody authoritative who can say, "Yes, don't be afraid." You need a father-figure.

It is not just a coincidence that Christians think of God as the father, or the Catholic priest is called 'the father'. Out of fear, people are searching for the father. They need fathers here and they need a great Father up in the heavens. These people are childish, immature; they can't stand on their own. They can't live their lives on their own. They need someone to Lean to.

Zen does not talk about God. Not that God is not! but God is not a father. And God is not a mother either. You cannot conceive of God in any word. All your words are irrelevant. God can only be experienced in utter silence, in absolute silence. But there is no point in talking about it, because talking about it people start thinking they are doing great work. Then they read the scripture and they philosophize, and they go on polishing their concepts and doctrines, and go on believing. And nothing ever changes in their lives. Their belief never brings any light to their lives. In fact, their belief hinders the light.

Zen is not a belief system. It is a way of awakening. And the Zen master is bound to be tough. That is his compassion. He has to hit you. And he goes on finding devices how to hit

you.

Just listen to this story:

A Zen master was worshipping at a statue of the Buddha. A monk came by and said, "Why do you worship the Buddha?"

"I like to worship the Buddha."

"But I thought you said that one cannot obtain enlightenment by worshipping the Buddha?"

"I am not worshipping the Buddha in order to obtain enlightenment."

"Then why are you worshipping the Buddha? You must have some reason!"

"No reason whatsoever. I like to worship the Buddha."

"But you must be seeking something; you must have some end in view!"

"I do not worship the Buddha for any end."

"Then why do you worship the Buddha? What is your purpose in worshipping the Buddha?"

At this point, the master simply jumped up and gave the monk a good slap in the face!

It looks so wild, unexpected. And the monk is not asking any irrelevant question: he is asking a simple human question out of curiosity. He should not be treated like that; there is no need to hit him. No Hindu priest would hit him, no Catholic priest would hit him. Their purposes are different -- only a Zen master can hit him. His purpose IS different.

Why didn't he hit him in the first place? Why did he bother to answer so many questions and then hit him? He created the situation, the right situation. He created the heat. He created the curiosity more and more and more. He brought the monk to a state from where the hit could simply shock him to a kind of awareness.

He helped the monk to think about it more and more and more, to bring a peak of thinking -- because only from the peak can the hit be of any help. But his hitting the monk is neither wild nor arrogant -- it is not out of anger, remember. This story I have found in a book written by an American who thinks the master became angry because of the persistent query of the monk, and out of anger he hit him back. This is stupid. You have missed the whole point. It is not out of anger! He is not offended by the question; he is enjoying the question. He is bringing the monk to a more and more feverish state by answering in such a way that the question is not answered but enhanced. Just see the difference.

Ordinarily, you answer a question so that the question is finished. The Zen master is answering so that the question becomes even more pointed and poignant. He is helping the question to arise with a totality. He is giving the idea to the monk that his question is very important and the master is unable to answer it. He is helping the ego of the monk to become a big balloon so a small prick and... the balloon bursts.

It is not out of anger; it has nothing to do with anger. He is not angry with the monk, he is not annoyed with the monk. He must be feeling perfectly happy with the monk that he has asked -- now he is giving a chance for the master. But it is a device. He is not answering.

Even the slap is not the answer, remember. A few people start thinking as if the slap is the answer -- that is not the answer either. The slap is just to give you a jerk, just to shake your foundations, so even if for a single moment you slip out of your thinking you will have a glimpse of reality. Then you will forget about God and about Buddha and worship... and you will just see that your breakfast is getting cold. You will come herenow.

ZEN is AN EXISTENTIAL APPROACH, not a philosophical approach towards life. And it has helped tremendously, it has brought many people to awakening.

Zen does not believe in analyzing a problem, because it does not believe that any problem can be solved at its own level. No problem can be solved unless your consciousness is raised a little higher than the problem. This has to be understood. This is something very fundamental.

You ask me a question. I can answer it, but you remain on the same level of consciousness. My answer cannot raise your consciousness. You ask, "Does God exist?" I can say yes or no -- but you remain the same! Whether I say yes or no will not help you in any way to become more conscious. It will not give you more being; it will only give you more knowledge this way or that.

If you are an atheist and you ask, "Is there a God?" and I say no, you will feel very happy. You will say, "So I was right." Or if I say yes, you will say, "This man is wrong. He does not know anything. He is just a blind person. I have argued, I have looked into the matter deeply, and I can't find any proof for God."

Whether I say yes or no, whether you are a theist or an atheist, either you will accumulate the knowledge, receive it if it fits with you, or, if it doesn't fit with you, you will reject it. That's what you are doing continuously in your mind. But your consciousness is not raised. And unless your consciousness is raised no problem can be solved. In the first place the problem is created because of your conscious-ness, and it can be solved, not by any answer -- it can be solved only by helping your consciousness to go a little higher from where it is.

That's the work of Zen. It is not a transfer of knowledge -- is a transfer of consciousness, being.

By slapping the monk, the master has simply helped the monk to become a little more alert. And if the monk becomes a little more alert, that slap is not only a slap -- it is a Leap of the master's being into the disciple. But for that you need great love for the master, otherwise you will miss the slap. You need great trust in the Master. This happens every day.

If I slap somebody, if I say something hard, if I hit somebody's ego, then out of a hundred cases ninety percent of people start reacting antagonistically. They miss the point! They missed a great opportunity. If sometimes I criticize you, that is a slap on your face. If sometimes I am hard on you, that is a slap on your face. Subtle slaps.

But humanity is no more interested in truth as much as it is interested in its ego. Immediately you are ready to leave. This man is not for you. A single slap, and you forget all about the search. Rather than becoming aware, alert, rather than receiving more consciousness and being, you simply close up.

Zen needs a particular atmosphere, a milieu -- a milieu of love, trust. That's why I insist that unless you are a sannyasin, my work cannot start on you.

Just the other day, somebody had written a letter, a beautiful letter; must be from a very good heart. He asked, "Can I not relate to you without becoming a sannyasin? Can I not just be a friend? Is it a must to be a disciple?" The question is relevant. You can be a friend to me; there is no problem in it. But you will miss as surely as the foe. The friend is going to miss AS much as the foe -- because when I slap you you will not be able to awake. You will become angry because you don't expect that from a friend. When I hit you hard, you will simply be angry; you will retaliate. you will argue, you will fight back. You will simply say, "Then I am going!"

Sannyas simply means that you are ready to go with me even if I hit you. You are ready to go with me even if I crush you, annihilate you. You are ready to go with me to any limits. Your trust is more. Your trust is more in me than your trust in yourself. Then the work starts.

'The work' simply means you have become available to the master -- only then can you be awakened. Because awakening is going to be painful. It is not going to be very sweet, you have slept so long, and you have dreamt so many beautiful dreams. And awakening is certainly going to destroy all those dreams. They are dreams, but you have thought up to now that they are realities. And when some-body starts taking them away from you it hurts. You start feeling that "I am getting nothing -- on the contrary, I am losing all that I had before."

Zen is a particular milieu, a climate between the master and the disciple of trust, of love, of infinite love, so the disciple is ready to go to any end. You will be surprised: sometimes Zen masters have been really wild.

It happened in one Zen master's ashram: whenever he used to talk, and he used to talk about truth, he would raise one of his fingers towards the sky. That was his particular gesture. Naturally, it became a joke. Anybody who wanted to imitate the master would raise the finger.

A young disciple, very young, became very artful in repeating and imitating the master's gestures -- his face, the way he walked, the way he talked, the way he sat. Just a young boy he was. And anywhere and everywhere, when ever there was some serious discussion going on, he would raise his finger towards the sky in the same way as the master.

One day, the young boy was standing behind the master and the master was talking to people and he raised his finger, and from the back the boy also raised his finger. And the master called him... just took a knife and cut his finger! Now, you cannot think of this as compassion -- just cut his finger. And the boy screamed out in pain, and the master said, "Don't miss the point! Now raise the finger." Now the finger is gone, there is nothing to raise, and the master says, "Now, raise the finger -- don't miss the point! " And the boy, with tears in his eyes, raised his cut finger towards the sky... and that very moment the satori happened. The boy was transformed.

Now, on the surface it is very cruel, violent. If you can only see the surface you will be for ever against these Zen people. They don't look like saints. Saints are not known to do such things. Saints talk to the fish and saints talk to the trees, and birds come and sit on their shoulders. We have known such saints. But saints cutting the finger for no special reason? of such a simple young boy, who was, out of his innocence, imitating the master. Is the master angry? But if you look deep down, the boy was transformed.

If you see the transformation, then it was worth it -- even if the master had cut the head of the boy it would have been worth it. A finger is nothing. The boy was totally transformed.

About this same Zen master it is said that when he was searching with his own master he had become very famous -- famous because birds would come and sit on his shoulders and on his head. Once even, while he was meditating under a tree, a bird made a nest in his hair. He had become famous all over the country. People used to worship him like a Buddha.

He became very egoistic, naturally -- such a great attainment. His own master came and was very angry. He said, "What is this bird doing in your hair? Drop all this nonsense!" He was hurt, but he understood. And since that day, birds stopped coming to him.

People would come to see, but no birds would come -- and they were surprised. They asked the master, "What has happened to your disciple? First birds used to come, animals used to come and sit by his side, but now they no more come.

The master said, "Now he has disappeared, he is no more special. He has attained. Now birds don't take any note of him. Animals simply pass by. He is not there! First he used to be there. He was becoming a special person; he was attaining to a specific kind of ego. Now

even that is dropped. He was becoming enlightened! -- now even enlightenment is dropped. So birds no longer come to him. Why should they come when there is nobody? And why should animals come and sit there? -- they can sit anywhere. It is all the same. There is nobody any more."

Now see the point! Zen has a totally different approach towards life. NOW the master is happy that the disciple has completely disappeared -- because one can even become attached to the idea of enlightenment. And you have to be alert about it.

Just a few months ago it happened: I told Somendra "You have had a small satori" -- since then I have not seen him laughing. Since then he has become very serious. He has become enlightened! He has taken it to his heart. He has become special. He cannot laugh, he cannot enjoy -- he cannot be ordinary.

And now, if this idea gets too much into him it will become a crust around him. He has to drop it. He has to become unenlightened again. He has to forget that satori. And not that it was not there -- it was there -- but many satoris happen before the ultimate satori happens. And the ultimate satori is dropping of all satoris, of all samadhis. The ultimate enlightenment is when you forget the very idea of enlightenment. Then there is innocence. Then there is just simple nature.

I have played a joke upon Somendra and he got caught into it.

I AM CREATING HERE A CLIMATE OF WORK -- many things are happening, many are going to happen. And you have to be ready. And the first readiness is: when I hit you, when I shock you -- now Somendra will be shocked -- when I shock you, use the shock to become a little more alert, a little more aware.

Zen is a device, not an analysis of life.

And always remember, the universe is unknowable, absolutely, because it is alive. Analysis kills. And remember also: only dead things can be known. Life remains unknown and unknowable.

The moment you know, you have killed something. And people go on killing. They kill love -- once they analyze it, it is killed. People are so violent that even in love their violence is dearly there, loudly there.

Sending flowers is a form of life sacrifice to show high esteem. When you send a beautiful roseflower to your girlfriend or boyfriend, what are you saying? This is not understanding. What are you saying when you say something with a flower? You give a roseflower to your girl -- what are you saying? You are saying: "I will kill for ya, baby! -- I am ready to kill, I can murder. Look, I have murdered this rose."

Even your love is nothing but a power trip. Power always kills. Bacon has said knowledge is power -- must be so, because knowledge also kills. When you can kill something, you feel great power.

I have heard that the most favourite pastime of people around Stalin was hunting. When Brezhnev took Kissinger on a hunting trip, he showed his power. It is said that whenever Tito wants to know that he is still in control, he kills stag and bear.

Whenever people want to show that they are powerful, they kill. Adolf Hitler had to kill to show his power. And killing goes on on many levels. Knowledge is also a subtle way of killing a thing.

Zen people are not interested in knowledge because they are not interested in power. They are interested in life as it is. They are interested in the breakfast, not in God -- not in

heaven, not in the soul, not in past lives, not in future lives. Simply the breakfast. They are utterly for the immediate.

We know only that which we have killed. So never be a seeker for knowledge, otherwise you will become a killer, you will be a murderer. That's what science goes on doing. In all the scientific laboratories it is nothing but murder and murder -- they have murdered nature, they go on murdering. It is a beautiful device to hide violence.

Just go and see in a scientific lab how many ways they have devised to torture simple, innocent animals -- in the name of experiment! in the name of inquiry, in the name of truth. Unimaginable torture. But when it is for truth's sake, it is allowed -- nobody thinks of the scientist as violent.

Nobody thinks of the philosopher as violent, but he is also violent. He goes on analyzing everything.

Zen is not interested in killing -- not even in killing a single word. It is not interested in knowing: it is interested in being. And these sutras will help you to see the point.

MY ABIDING PLACE
HAS NO PILLARS;
IT IS ROOFLESS --
YET THE RAIN DOES NOT
WET IT, NOR THE WIND STRIKE IT.

Go into each word with deep love, with deep sympathy.

First:

MY ABIDING PLACE
HAS NO PILLARS...

THE INNER HAS NO BOUNDARIES, no supports, no pillars. It is infinite space, it is pure space. It is nothingness. And there is nobody there. It is utterly silent. Not a single sound has ever penetrated there. Nobody has ever walked on that beach of your inner being, no footprints are there. It is virgin land.

If you look into that inner space, you will start disappear-ing. The more you look inside, the more you will disappear. That's why people don't want to look inside. They talk about self-knowledge, they talk about how to look inside; they talk about techniques -- but they don't look. And there is NO technique.

It is a very simple phenomenon to look inside. It is as simple as looking outside. You can simply close your eyes and look inside. But fear arises, great fear arises in looking inside -- because that emptiness overwhelms you. You start disappearing; you start feeling as if you are going to die. You rush back. You start thinking a thousand and one things.

Have you not observed? Whenever you sit silently and look inside, the mind creates so many thoughts immediately. Why? It is your device. It is just like the octopus: whenever he sees that some enemy is coming around, the octopus releases dark black ink like a cloud around himself. Immediately the ink cloud surrounds him and the enemy cannot see where he is.

When you go inside, immediately your mind starts secreting a thousand and one thoughts; immediately there is a great rush of energy into thinking. This is just like the octopus releasing dark black ink around himself -- to create a cloud so you cannot see the innermost nothingness. You don't want to see. To see in is to commit suicide -- to commit suicide as an

ego, as a self.

Ikkyu says:

MY ABIDING PLACE
HAS NO PILLARS;
IT IS ROOFLESS...

It is just the vast open sky... no pillars, no roof. It is infinity.

YET THE RAIN DOES NOT WET IT,
NOR THE WIND STRIKE IT.

How can the rain wet it if there is no roof and no pillar? and no ground either? Do you think when it rains the sky is wet? The sky remains as it is. Rains can't wet it. Do you think when it is cloudy those clouds leave any impact on the sky? Do you think the sky becomes contaminated, polluted by the clouds? Do you think it becomes darkened? Do you think any mark is left on the sky? Nothing is left.

How can you touch pure nothingness? And just as there is an outer sky, there is an inner sky. And 'outer' and 'inner' are just arbitrary words. The day you will know, it is all one sky -- outer and inner, it is all one. One has to be very courageous to go into it. Once you have the courage to see your reality, all fear disappears -- because all fear is for the ego, all fear is because of the ego. "Am I going to survive or not?" is what fear is all about. But once you have seen the inner sky, the fear can't remain. You are not, so what? You have never been and you will never be, neither born nor dying. And that which is has been always there and will be always there. But you are not that!

It appears only when you are not, when you have dis-appeared. You are just a dream. The dreamer is also part of the dream, and when the dream disappears, the dreamer also disappears. Living in this inner space, you are not afraid about security. Then insecurity IS security.

That's what Alan Watts means when he says 'the wisdom of insecurity.' There is only one way to be really secure and that is: don't have any roof, don't have any pillars. Just move into the open sky. And then if it rains, let it rain -- you will not get wet. You will be the sky, how can you get wet? Then if death comes, let it come -- you will not be dying, because how can you die? You were never born. You don't exist as a thing, as an entity.

Living in insecurity, one is secure. Trying to be secure, one remains insecure. This is the law of reverse effect. If you want something you will miss it -- just because you want it. The more you want, the more difficulties you create. And then there is a vicious circle. You want to be secure, you don't want to die. If you don't want to die, you will have to die a thousand and one deaths; you will have to die every day. If you don't want to die, then everything will become a death message; then you will be continuously trembling; and afraid. From everywhere you will see death coming.

And if you forget all about death, and you accept death, then even in death you will not die, even in death you will be a watcher. Death will come and go. You will see it coming, you will see it passing, and you will remain, you will abide. That which abides in you for ever and ever is not an entity -- it is a consciousness. It is not a soul, it is awareness, it is pure awareness. And that awareness is part of the universal awareness.

MY ABIDING PLACE

HAS NO PILLARS;
IT IS ROOFLESS --
YET THE RAIN DOES NOT WET IT,
NOR THE WIND STRIKE IT.

One Zen master was moving with his disciples. They came across a small river -- they had to cross it. It was not very deep, a shallow river. They started passing through it. The master had always said to his disciples, "When an enlightened person passes through the river, his feet never become wet." They were all waiting for an opportunity to see. They were puzzled because his feet were becoming wet. They became very much confused: "Is our master not yet enlightened?"

And just standing in the middle of the river, the master started laughing an uproarious laugh, a belly-laugh, and they asked, "What is the matter?"

He said, "You fools! I had said that the enlightened person's feet never become wet, and my feet are not becoming wet -- and the feet that are becoming wet are not my feet. You need not be confused; you need not look so puzzled and perplexed. This water is not touching me! Nothing can touch me because I am not. This water of the river is not touching the sky, it is not making the sky wet -- how can it make ME Wet? I am part of the sky."

YET THE RAIN DOES NOT WET IT,
NOR THE WIND STRIKE IT.

So when you are Communing with a master, remember it -- you are communing with somebody who is a nobody; you are communing with something which is not an entity but only a presence. Communing with a master is not communing with a person but with a presence. A person will become wet, but the presence cannot become wet. The presence remains uncontaminated.

That presence is you. One has just to find it out -- that's all. But you have become so much entangled with the ideas about yourself -- that you are a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Christian, a man, a woman, white, black, this and that -- you have become so much entangled with identities that you never look inside to see that you are just a pure sky and nothing else. No Hindu exists there, no Mohammedan, no man, no woman, no black, no white. These are all identities.

Think of the one who is identified with these things, think of the inner sky. These are all clouds -- Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, communist, capitalist -- these are all clouds. Don't get too much obsessed with the clouds. Go on remembering the sky.

WHEN IT BLOWS,
THE MOUNTAIN WIND IS BOISTEROUS,
BUT WHEN IT BLOWS NOT,
IT SIMPLY BLOWS NOT.

ONCE SEEN, this inner nothingness, a person becomes a suchness. This word 'suchness' is of infinite value in Buddha's experience, on Buddha's path -- TATHATA or suchness. When there is nobody, then what happens? A few things happen....

First, if there is nobody, there is nobody to control your life, there is nobody to manipulate, there is nobody to discipline. All control, all discipline, all manipulation dis-appears. That's what freedom is -- that's what MOKSHA IS. Not something far away in

the skies, but something deep inside you right now.

When you are not there, how can you control your life? All control disappears -- and with control disappear all kinds of tensions, with control disappears all uptightness, with control disappear all anxieties. You become an open flow, so open that

WHEN IT BLOWS,
THE MOUNTAIN WIND IS BOISTEROUS,
BUT WHEN IT BLOWS NOT,
IT SIMPLY BLOWS NOT.

Then whatsoever happens happens. A man of Zen is totally different from the man of Yoga, and the distinction has to be understood.

The man of Yoga is in tremendous control. The whole methodology of Yoga is how to control yourself, how to control absolutely. The man of Yoga cannot be disturbed because he is in such utter control. The man of Zen cannot be disturbed because there is no control. But the difference is great.

The man of Yoga is not absolutely in control, nobody can be. There are possibilities when he will lose his control. You just have to bring about those possibilities -- he will lose control, because all control is relative, it is only up to a certain extent.

Watch your control: if there is a ten rupee note you may not steal it, but ten thousand rupees? Then you feel a little inclined. And ten lakh rupees? Then you start thinking, then the idea seems to be worth thinking about. You start dreaming... ten lakh rupees? And just for once, and people are doing so many sins, you will be doing one and only one. And then you can donate half of the money to the church or to the temple. And it is not so wrong either, because it doesn't belong to a beggar -- it belongs to some very rich person, and it doesn't matter to him whether he has ten lakh less or more. And in the first place he has exploited people for all this money. Now you are gathering energy to do it! But if it is ten crore rupees? Then you will not think a second time: you will simply grab it and rush.

There is a certain limit to all control; beyond that you will fall. Nobody can be in absolute control, because control is an unnatural thing and nothing unnatural can ever be absolute. Only nature can be absolute. Unnature has to be maintained; it takes energy, conflict, struggle. And when you are controlling yourself, there is somebody inside you who is against it -- otherwise what is the point of controlling?

Control always splits you: the one who controls and the one who is being controlled, the top-dog and the bottom-dog. And the bottom-dog waits for its own opportunities. There is constant barking and they go on fighting inside you. And you know it! There are moments when you can control your anger, and there are moments when you cannot. There are moments when you can control anything, and there are moments when you cannot control. Sometimes the top-dog is powerful and sometimes the bottom-dog is powerful.

And the conflict continues and the victory is never absolute. Nobody ever wins it because the other remains there, maybe tired, resting, waiting for its time. And whenever one is in control, the other is gaining power by resting. And the one who is in control is losing power by controlling? because controlling means energy is being lost, dissipated. Sooner or later, the controller becomes weak and the controlled becomes powerful. And this goes on, this is a wheel.

The man of Yoga seems to be in great control, but cannot be in absolute control. He has repressed. All that he has repressed is waiting there underneath him like a volcano -- it will erupt. And when it erupts, he will be thrown in fragments.

The man of Zen cannot be disturbed -- but the reason is totally different. Not that he is in absolute control: he cannot be disturbed because he is not.

And then one thing more has to be understood: because he is not, there is no division. He is just a natural man. But you carry the idea of control from the man of Yoga, and that's why the natural man has always been misunderstood. For example:

A master died and his disciple started crying, great tears started coming, sobbing. The disciple was known himself as an enlightened person. Others said, "This is not right -- you should not cry, you should not weep. What will people think? Is it right for a man who is enlightened to cry? "

And that disciple said. "There is no question of right and wrong -- if tears are coming, they are coming. There is nobody to prevent them."

This is a totally different vision -- this is the natural man.

And they said, "But you have been telling us that only the body dies, then why are you crying and weeping for the master's dead body? Only the body has died and the body was just material. It was going to die -- dust unto dust."

And he said, "What are you talking about? I am not crying for the soul -- the soul never dies, okay, so I am not crying for the soul! I am crying for the body, because it was beautiful, so beautiful. I will never be able to see such a beautiful man walk again. I will never hear his voice."

And they said, "But you should not be attached!"

But he said, "I am not attached! Just a flower has withered away and tears are coming to my eyes -- I am not attached. These tears are not out of attachment."

This is very difficult to understand, because we know only tears which come out of attachment. We have not know natural tears -- we have forgotten ALL that is natural. We know tears of attachment; we don't know tears of innocence.

A Zen man is a natural man.

WHEN IT BLOWS,
THE MOUNTAIN WIND IS BOISTEROUS...

This is the description of a Zen man.

BUT WHEN IT BLOWS NOT,
IT SIMPLY BLOWS NOT.

When he laughs, he laughs. When he cries, he cries. It is a simple phenomenon. Just as birds sing, the Zen master speaks; just as flowers bloom, he lives. But his life has no ulterior motive, no goal. His words are not teachings but assertions of joy -- hallelujah! his celebration of being. And that, too, when it happens it happens. When it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen.

There have been Zen masters who talked their whole lives, and there have been Zen masters who never talked. Sometimes it happens that the song is sung in words, and sometimes it happens that the song is sung in silence. But there is nobody to do something. Whatsoever is happening is happening.

This is what is called freedom by Buddha: nobody to control and manipulate, all control disappears -- freedom is born. Freedom from the self, the true freedom, Freedom for the self is the pseudo freedom. Yoga tries freedom for the self, and Zen is nothing but freedom from the self? Then one becomes like a tree, like an animal, like a child.

The sage is like a child, not like a yogi, not like a mahatma. The mahatma is trying to control himself continuously, day in, day out -- curbing, dropping this, creating that. His whole life is his own effort. And, naturally, the so-called mahatmas look very tired, sad, desperate. Their life has not the quality of joy. They talk about satchitanand, but their life has not the quality of joy.

Zen people have the quality of joy. They don't talk about satchitanand -- they ARE satchitanand. They are truth, they are bliss, they are consciousness.

Once Ma Tzu was asked, "Why did Buddha never talk about God?"

Ma Tzu said, "He was so busy living him, that's why. He didn't talk about God because he was too busy living him."

This state is a simple state, a natural state. You cannot brag about it. No child brags about his childhood, no sage can brag about his sagehood -- it is the second childhood. He is reborn, the circle is complete. He has seen the world, he has seen the ways of the world, he has seen all the miseries of it, he has become wise. Now desires no longer drag him away from reality. He simply lives. Feeling hungry, he eats; feeling sleepy, he sleeps. He goes on doing the small things of life, but he becomes absolutely a nobody.

THOUGH IT HAS NO BRIDGE,
THE CLOUD CLIMBS UP TO HEAVEN;
IT DOES NOT ASK AID
OF GAUTAMA'S SUTRAS.

AND WHEN YOU BECOME NATURAL, spontaneous, simple, you start rising -- of your own accord. You need not ask Gautama Buddha for his help. No help is needed.

THOUGH IT HAS NO BRIDGE,
THE CLOUD CLIMBS UP TO HEAVEN;
IT DOES NOT ASK AID
OF GAUTAMA'S SUTRAS.

There is no need to have any guide. If you are simple, then simplicity is enough. If you are natural, then that naturalness is enough. If you are not natural, you will need the help of a master. And the master is not going to give you anything -- he will simply take all that is plastic in you, all that is inauthentic in you.

The master, the real master, simply throws you back to your own utter naturalness. He does not make you an achiever. He does not give you great dreams that you have to become this and you have to become that. He simply says: You relax. You be in a let-go. You be -- don't become.

This is own of the basic messages of Buddha: Be a light unto yourself. If you are not, then you need the help of a master, just for the time being. But what is his help? He throws you back to yourself; he goes on throwing you back to yourself. You would like to cling to the master and he goes on throwing you back.

The real master does not allow you to cling to him. He helps you to uncling, because unclinging is maturity, clinging is childishness. And remember: to be a child is one thing, to be childish is quite another. To be a child means to become a sage; to be childish means to remain clinging, immature.

RIPPLES APPEAR
On THE UNACCUMULATED WATER
OF THE UNDUG WELL
AS THE FORMLESS, BODILESS MAN
DRAWS WATER FROM IT.

AND THIS IS THE CONSTANT REFRAIN OF BUDDHA, that all is dream. Nothing has ever happened, and nothing is ever going to happen. But the mind lives in hope and through hope; it goes on thinking that something is going to happen. Nothing has ever happened, nothing is ever going to happen. All is. Hence the master reminded the disciple about the breakfast.

All is. You have to be reminded constantly of it, because you go on rushing away from it. All going is dreaming -- whether you are going for money or for God does not matter. Whether you think of the body or of the soul does not matter. Whether you want to become very rich, very famous, or enlightened, doesn't matter. All is dream. Becoming is dream.

Look into that which you are, and don't go on looking for that which you would like to be. Hope is the secret of the mind; the mind lives through hope, nourishes itself on hope. Once you stop hoping, once you relax and you just let hopes disappear, suddenly you are awakened to the truth -- the truth of your being, the truth of the whole existence.

RIPPLES APPEAR
ON THE UNACCUMULATED WATER
OF THE UNDUG WELL...

Such is your life. Have you not seen in your dreams again and again? A lake is there and ripples appear, and a boat, and you are travelling in the boat -- and there is no lake and no ripples and no boat and no traveller either. And in the morning you find yourself just lying in your bed -- there has been no lake, no water, no boat, nothing. But all had appeared.

Let me remind you of the famous dream of Chuang Tzu:

He dreamt one night that he had become a butterfly. Next morning, sitting amidst his followers, he started laughing madly. And one disciple asked, "What is the matter? We have never seen you laugh so madly."

He said, "There is such a trouble, and I don't think that I will ever be able to solve it. I have fallen into a great riddle."

They said, "Just tell us -- maybe we can be of some help."

And Chuang Tzu said, "Last night I dreamt that I had become a butterfly."

So they said, "But that is not a great riddle. We all dream, and we know it is a dream."

Chuang Tzu said, "That is not the point. Now the problem arises: it may be that now the butterfly has fallen asleep and is dreaming that she has become Chuang Tzu.

"Now who is right? Whether Chuang Tzu was right dreaming that he is a butterfly, or the butterfly is right dreaming that she is Chuang Tzu?

"And who am I? Am I just a dream in the mind of a butterfly? Because if Chuang Tzu can

become a butterfly in the dream, then why cannot a butterfly become Chuang Tzu in dream?"

Just think of butterflies sitting under the shade of a tree taking a good sleep in the afternoon, and dreaming that they are sannyasins... in orange, meditating, doing vipas-sana, thinking of great things. And you will also be puzzled -- perhaps Chuang Tzu was right.

Who is true? Butterfly dreaming of Chuang Tzu? Chuang Tzu dreaming of butterfly?

Buddha's answer is that neither is true -- only the one who has become aware of the problem, he is true. And he is neither; he is neither Chuang Tzu nor butterfly. The one, the mirror in which these dreams are reflected, the screen on which these dramas are played... that witnessing.

THE MIND:
SINCE THERE IS REALLY
NO SUCH THING AS MIND,
WITH WHAT ENLIGHTENMENT
SHALL IT BE ENLIGHTENED?

AND NOW COMES ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT SUTRAS, and only those who have followed the sutras up to now will be able to understand it. Now Ikkyu hits hard. He says:

THE MIND:
SINCE THERE IS REALLY
NO SUCH THING AS MIND...

because mind means nothing but ALL the processes of dreaming. You call a mind a materialist mind because he dreams of money; and you call a mind a spiritualist mind because he dreams of satoris -- but mind is dreaming, mind lives in dreams. It thinks of the faraway, of the distant. It lives in imagination and in memory; both are part of imagination. It never comes to reality; reality is too much for it. Facing, encountering reality it melts and disappears just like dewdrops disappear in the morning sun. Whenever the mind comes to herenow, to the breakfast, suddenly it evaporates.

Try it: taking your breakfast, just take the breakfast and don't think of God and the Devil and money and the woman and the man, and love and a thousand other things -- don't think. Just take the breakfast, just be there, totally there -- in it. Don't go here and there. Utterly present. And where is the mind? You will not find the mind.

Mind has never been found. Those who have looked, they have always found there is no mind.

THE MIND:
SINCE THERE IS REALLY
NO SUCH THING AS MIND,
WITH WHAT ENLIGHTENMENT
SHALL IT BE ENLIGHTENED?

And then the question arises: If there is no mind, then why this talk about enlightenment? If there is no mind, there -- there is nothing to become enlightened, nobody to become enlightened. If there is no mind, no illusion, then how to get out of the illusion? If there is no mind, then how to become something which is beyond mind? If mind exists not, then what is

the point of saying that one has to attain to no-mind?

Mind in itself is not... one cannot talk about enlightenment any more. But in fact, this is enlightenment. Enlightenment is not getting out of the mind: enlightenment is seeing that the mind exists not -- then you are suddenly enlightened. Then you are a Buddha.

There is the well-known incident about the Confucian scholar seeking enlightenment from a Zen master. The student constantly complained that the master's account was somehow incomplete, that the master was withholding some vital clue. The master assured him that he was withholding nothing from him. The student insisted that there was something the master was withholding from him. The master insisted that he was not withholding anything from him.

Later on, the two went for a walk along the mountain path. Suddenly the master said, "Do you smell the mountain laurels? "

The student said, "Yes!"

The master said, "See! I am not withholding anything from you."

A strange story, but of tremendous import. What is the master saying? The smell of the laurels.... He says to the disciple, "Do you smell the mountain laurels?" They always bring you to the immediate: to the breakfast: to the mountain laurels. They don't bother about philosophical things.

And the disciple smells and he says, "Yes!"

And the master says, "See! I am not withholding anything from you. Just as you can smell the mountain laurels, so you can smell Buddhahood right now, this very moment. It is in the mountain laurels. It is on this mountain path. It is in the birds, it is in the sun. It is in me, it is in you. What keys and clues are you talking about? What secrets are you talking about?"

Zen has no secrets it is said. Zen is all openness. Zen is not a fist: it is an open hand. It has no esoteric ideology. It is down-to-earth, very earthly, very simple. If you miss, that simply shows that you have a very complex mind. If you miss, that simply means that you have been looking for complex ideologies, and Zen simply drags you back to reality, to the breakfast, to the mountain laurels. To THIS bird calling. This is Buddha calling! To THIS utter silence -- this is Buddha present. This communion between me and you. This moment when I am not and you are not. All is open, all is available.

Someone asked a Zen master, "What is the ultimate nature of reality?"

The master replied, "Ask the post over there!"

The man responded, "Master, I don't understand!"

The master said, "Neither do I."

It is not a question of understanding. Either you see it or you don't see it. Either it is there, felt, seen, recognized, or you have missed. It is so simple. There is no complexity in it.

The master says, "Ask the post over there!"

It is very natural that the disciple said, "Master, I don't understand -- how is the post going to answer me?" because he had asked one of the greatest questions: What is the ultimate nature of reality? And so he said, "Master, I don't understand."

And the master said, "Neither do I."

There is nothing to understand and nobody to understand. ALL SIMPLY IS! Understanding creates problems. You think you don't understand so you have to understand

-- then understanding creates new problems, and then you solve them and your solutions again create more new problems... and it goes on and on. One answer creates ten questions, and it is an infinite regress.

Nothing has to be understood! Life has to be lived, not understood. You ARE Buddhas, and so are the posts.

Another time it happened -- the same master inquired of a disciple, "You have come very late. Where have you been the whole day?"

He said, "There was a polo match. A great match was going on and I became interested. I was watching."

The master asked, "The players were tired?"

And he said, "Yes, by the end they were very tired."

"And the horses were tired?"

And the disciple said, "Yes, the horses were also tired."

And the master said, "And the posts? The posts were tired?"

And the disciple was puzzled -- how can posts be tired.

He said, "Sir, give me a little time to think." And he meditated over it the whole night, and only by the morning, as the sun was rising did he get the point.

He rushed to the master's room and he said, "Yes, master -- they were tired."

And the master said, "So you have seen the point."

All is one, so if the players were tired, the horses were tired, the posts must have become tired. All is one. Nothing is separate. We are not islands. So the stones and the stars, all are joined together.

And everything is joined in THIS moment, is participating in this moment. If you become just THIS moment, all is attained. There is no other enlightenment.

Zen is a way back home -- and the simplest way and the most natural way.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Only Man is Capable of Boredom

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The first question

WHAT EXACTLY IS BOREDOM? IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING, EVEN SOMETHING NEEDLESS, A PANIC ARISES, A HUGE FEAR. WHAT IS IT THAT CAUSES THIS FRENZY OF MOVEMENT? WHY AM I SO UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THIS FEELING?

THE FRUSTRATION OF BOREDOM INCREASES WHEN I THINK THAT WHAT I WOULD DO IS EQUALLY A MEANINGLESS FRENZY. I FEEL CAUGHT.

ABHA, BOREDOM IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN HUMAN LIFE. Only man is capable of boredom; no other animal is capable of being bored. Boredom exists only when mind starts coming closer and closer to enlightenment. Boredom is just the polar opposite of enlightenment. Animals cannot become enlightened, hence they cannot become bored either.

Boredom simply shows that you are becoming aware of the futility of life, its constant repetitive wheel. You have done all those things before -- nothing happens. You have been into all those trips before -- nothing comes out of it. Boredom is the first indication that a great understanding is arising in you about the futility, meaninglessness, of life and its ways.

Now, you can respond to boredom in two ways. one is what is ordinarily done: escape from it, avoid it, don't look eye to eye into it, don't encounter it. Keep it at your back; and run away; run into things which can occupy you, which can become obsessions; which take you so far away from the realities of life that you never see boredom arising again .

That's why people have invented alcohol, drugs. They are ways to escape from boredom. But you cannot really escape; you can only avoid for a while. Again and again the boredom will be coming, and again and again it will be more and more loud. You can escape in sex, in eating too much, in music -- in a thousand and one kinds of things you can escape. But again and again the boredom will arise. It is not something that can be avoided; it is part of human growth. It has to be faced.

The other response is to face it, to meditate on it, to be with it, to be it. That's what Buddha was doing under the Bodhi Tree -- that's what all Zen people have been doing down the ages.

What exactly is meditation? Facing boredom is meditation. What does a meditator go on doing? Sitting silently, looking at his own navel, or watching his breathing, do you think he is being entertained by these things? He is utterly bored! That's why the Zen master moves with a stick in his hand -- because those bored people are bound to fall asleep. There is no other escape, so only one escape is left: at Least they can fall asleep. They cannot escape. They have themselves, of their own accord, become part of the Zen training and the discipline -- they cannot escape. But one escape is always available: you can fall asleep, then you forget all about it. That's why in meditation one feels sleepy.

The whole effort in meditation is this: be bored but don't escape from it; and keep alert, because if you fall asleep you have escaped. Keep alert! Watch it, witness it. If it is there, then it is there. It has to be looked into, to the very core of it.

If you go on looking into boredom without escaping the explosion comes. One day, suddenly, looking deep into boredom, you penetrate your own nothingness. Boredom is just the cover, the container in which is contained your inner nothingness -- SHUNYATA. If you escape from boredom, you are escaping from your own nothingness. If you don't escape from boredom, if you start living with it, if you start accepting it, welcoming it... That's what meditation is all about: welcoming boredom, going into it on one's own; not waiting for it to come but searching for it.

Sitting for hours in a yoga posture, just watching your breathing, one gets utterly bored. And the whole training of meditation is such that it helps boredom. In a Zen monastery you have to get up every day at the same time in the morning -- every day, year in, year out. It doesn't matter whether it is summer or winter. You have to get up early, three o'clock, you have to take the bath, you have to drink the same tea, and you have to sit.... The same gestures followed again and again. And the whole day is also a very very fixed routine: you will eat your breakfast at a certain time, then you will meditate again, then you will have your food at a certain time -- and the same food!
Everything helps boredom.

And the same clothes, and the same monastery, and the same master every day with his stick walking around. And every day in the evening you have to go for a session with the master. And the questions that are given are such boring questions to meditate on: What is the sound of one hand clapping? Just think of it -- it will drive you mad! What is the sound of one hand clapping? There is no answer to it, you know it; everybody knows there is no answer to it. And the master goes on insisting, "Go on repeating, go on meditating on it."

It is all well managed. The boredom has to be created -- immensely, tremendously. The boredom has to be allowed as totally as possible, has to be helped, supported from every side. The same evening, the same work, the same chanting of the mantra. The same time you have to go to sleep again... and this goes on, this wheel. Within a few days you are utterly bored and you cannot escape. There is no way to escape. You can't go to the movie, you can't look at the TV; you can't have anything that can help you to avoid it. You are thrown into it again and again.

Great courage is needed to face it. It is almost like death; in fact, far more hard than death, because death comes when you become unconscious. And you are stirring ALL sorts of boredom. What happens? There is the secret of all meditations: if you go on watching, watching, watching, boredom becomes bigger and bigger, intenser and intenser, and then the peak... nothing can go on for ever. There is a point from where the wheel turns. If you can go to the very extreme, to the very peak, then the change, transformation, enlightenment, satori, or whatever you want to call it, happens. Then one day, suddenly, the boredom becomes too much. You are suffocated, you are almost being killed by it. You are surrounded by an ocean of boredom. You are overflowed by it and there seems to be no way to escape. The very intensity and totality of it, and the wheel turns. Suddenly boredom disappears and there is satori, samadhi. You have entered your nothingness.

Now there will be no boredom any more. You have seen the very nothingness of life. You have disappeared -- who can be bored? with what? You exist no more. You are annihilated.

You ask: WHAT EXACTLY IS BOREDOM?

A great spiritual phenomenon. That's why buffaloes are not bored; they look perfectly happy and enjoying. Only man is bored. And in man, also, only the people who are very talented, intelligent, they are bored. The stupid people are not bored. They are perfectly happy doing their jobs, earning money, making a bigger bank balance, raising their children, reproducing, eating, sitting in the movie, going to the hotel, participating in this and that. They are enjoying! They are not bored. They are the lowest types; they really belong to the world of buffaloes. They are not yet human.

A man becomes human when he starts feeling bored. You can see it: the most intelligent child will be the most bored child -- because nothing can keep his interest for long. Sooner or

later he stumbles upon the fact and asks, "Now what? What next? This is finished. I have seen this toy, I have looked into it, I have opened it, I have analyzed it, now I am finished -- what is next?" SOON he starts finishing things. By the time he becomes young, he is already bored.

Buddha was utterly bored. He left his kingdom when he was only twenty-nine, at the peak of his youth. He was utterly bored -- with women, with wine, with wealth, with kingdom, with everything. He had seen all, he had seen through and through. He was bored. He renounced the world NOT because the world is wrong, remember. Traditionally it is said he renounced the world because the world is bad -- that is absolute nonsense. He renounced the world because he became so BORED with it.

It is not bad, neither is it good. If you are intelligent, it is boredom. If you are stupid, you can go on. Then it is a merry-go-round; then you move from one sensation to another. You are interested in trivia and you go on repeating and you are not conscious enough to see the repetition -- that yesterday also you had been doing this, and today also you are doing, and again you are imagining tomorrow to do the same thing again. You must be really unintelligent. How can intelligence avoid boredom? It is impossible. Intelligence means seeing things as they are.

Buddha left the world out of boredom; utterly bored, he ran away from the world. And what was he doing them for six years sitting in those forests? He was getting more and more bored. What can you do, sitting in a forest? -- watching your breath, looking at your navel, day in, day out, year in, year out. He created that boredom to its ultimate peak, and one night it disappeared. It disappears of its own accord.

If you reach to the peak... the turn comes. It comes! And with that turn of the tide, light enters into your being -- you disappear, only light remains. And with light comes delight You are full of joy -- you ARE NOT, but full of joy -- for no reason at all. Joy simply bubbles up in your being.

The ordinary person is joyous for a reason -- he has fallen in love with a new woman or a new man and he is joyous. His joy is momentary. Tomorrow he will be fed up with this woman and he will start looking for another. The ordinary man is joyous because he has got a new car; tomorrow he will have to look for another car. It goes on and on... and he never sees the point of it, that always, finally, you are bored. Do whatsoever -- finally you are bored. Every act brings boredom.

The intelligent person sees it. The sooner you see, the more intelligence you show. Then what is left? Then only boredom is left, and one has to meditate over it. There is no way to escape from it. Then go into it. See where it leads. And if you can keep going into it, it leads into enlightenment.

Only man is capable of boredom, and only man is capable of enlightenment.

The second question

IT SEEMS THAT THOUGH THE SOCIETY IS AT PRESENT REJECTING YOU, BY AND BY IT WILL ACCEPT YOU.

Please comment.

SIDDHARTHA, why are you worried about the society, its rejecting me or accepting me? Forget about the society! It has always accepted people like me only when they are gone; it

always accepts Buddhas when they are dead. It accepts only when Buddhas cannot do anything; it accepts only when Buddhas become just theories. The flame is gone; it is only a memory now. Then they accept -- not only accept, they worship. That's what they have been doing all the time and they will be doing all the time in the future too.

Nothing has changed fundamentally. The unenlightened remain unenlightened.

Why do they reject? They reject out of fear. Just listen to me: just now I was saying something about boredom. Now the ordinary person can't accept it, that one HAS to go into boredom. He will be afraid. He will say, "What nonsense is this man talking about?" He will become afraid even to listen to it, because who knows? -- the idea may get into his mind that life is boring. Then all his joys... and he was going along so happy and he was so delighted with small toys. All those toys will be broken! He does not want to do that; he is too much obsessed with his toys. He does not want to listen to such things. When I am gone, they can worship me -- because I will not be shouting at him.

Worship is cheap. To be with a living master is hard, arduous; it needs guts. Worship is a polite gesture. Worship says, "You may be right, but we are not ready for it. You must be right; we are not even ready to argue about it, because -- who knows? -- if we argue about it, you may prove right. So we don't argue; we will worship you. You must be right! How can you be wrong? But we don't want to follow you yet. We will make a beautiful image of you in the temple. We will bring flowers to your feet, we will repeat your name, and we will go on doing the same stupid things we have been doing before. You will be just decor, a decoration. We will put a beautiful picture of you in the home; it makes the drawing-room look so pretty. But that's all. And once in a while we will even garland your picture, but that's all."

This is a polite way of avoiding, a very polite way of saying, "No, we can't come with you -- at least, not yet. Ultimately you may be right, but we are not worried about the ultimate. For the moment, forgive us, and let us live our joys. Life is so enchanting -- who cares about enlightenment?"

And any person who comes here and throws a stone in your glass houses looks like an enemy. Any person who comes and disturbs your sleep and destroys your dreams looks like an enemy. So when a Buddha is alive he HAS to be rejected. If he is not rejected, then he is not a Buddha. When he is dead, he has to be worshipped. If he is NOT worshipped when he is dead, then he is not a Buddha.

That's how we have always been behaving with Buddhas, Krishnas, Christs -- that has been our usual procedure. We have found a very very cunning, clever way. We don't want to say no, because then we have to enter into the argument with these people -- and these people ARE argumentative. To face them is dangerous because they may convince you, their very being is convincing. One does not want to come close to them. When they are dead, then it is perfectly okay. When Christ is alive, crucify him -- and these are the same people who crucified him, now they go to the church. The SAME people! If he comes again, these same people will crucify him. People are people; they are not Jews and not Christians and not Hindus and not Mohammedans. They are just the same people.

There are only two possible categories: the enlightened and the unenlightened. The unenlightened are all the same, and the enlightened are all the same. Their tastes are not different.

It is not that Jews crucified Jesus -- it is the mediocre mind, the mind that is afraid, afraid TO face reality; the mind that is afraid to go into the utter boredom. And the utter boredom is a passage: it leads to the temple of celebration.

But, Siddhartha, don't be worried about people. Why should you be worried? Is there some doubt in your mind? Are you searching, seeking support from the people? It must be creating a certain restlessness in you: "How can Osho be right if so many people are against him?" You feel a little shaky, afraid, a little trembling arises in you. When you are here with my orange people, it feels good: "Osho must be right -- so many orange people.

When you go to M. G. Road, naturally you start thinking. "What am I doing here? All are not orange people. And it is not only that they are not orange, they are deadly against."

Fear arises in you, doubt arises in you: "Maybe I have fallen in the trap of a magician? of a hypnotist? An intelligent person like me, what am I doing here? Why did I get caught into these meditations? Nobody else is meditating! And I am coming from so far away, and the people who live in Poona don't care a bit." Something seems to be unsettled; you become shaky, you tremble. Now, deep in your mind you would like to be with me, but what to do with this crowd that is against me? Now you are creating consolations for yourself.

You ask: IT SEEMS THAT THOUGH THE SOCIETY IS AT PRESENT REJECTING YOU, BY AND BY IT WILL ACCEPT YOU.

You are not really concerned with the society. You want to hear from me that "Yes, Siddhartha, don't be worried -- these people are going to follow me," so you can feel good. "These people WILL accept me, wait! All these people are going to become orange -- just wait, just time is needed." You want an assurance from me so the presence of those people who are against me does not disturb you.

Just look into these things. Become very alert to what happens in your mind when you ask a question, why you ask a question. The question may not show anything of the reality of you, but you cannot hide it -- not from me. And I don't answer your questions so much as I answer the reason why the question has arisen in you. So sometimes it feels that I am not directly answering your question; sometimes you may even be surprised that I am going a little roundabout, not direct. Sometimes you may even think that I am avoiding the question that has been asked -- it is not so. My whole effort here is not to answer the question on the surface, but in the depth, from where it has arisen, why it has arisen.

There are people who ask questions, and then they make a note that "This is not really my question I am asking it for others." But why can't the others ask it? Why should you be worried about others? Now, this person wants to ask but does not want to show that the question is his.

One day a man came to me and he said, "One of my friends has suddenly become impotent. I have Come for him. Is there some help?"

I told the man, "Why didn't you tell your friend? -- he could have come himself and told me that one of his friends has become impotent, because I see perfectly well that you are your friend."

He became very much worried. He started perspiring. I said, "Don't perspire! But why? Why can't you face a thing? If you have become impotent, don't be so impotent that you cannot even ask the question. At least save that much potency. Face the problem."

There are a few people who go on thinking.... And it is not just that they are deceiving -- they even think that they are asking to help others. Yoga Chinmaya often asks questions that "This is to help others." Deep down the question is HIS, but he cannot accept it, that "It is my

question." That hurts: "I am asking such a question? I should not be asking such a question. I have lived with Osho so long -- I should not be asking such a question." But the question is there and it has to be asked, so one finds a clever way to ask it.

Now, Siddhartha is worried about the society, it seems, on the surface. Deep down, he is worried about himself. He wants an absolute promise that "Siddhartha, you are on the right track -- others are wrong. Just wait! They will not only worship me, they are going to worship you too! You are going to be my apostles; you are my Luke and Thomas and Mark. Wait, just wait! You have done such a great work by becoming a disciple to a madman. Just wait -- these foolish people will not only worship your master, they are going to worship you too. Then they will recognize, then they will see what a great opportunity they have missed."

Just go deep into your own fear and let the fear be expressed clearly in your question. At least find the CAUSE of your questions. If you can find the cause of your questions, out of a hundred, ninety-nine questions will simply disappear -- because in the very cause you will find the answer. To go deeply into a question, to its very roots, is to find its answer. And the one question that will not find an answer from yourself... asking it will be of great import -- that will become a bridge between me and you.

Always go into the unconscious roots of your question.

There is another question on similar line:

IN YOUR LAST LECTURE YOU CALLED YUDHISHTHIRA, THE DHARMARAJ, AN IRRELIGIOUS PERSON SIMPLY BECAUSE HE LOST HIS WIFE IN GAMBLING. BUT WHAT ABOUT ONE OF YOUR OWN FOLLOWERS WHO IS MAD AFTER WINE AND WOMEN? NOT ONLY THIS BUT HE SMOKES CHARAS AND GANJA FREELY. IN WHAT SENSE IS HE FOLLOWING A RELIGION SUPERIOR TO THAT OF YUDHISHTHIRA? PLEASE EXPLAIN.

THE QUESTION IS FROM SOHAN BHARTI. He is a new sannyasin; just a few days before he took sannyas. He must be having a very very strong Indian mind, deeply conditioned.

Now, staking a woman in gambling -- and he says, "Simply because he lost his wife in gambling!" Wife in India is just a thing, furniture, so what is wrong in it? In fact, Yudhishtira and his brothers were behaving with the wife with that attitude that "she is property." There were five brothers and the five had divided the wife; the wife had five husbands. You can't divide a person like a property. This is such a horrible thing to think about: a woman has been divided by five men -- as if she is a piece of land!

And then, finally, he staked her as a bet in gambling and lost her. Can you think of any woman staking her husband in gambling? And would you say, "So what! Just a husband -- why not?" But there is no such story in India. You would never have forgiven that; you could not have conceived.

The husband in India is called SWAMI -- master. And the wife is called DASI -- servant, a slave. This is ugly. But Sohan Bharti's Indian mind must have been hurt when I said it, because this man, Yudhishtira, is thought to be a great religious man, one of the great religious leaders of the Hindus. To me he is not even human! What to say about his being religious? He is not even human -- he is inhuman.

And he asks: BUT WHAT ABOUT ONE OF YOUR OWN FOLLOWERS WHO IS

MAD AFTER WINE AND WOMEN?

Then he is perfectly human! Nothing inhuman about it! What is wrong in being mad after a woman? It is natural. Yes, one can go beyond it, but one goes beyond only when one has gone through.

And everybody is in search of some kind of wine, some kind of intoxicant, to drown one's miseries, one's anxieties.

Morarji Desai is trying to create prohibition in India. Now, he himself is intoxicated with power. That is a far more dangerous intoxication than ordinary wine -- because when you drink alcohol you harm only yourself, nobody else; but when you drink the alcohol of power you harm millions.

If a person is smoking charas and ganja freely, he is simply harming himself. Yes, he is harming, but he is simply harming himself. That is his birthright, to harm himself. He is committing a slow suicide, but that is his birthright. He is not harming anybody. He is not trying to force his ganja on you or his charas on you.

Now, Morarji Desai is trying to force his idea on the whole country! That is bossy, that is irreligious. Who are you to direct everybody's life? Nobody should be so arrogant. You can say what you feel, but it should not be imposed as a law. I also know that alcohol is not good, but you should go and teach people, tell people that alcohol is not good. Nobody should try to impose it by violence. To make it a law is violence: it means now the police will be behind it, bullets will be behind it.

What does it mean when you make a law? It means now you are not capable by converting people, persuading people; now you are trying to do things by force, by power, by violence. This is undemocratic, this is absolutely undemocratic.

And nobody sees the power trip -- the alcoholic, the intoxicating state of power. Whenever somebody gets into power, he is drunk!

I am not saying that people should drink alcohol or use charas and ganja, but I am saying that that is everybody's birthright. One has to be allowed at least one thing: to do harm to oneself -- if one wants to, if one decides that way. You make it dear that this is harmful, that's all. Nothing else can be done. You cannot be the deciding factor.

So, if you ask me, "What higher religion is your follower following?" I will still say that he is better than Yudhishtira -- at least he is not staking his wife in gambling. He may be staking himself, he may be foolish, but I cannot say that he is harming anybody else. Yudhishtira had no respect for the woman. And if you don't have any respect, how can you have any love? Love and respect go together.

Don't pretend that you love your woman if you don't respect her. If you respect, only then do you love. If you don't respect, you only exploit her; your relationship is that of lust, not of love. Yudhishtira had to be exploiting this poor woman. Just think of the idea, of the horrible idea... like a thing. She was being used like a thing, and now she was being staked like a thing. And if... and that's what happened: Yudhishtira lost her. The others who had won immediately tried to undress her then and there. And then Yudhishtira and all the four brothers were sitting silently there, looking at it: "Now you cannot do anything -- now she is somebody ELSE'S property. Whatsoever they want to do, they can do." What kind of respect? What kind of love?

It is ugly. It is irreligious. It is inhuman.

And remember, I am not saying that my follower... and I don't know who this follower is. It may be just a figment of your imagination. If he is doing these things, he is not doing very

well, but still if you compare him with Yudhishtira he is far better -- he is just harming himself.

The other has to be respected as an end, is never to be used as a means. The woman is equal to man. But for the Indian mind it is very difficult to accept the equality of the woman. So many so-called saints of India have been condemning the woman, down the ages, in such words that it seems unbelievable that these people had any sense -- of respect, of love, of sympathy, of compassion.

The Indian saints have been telling that the woman is the door to hell. The woman is not the door to hell; it depends on you. She can be a door to hell if you decide to go to hell, and she can be a door to heaven if you decide to go to heaven.

And don't forget that the same is true about you too. It is not only that men go to hell -- then where do women go? And how will they go, because they will not find any door? Men must be function as a door for them too.

Nobody is a door to heaven or hell. You create your heaven and hell. But these so-called saints were so much afraid of woman -- their fear shows in their condemnation.

I have heard a story that a rabbi used to go around Sodom, the famous condemned city, Sodom, and he would shout from every corner, on every street to people, "Stop your sins! Don't do this! Don't do that! Avoid sex, avoid this, avoid that..." for years.

One day, one of the disciples of the rabbi asked, "You never become tired? Nobody listens to you, nobody has ever listened or paid any attention to you, but you go on shouting around the town continuously. People are tired of you, but you are not tired? From where do you get this energy? Do you still think, do you hope, that you will be able to convert these sinners?"

He said, "What are you talking about? I am not worried about them. If I go on shouting against them, at least I can save myself. If I don't shout, there is every possibility they will convert me. I will start doing the same things that they are doing -- that is the fear. So I go on shouting! The more I shout, the more I become convinced. I am not worried about whether they are convinced or not. The more I shout, the more I convince myself that I am on the right track. And I can repress easily -- those desires are in me too. And if I don't say anything against them, there is every possibility I may become just like these people."

Your so-called saints who have been talking against women are afraid. They know if they don't talk, if they don't go on condemning, they will be falling into some kind of relationship with women. They are afraid of their desires, they are afraid of their own sexuality. By condemning women they are simply creating an atmosphere around themselves, they are simply trying to repress their sexuality and nothing else.

But the Indian mind has become so much accustomed to this -- that's why you can ask such a thing:

IN YOUR LAST LECTURE YOU CALLED YUDHISHTHIRA, THE DHARMARAJ, AN IRRELIGIOUS PERSON SIMPLY BECAUSE HE LOST HIS WIFE GAMBLING.

Now, Sohan Bharti must not be behaving humanly with his own wife. How can he behave respectfully with his own wife if he has this idea? Look deep into your question . If you cannot respect women, you cannot respect anybody else -- because it is from women you come. The woman mothered you for nine months, then she took every care, she loved you for

years. And then again... you can't live without a woman. She is your solace, your warmth. Life is very cold; the woman becomes your warmth. Life is very uninspiring; the woman becomes your inspiration. Life is very very arithmetical; the woman becomes your poetry. She gives grace to your life. She takes care of you. She loves you, she goes on loving you, tremendously, totally.

And you say:... SIMPLY BECAUSE HE LOST HIS WIFE GAMBLING?

He must have been a man without heart. Instead of a heart, there must have been a hard rock.

The third question

"I AM LIFE, LOVE, JOY. HERE I GIVE YOU LIFE, LOVE, JOY." OSHO, WHEN I HEARD YOU SAY THIS TWO MORNINGS AGO, MY BODY TREMBLED WITH AWE AND ALSO A DEATHLIKE FEAR OF GETTING LOST IN YOU OR OF MISSING OUT COMPLETELY. WHY AM I FINDING IT SO HARD TO RECEIVE THIS LIFE, LOVE, JOY, FROM YOU?

CHINTANA, EVERYBODY FINDS IT HARD, because to receive joy, to receive light, love, goes against your ego. The ego wants to be the donor, not the receiver; the ego always wants to give, not to receive. It is easier to give love; it is very difficult to receive it. To be at the receiving end ego feels very much hurt.

It is always difficult, and it is going to be still more difficult if you are with a Buddha or a Christ or a Krishna -- because you have nothing to give to them. You have all to take from them and nothing to give them in return. Your ego feels annihilated.

If you can give me something in return, it will not feel so bad, but what can you give? And whatsoever you can give will be just a token and nothing else, because whatsoever you have is nothing.

Just the other night a sanyasin gave me a sea-shell. I loved the gesture. Must have found on some beach. It is nothing, but shows great love for me. Not only love -- something else too. You receive so much from me, you would like to give something in return so it remains balanced. And all that you can give, ALL, I say, can't be more than sea-shells.

So, Chintana, that fear arises in everybody. You have to drop that fear, because when you are receiving from me, you are not really receiving anything from me -- because I am not there. I am just a passage. If you are receiving anything from me, you are receiving from God, not from me. Forget all about me! You need not even say a thank-you.

Whenever a sannyasin comes to me and says, "Thank you, Osho, for all that you have done to me" I feel a little uneasy, because what is he saying? There is nobody to receive this thankfulness.

Remember Jesus: he was passing through a crowd. A poor woman, an ill woman, rushed behind him and touched his garments. And she was healed -- immediately, instantly, so deep was her trust. She had come from a great distance; she was in great agony and pain and suffering. But such was her trust that she believed that if she could even touch the garments of Jesus all would be cured -- and all was cured.

Jesus looked back and the woman said, "How should I thank you, Lord? You have healed

me! I had come ill and I am now healthy and whole."

And Jesus said, "Your faith has healed you. And don't thank me, thank God."

Never be worried. Don't feel that you are becoming grateful towards me. I am just a vehicle, a passage, a window. And if the sun has penetrated through the window to you, feel thankful to the sun -- forget about the frame of the window. I am just the frame and nothing else. You can receive from me as much as you want, as much as you can dare, as much as you need.

Remember always, you are receiving from God -- because from wherever we receive, we always receive from God. He is the only giver; there is no other.

You ask me: "I AM LIFE, LOVE, JOY. HERE I GIVE YOU LIFE, LOVE, JOY." OSHO, WHEN I HEARD YOU SAY THIS TWO MORNINGS AGO, MY BODY TREMBLED WITH AWE AND ALSO A DEATHLIKE FEAR OF GETTING LOST IN YOU OR OF MISSING OUT COMPLETELY. WHY AM I FINDING IT SO HARD TO RECEIVE THIS LIFE, LOVE, JOY, FROM YOU?

Feel fortunate that you are standing on that verge from where, if you receive, you will be transformed. If you don't receive, you will suffer all your life. The memory will haunt you.

If you have come to me, and if you don't dissolve, the memory will haunt you. You will never be at ease with life again. You have tasted something of the beyond; now life will feel almost tasteless. Going back, hiding, back into your old caves of the mind, is dangerous. And the mind tends to do that. Beware of it.

Take the jump! -- when I give you the call, take the jump.

And remember always that it is not from me as a person that you are taking anything,, because the person exists no more. It is only a presence. It looks like a person to you, because you cannot yet see the presence. Once you accept this love, this joy, this life, that is happening here, you will forget about me as a person, you will start feeling me as a presence. You will forget my boundaries -- they are arbitrary -- and you will start seeing the unbounded, which is true, which is truth.

The person is just a wave in the ocean. Presence is the ocean itself. Let me be just a door, an opening. And that's exactly what I am, and that's exactly what a master is supposed to be.

Put your ego aside, Chintana, and open up. Receive it! A disciple has to be feminine to receive God; a disciple has to be just a womb, become a womb. That's why it happens almost always that the women are the best disciples in the world.

Buddha had fifty thousand disciples -- forty thousand are women. So was the case with Mahavir too. Why? Why does a woman easily become a disciple, very easily, naturally. She knows how to receive.

For man it is a little more difficult. For man it takes a little longer -- -because he has no physical womb so he does not know how to receive. He also has a spiritual womb, but that is unconscious. The woman has a spiritual womb and a physical womb too, so she is conscious of her being a womb. She receives, and gives birth to a child. She knows that she can receive with great joy, in exhilaration, in ecstasy. But man ordinarily is a donor, biologically a donor. His ego is hard. He never thinks in terms of receiving, in terms of surrendering and trusting.

That's why it is difficult for man to surrender. It takes a little longer.

And whenever a MAN surrenders to a master, then too you will see -- in the man disciple

also some feminine grace arising. Many women have reported to me again and again, "What is happening to your men disciples? They are turning feminine." That is true. Whenever somebody becomes a disciple, naturally a feminine grace arises. He becomes less aggressive; his aggression slows down. His ego is no more so prominent. And, slowly slowly, spiritually he comes to recognize his womb.

Only when you have recognized your womb can you connect with a master -- that's what sannyas is all about. When I say to some new person, "You ARE ready for sannyas," and he hesitates, and he says, "But I have not thought about it...."

Just the other night it was happening. You must be remembering Mark -- I had told him that I never miss a Mark. Last night he came to see me, and he tried, but I didn't miss him. He was so perfectly womblike, but he was not aware of his own womb. It is deep hidden into the recesses of the unconscious. And the moment he surrendered, a great grace arose in him. His face changed, became luminous.

Chintana, the problem with you is: you are a woman but you had fallen in wrong company. She has been a Catholic nun -- that is the difficulty. She has forgotten about her biological womb also. A nun HAS to forget; a nun has to forget her biological receptivity. A nun has to become a non-woman.

So Chintana has almost turned into a man -- all nuns turn. She has lived in wrong company. Those people enforced a certain structure upon her being. She is a soft woman deep inside, but on the outer side the character of a nun, the armour of a nun, has made her hard. It is fortun-ate that she has come here. Slowly slowly that hardness is disappearing; her woman is arising, her womb is taking possession of her again. The nun is going away. But when you have practised a certain thing for years, it takes time, it lingers.

That Catholic nun, the shadow of that Catholic nun, is around Chintana yet. That's what is making her so hesitant about taking the ultimate jump. In fact, she must have had a great religious desire, otherwise why should she have be-come a nun? She must have been a seeker -- for many lives -- otherwise nobody goes and becomes a monk or a nun. It is out of people's search. And the search was such that she was not contented there; naturally, she moved to the opposite polarity.

My sannyasins are a totally opposite polarity from being a Catholic nun or monk. Now, here, she can relax. But the conditioning is there and it will go, slowly slowly. Don't co-operate with that conditioning. It is on the way, it is dying. Let it die.

And once the nun has disappeared from Chintana's con-sciousness, she will bloom into a beautiful flower. And the day is not far off....

The fourth question

YESTERDAY YOU SAID A MAJOR DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY, HINDUISM, ETC., WAS THAT IN THE FORMER THERE WERE NO A PRIORI CONCEPTS, AND IN THE LATTER A PREDETERMINED IMAGE OF GOD CONDITIONED ONE'S EXPERIENCING OF THAT GOD WHICH IN TURN REINFORCES THE INITIAL IMAGE: A VICIOUS CIRCLE. HOWEVER, IN THE BUDDHIST WAY NOT-HOLDING A PRIORI IMAGES -- HOLDING NON-IMAGES -- OBVIOUSLY STILL CONDITIONS ONE TO EXPERIENCE GOD AS NO-THING, VOID, WHICH THEN IN TURN REINFORCES THE INITIAL NON-IMAGE -- STILL A VICIOUS CIRCLE. PLEASE COMMENT.

DON'T PLAY WITH WORDS. Look to the simple fact. Buddhism is not giving you an image of nothingness -- there cannot be any image of nothingness. Can you imagine NOTHINGNESS? Try. How will you imagine nothingness? What image? Nothingness simply means: no thing, no image. You cannot make an image of no image. One thing.

Buddhism is not saying create an image of nothingness. In the first place, it cannot be created. If you create an image of nothingness, then certainly you are conditioned again; then God will look like nothingness. But Buddhism is not saying to create an image of nothingness. Buddhism is simply saying avoid all images. And if you can create the image of nothingness, that is included in 'all images'.

Avoid all images. Just keep your inner space clean and open, mirrorlike... and then see whatsoever is seen.

Simply, Buddhism is saying: Don't decide before knowing. That is the meaning of don't have an a priori image -- don't decide before knowing. Let knowing happen, and let the decision come through knowing. Don't believe beforehand, because your belief will contaminate your knowing -- and then you will never be able to know whether what you have known is really there, or is there because of your belief. Your belief can create it.

Man's mind has great potential to create imagination. That's why hypnosis works. Have you watched a hypnotist working? He can hypnotize a person, and he can just put a small pebble on the hand of the person and can say, "This is burning coal, red hot burning coal." And the man who is in deep hypnosis simply believes it, because deep hypnosis means your faculties to doubt have been put to sleep. He believes, and the belief creates reality. His hand will burn -- from the cold pebble! He will shriek, he will scream in pain; he will throw the pebble. And not only that -- a blister will come on his palm.

Now what has happened? Now, when this man is de-hypnotized, the blister will be there -- enough proof that a burning coal had been put on his hand. And you know that there was no burning coal, nothing like that: just an ordinary cold pebble. But the belief has created the reality of it.

And vice versa also it happens: you can put a burning coal in the hand of a deeply hypnotized person, in deep trance, and you can say, "This is a cold pebble," and there will be no blister and the man will not scream and there will be no mark left. That's how people fire-walk.

Now, what Buddhism is saying is: Belief can create a certain kind of reality -- which is not there. Buddhism is not saying believe in nothingness, because that will create, certainly. But how can one believe in nothingness? You can't create the image of nothingness.

Nothingness simply means no image! So don't play with words. Logically, it looks relevant, your question looks relevant, that Buddhism creates the belief, the image of nothingness, then God appears AS nothingness -- so it is the same vicious circle. It is not. Buddhism simply takes all the beliefs away. It does not create any belief. It leaves you in a state of no-belief.

Remember: it does not create disbelief either! It simply leaves you in a state of no-belief. No-belief is not disbelief. Buddhism is not atheist; Buddhism is not theist. Buddhism does not say anything about God. Buddhism says: Be silent, utterly silent, utterly imageless, empty, your eyes completely clean of all dust.

Now you can say, "This cleanness will be the dust in the eyes" -- then you are playing with words. If I say, "Let your eyes be clean, then you will be able to see better," you can say, "But cleanness will be there. How can I see better? Cleanness will be a disturbance just like

any dust!"

Logically, linguistically, you are right. Existentially you are not right. Cleanliness does not mean any thing; cleanliness simply means there is no dust, all is clean. When I say, "Nothing is written on this paper," will you say, "Then NOTHING is written on this paper, so something is written. You say nothing is written on this paper -- 'nothing' at least is written on the paper"? Now you are creating an unnecessary puzzle for yourself.

When I say nothing is written on the paper, I am simply saying nothing is written on the paper -- the paper is empty. But you can start a philosophical argument: "At least 'nothing' is written on the paper, so the paper is not empty because nothing is there."

Nothing is nothing, sir.

There is a beautiful story:

Alice reached the King. When she reached the King, the King asked, "I am waiting for a messenger. Did you meet somebody on the way coming towards me?"

Alice said, "Nobody, sir."

The King thought that she had met somebody who is known as 'Nobody'. Alice simply said, "Nobody, sir." She is saying, "I have not met anybody," but the King must have been a great linguist, a philosopher. He thought, "So she has met NOBODY on the way."

After a few minutes he asked, "But it seems Nobody walks slower than you, otherwise he must have arrived by now."

Alice thought, "He is saying, 'Nobody walks slower than you,' "that he was condemning her. So she said, "No, sir. Nobody walks faster than me!"

And the King said, "But then it puzzles me: if Nobody walks faster than you, then why has he not arrived yet?"

Out of desperation Alice said, "Sir, nobody is nobody!"

And the King said, "Of course, Nobody has to be Nobody -- but why has he not arrived yet?"

And so on... so it goes.

Buddhism is not saying NOBODY IS there inside, not in the sense the King took it. Buddhism is saying there is simply nobody, it is empty.

And beliefs gather around. And then you start looking through the beliefs. Then those beliefs change the colour of reality. Then you start seeing things as they are not.

Drop all belief systems. And remember: Buddhism is not a belief system -- you are not to replace it. It is not said to drop Christianity and replace it by Buddhism -- then you have not done anything. Then you have chosen one disease for another. Then you moved from one prison into another, from one bondage into another.

That's why Ikkyu says Buddhism is not an 'ism'. It is not a religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It is not a church: it is an insight. It is not an organization: it is an understanding. It is not a philosophy: it is a realization.

Once you understand the point, this problem will not arise. But if you have a philosophical bent of mind, you can go on creating such unnecessary questions and solving them, and you can get too much messed up.

It happened:

Dashing young Edward was walking through the park one afternoon when he heard a female voice cry out, "Get down, you beast! If you put your filthy paws on me once more I'll

never come on the grass again."

He rushed behind the hedge from whence the voice had come, hoping to rescue a fair maiden from a foul creep -- but instead discovered a little old lady talking to her pet dog.

Your ideas, your interpretations.... Drop all ideas, drop all interpretations.

Ikkyu is not saying to accept Buddha's interpretation instead. Listen to what he says: Shakamuni, this mischievous guy -- how many people he has misled! Not that Buddha has misled anybody, but people have been misled, that is true -- people like you! They start creating images of noth-ing, they start believing in nobodies, they start believing in nothingness, they create a belief around nothingness -- then nothingness is lost. Then your nothingness is no more empty: it is full of nothingness. Then you miss the point.

When Ma Tzu attained to emptiness he went to his master, bowed down and said, "Sir, now I have attained emptiness." He had been waiting for this moment for years and years, to go one day and tell the master. Now the moment had come -- he had attained. And the master slapped him.

He said, "What nonsense are you talking? Go out and empty your mind of this emptiness. Empty your mind of emptiness! Go out! How can you have emptiness inside you? because then emptiness becomes SOMETHING."

And Ma Tzu understood, and that very moment the illumination happened. He bowed down, and he said, "Yes, I had started clinging to emptiness. I was cherishing it as something great. Again the ego was coming from the back door. Now it was claiming, 'I have attained emptiness.'"

One has to be empty of emptiness too. One has to be simply without any beliefs -- then the reality is as it is, then you know its suchness.

The last question

I VERY STRONGLY BELIEVE IN GOD. WHY DO YOU CONDEMN BELIEF?

I AM NOT CONDEMNING BELIEF -- I am simply explaining it to you, that belief is the barrier to God. Belief is not a bridge but a barrier. It is your belief that is hindering you from God. If belief is dropped, immediately you are in God, you are God.

And why is there any need to believe? You don't believe in the sun, or do you? You don't believe in the earth, or do YOU? You know the earth exists, so there is no point in believing. You only believe in things which you don't know. Belief is out of ignorance. Buddha does not believe in God because he KNOWS God! You don't know God, that's why you believe in God. And if you go on believing, beware -- you will never come to know.

Belief simply means you are hiding your ignorance. Rather than destroying it, you are hiding it, decorating it, making it a little comfortable, convenient, acceptable. You are worried that you don't know God, so you cling to a belief, and you make yourself feel that, yes, you know. Repeating your belief constantly, again and again, you start creating a kind of auto-hypnosis that "I know, I believe!"

Just look at your question: **I VERY STRONGLY BELIEVE IN GOD**. Just belief won't do? It has to be strong? and then very strong? What does it show? You can't hide. The truth

shows itself: you are very much afraid of your ignorance. Deep down you know that "I don't know." You have to push that ignorance, you have to fight with it -- so you have to believe strongly.

Just think: somebody comes to you and says, "I love you VERY strongly!" What in the world does he mean? Love is not enough? Has it to be very strong? If love is there, it is enough. If love is there, there is no need even to say it. Silence is its expression.

But when somebody says, "I love you very strongly, very very strongly," then there is one thing certain, that he is afraid that his love is not there. He is managing it somehow, creating it somehow. And great effort he is taking to create it -- that's why he calls it strong, because he knows his unloving nature is difficult to repress. He has to fight with his unloving nature.

Your very word, "Very strongly I believe in God," shows that you don't know God at all; otherwise, there will be no need for strength. There will be no need for belief! God simply is. How can you believe or disbelieve? It is not left to you. But we go on hiding. Just listen to this story:

Farmer Jim was very worried about the poor performance of his prize bull for which he had paid an astronomical sum. He talked to all his friends every time he went to the market, and one day learnt from a cousin that there was an amazing vet way down in the West Country.

He was so depressed about the bull that he decided this last resort was the answer, and he took himself off to Cornwall to find the vet. At last he found the chap who urged him to give his bull a great big pill once a day.

A few months later he met his cousin who asked him how he had got on. "Oh, it was marvellous," he said. "He gave me these pills for the bull and I had no sooner started him off on them than he hit the jackpot. In fact," he said, "I'm making a fortune out of the local farmers -- they can't get their cows round here fast enough!"

"What are these pills then?" asked his cousin.

"Oh!" said Farmer Jim, "huge great green jobs like bombs -- with a peppermint taste!"

Do you see the point? Do you get it? You cannot hide it -- that peppermint taste will say everything. Very strong belief? That is the peppermint taste.

You don't know anything about God. That's why you are worried about why I am condemning belief. Your belief must be feeling shaken. And if the belief is gone, you will again be ignorant -- that is the fear. But that is my work here. Excuse me, but that is my work here -- to make you absolutely as you are. If you are ignorant, you are ignorant. It is better to be that which you are, because only from that authentic reality can you be bridged to ultimate reality. With your false beliefs... and ALL beliefs are false. Belief as such is false. Knowing is true: believing is false.

I am here to make you ignorant again. If you co-operate with me this will happen: you will become ignorant, innocent. Your knowledgeability will disappear -- and in that very disappearance you will find for the first time the mystery of life dancing around you, and the benediction of that mystery. That mystery is God.

God can never be a concept. God cannot be reduced to an idea. God cannot be reduced to a belief.

Become ignorant. I have never heard of pundits and scholars reaching God. Sinners have been known to reach, but not scholars. The original sin is the sin of knowledge.

Remember the biblical story again and again. It is one of the most precious parables of

human history. Adam has been turned out of the Garden of Eden because he has eaten of the Tree of Knowledge. His sin is his knowledge!

You will have to vomit your knowledge. Vomit the apple! Become innocent and ignorant again! And you will be attaining to a second childhood -- and fortunate are those who can attain to second childhood, because through it, and only through it, is one bridged to God. But then there is no belief. One knows.

And remember, knowing and knowledge are different. Knowledge consists of beliefs, knowing consists of experience.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #11

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PITIFUL ARE
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT KNOW
NIRVANA AND ITS ETERNAL FELICITY!
HOW THEY GRIEVE
AT LIFE, DEATH, AND MUTABILITY!

SHAKA, AND AMIDA TOO,
WERE ORIGINALLY HUMAN BEINGS;
HAVE I NOT ALSO
THE FORM OF A MAN?

WONDERFUL, INDEED,
THE LOTUS FLOWER OF THE LAW!
HOWEVER MANY AGES MAY PASS,
STILL THAT SAME COLOUR.

THE CRESCENT MOON
BECOMES FULL, AND WANES,
AND NOTHING IS LEFT;
BUT STILL, THERE IN THE DAWN,
THE CRESCENT MOON!

WHENEVER WE SEE THEM, ALL ARE

JUST AS THEY ARE:
THE WILLOW IS GREEN,
THE FLOWER IS RED.

A parable:

THERE WAS ONCE A TURKISH TEACHER WHO WASN'T REALLY A TEACHER. He went to a foreign country and started to teach. Of course, the people there did not understand Turkish, but the man spoke with such authority and such drama that he soon had many devotees and followers. Then, one day, a group of Turks happened to pass by. When they listened to him, they understood what he was saying -- bullshit! So they ran him out of town.

Afterwards, when the man returned to his home and was asked how his trip had been, he said, "Great... until these Turkish people came by and understood what I was saying .

The moral of the story being that it is possible to speak to people in a language they don't understand, but when they DO understand, the bullshit stops for ever!

The appearance of Gautam the Buddha was one of the most phenomenal events of human consciousness. Whatsoever was going on in the name of religion before he appeared stopped for ever. He brought truth to such simplicity, to such felicity, to such grace. He spoke the way an enlightened person speaks -- he spoke through his being. He was not a scholar, and he was not worried about speculation. He had no abstract ideas; he was very down-to-earth.

And since then, Zen people have carried the flame down the ages. They speak, not because they have a philosophy to propound; they speak because they have seen something -- it has to be conveyed. They speak as seers, not as thinkers. They speak as masters, not as believers.

Buddha transformed the very quality of religion. It was theology before him; after him it became anthropology. God was dethroned, man was enthroned. 'God' is not a relevant word with Buddha, 'man' is. He says: All that is needed is hidden inside human consciousness. Man has not to look up to the heavens, he has not to ask for any grace from anywhere. He has to become a light unto himself.

And the light is there, it is the very core of your life. Just one thing has happened, you have forgotten it. Not that you have lost it, just forgotten. Remember it, because that is very fundamental to Buddha's approach.

Life is a forgetfulness and a remembering. And that's all, and that's the whole story. one falls asleep and dreams a thousand and one things, and in the morning one wakes up and all the dreams are gone. So is life. We have fallen asleep -- fallen asleep to our inner being. We have forgotten who we are. Hence, the world, the SAMSARA. The SAMSARA means the world of ten thousand things.

And we go on rushing from one thing to another thing -- in search of a self. Because we have lost contact with our self, we are continuously searching for it. If you look deep down into the agony of man, this is the agony. He has forgotten who he is and is searching and asking, asking of everybody, "Who am I?" May not be so consciously....

That's what you are asking when you fall in love. You are asking your beloved to tell you who you are. Why do people feel so beautiful when they are in love? Because some identity starts arising. The woman you love says, "You are beautiful. You are intelligent, you are unique." She is giving you a self.

When you say to the woman, "You are beautiful. I have never come across such a beautiful person. I cannot live without you, you are my life, my joy, my very existence," you are giving an identity to the woman. She was searching for it; she does not know who she is. Now you are creating a self She is creating a self for you, you are creating a self for her.

That's why people feel so at ease when they are in love. When love disappears, is broken, shattered, they are shattered. Why are you shattered? You are shattered because your identity is again lost, again you don't know who you are. It was the woman or the man who was giving you a certain kind of idea of who you are. Now the woman is gone and the idea is gone with her. Now again you are in darkness. Again you don't know, again you start searching for....

Why do you seek money and wealth? Just to have some identity. So that you know who you are, so that people can say who you are. Why do you go on searching for power, prestige? The same reason.

Man is in a constant search for the self. Man is in a constant identity crisis. And because in the past things were more settled, people were more at ease. Now things are changing so fast that again and again your identity is shattered.

Just think: in the old days, once you got married, you got married. You were not going to be searching again for a woman or for a man; it was a whole-life thing, a settlement. A certain idea would become fixed, slowly slowly, that you were the husband, the father of the children, this and that. But now it is difficult, and more so particularly in the West.

Every once in a while you will change the woman; every once in a while you will change the man. Again and again you will have to search for the identity.

In the past, people used to do the same work their whole life; it was traditional. Your grandfather was a carpenter, your father was a carpenter, you are a carpenter, your children will be carpenters -- you knew who you were. Now it is impossible to know. People go on changing their jobs; things are changing so fast....

You knew in the past where you belonged. You were an Indian, a Christian, a Hindu, a Chinese, a Buddhist.

Now you don't know any more. The world has come very much closer, boundaries have become false. The world has become a small village, a global village. Now you don't know. And now you know there is not much difference between a Hindu and a Christian or a Mohammedan; that identity is not of any help any more.

Who are you? This problem is one of the most fundamental problems. Modern man is very much puzzled. almost paralyzed.

Buddha says: It is not going to be of any help if you create a false identity. You can live with it your whole life, still you will not know who you are. The only way to know who you are is to go within yourself with great remembrance, with great mindfulness, with awareness. Asking from the outside, whatsoever you get is a pseudo-thing. Your woman, your man, your country, your religion, your church -- they will give you a certain kind of identity. They will create a false self. But that is not real. And only the mediocre can be deceived by it, only the stupid can be deceived by it. The intelligent person sooner or later will have to see the point that these identities are from the outside: "In fact I don't know who I am. My being a husband does not say anything about me. My being a father or a mother does not say anything about me. My being a Christian or a Hindu does not say anything about me. I am still in darkness."

These labels may be of some help in the outside world but your identity card is not you. Your name is not you, even your photograph is not you, because you go on changing and the photograph remains static. It simply represents one moment in your life. It is not that it

represents you -- one gesture in your life, and that too very superficial. For example, you were smiling and the photograph was taken, and you may have just been smiling for the photographer.

I have heard: One photographer was saying to a very very serious-looking man, "Just for a single moment, sir, smile. And then you can be your usual self again."

Now, this photograph of this serious man smiling is absolutely false; that smile is just on the lips. The photograph cannot penetrate inside you. In fact not even an X-ray can penetrate inside you -- it may take the pictures of your bones but it cannot take your picture.

There is no way to see from the outside who you are. There is only one way, and that is to become alert inside, to awaken inside, to make great effort inside, so that you are not asleep there. Then only will you have the first glimpse of the real man.

And remember Ikkyu: One single glimpse of the real man and one is in love. The man who is searching for his identity cannot be in love; his love is also nothing but a search for the identity. Amongst other searches, that also is one. You write a book, you become a famous author, or you paint and you become a painter, or you sing and you become a singer. But these are all efforts to somehow categorize you, to identify who you are.

There is an ancient story about a philosopher who was very forgetful. He was so forgetful that in the night he would sleep with all his clothes on, even with his shoes on. Somebody suggested, "This is not a way to sleep -- and how can one sleep with shoes on? and your hat on, and all the dress?"

And he said, "It is very difficult. If I put them away in the night, then in the morning I forget where I have put my shoes, where I have put my coat. And what is a coat? and what are shoes? and what is my hat? Everything becomes such a mess and it takes so much trouble to find and sort things out that I have decided never to do it again. Half my day is wasted."

The man was a practical man. He said, "This is a simple thing. I know that you are a very forgetful man -- you can do one thing. You can write, you can stick small labels on everything: 'This is my coat', 'This is my shoe'. And you can keep a diary also: where you have put the shoes, underneath the bed; and where you have put your coat, and where your underwear is... you can just make notes."

That appealed to the philosopher, and he did it. And next morning he was really in a mess -- he had never been in such a mess. Everything worked out. He found his shoes, they were underneath the bed. He found his coat, it was hanging there in the cupboard. He found his shirt -- he found everything. And finally, he shouted, looking at the sky, "My God! But now where am I? Because I have forgotten to note it down!"

He looked in the bed, but he was not there. You can imagine the poor man's anguish. He searched all over the house, he looked in every nook and corner, and he was not there. And he came running out of the house shouting, "Please, somebody tell me where I am? Everything else I have found in its place; just one thing I forgot. I didn't write in the notebook where I have to find myself. I think was in the bed, but the bed is empty."

The story looks fictitious; it is not. It is your story. It is everybody's story. It is man's story. You know where your house is, you know your phone number, you know who your wife is, you know who your son is... you know you are a Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan, Indian, Japanese. But do you really know who you are and where you are? And you will be almost in as much bewilderment as that ancient philosopher.

But people don't ask this question, because this question creates such uneasiness. They

avoid it. They go on living, avoiding it.

Buddha transformed the quality of religion. Religion with Buddha became man-oriented. Before Buddha it was God-oriented. Now, God is not a problem at all -- whose problem is God? How are you concerned with God? Seems to be a bogus problem, nobody's concern. Maybe priests have some investment in it, maybe politicians have some investment in it, but really it is not an existential question.

The existential question is: Who am I?

WITH BUDDHA, religion changed its quality. It became realistic, it became pragmatic. Buddha said: There is no need to be worried about God. Let him worry himself about himself -- if he wants to know who he is he can ask, "Who am I?" Why should you be worried?

And in the first place, God is your creation. That is your ultimate effort to avoid yourself. You go on creating fictitious problems. There is one beautiful thing about fictitious problems: they can be solved, easily they can be solved. In fact the problem is fictitious -- any fictitious answer will do. The disease is pseudo -- any pseudo-medicine will do.

People become very much interested in pseudo-problems, and they think they are great seekers. Buddha hit them hard and shattered their ego, the ego of being a seeker. He said: if you are seeking and searching for God, you are simply befooling yourself.

God is nobody's problem I just see the point. How can God be YOUR problem? But people think it is a problem. By making it a problem, they can avoid their own problems. They become too much occupied with God. They start thinking, they start collecting answers, they start philosophizing, speculating; they go into scriptures, and they are lost in the jungle of words. And they have forgotten the simple question that was really THEIR question: Who am I? God may be the greatest escape.

It has been noted by psychologists that in times of anguish, misery, war, trouble, people start thinking of abstract things -- God, truth, heaven, after-life. In times of stress when people are very uneasy on this earth, they start looking at the sky. They focus their problems there so they can avoid the real problems of the earth. This has been watched, observed, again and again. After each year there is a great revival of religion -- the so-called religion.

And you know it by your personal experience also. Whenever you are in misery, in pain, you remember God. Whenever you are happy, when you are flowing and life is a celebration, you don't care a bit about God, you don't remember. This is a simple experience; no psychologist is needed to observe it. Everybody can observe in his own life. What does it say? It simply says that when you are in anguish you have to avoid the anguish and you have to create a false problem to go away from it -- a great occupation....

You start praying. And you had never prayed. In fact, when things were going well you had never gone to the priest. When things were going beautifully and you were succeeding in life and the life was a bed of roses, you didn't remember God. But when life becomes a bed of neurosis, then -- then suddenly you remember God.

God is an escape.

Bertrand Russell is right in saying that if life on earth becomes really blissful people will forget all about God and there will be no religion. He is right, because he does not know the religion of Buddha. He knows Christianity. Yes, religions like Christianity and Hinduism WILL disappear. But if life is really happy on the earth, something like Buddha's message will become very very prevalent.

When life is going well, beautifully, and all is flowing and flowering, this question arises in the deepest core of your being: "Now is the time to know -- who am I?" When life is not

flowing, all is blocked and there is only misery and misery and all is hell, how can you ask "Who am I?" To come that close to yourself is dangerous because there is only hellfire and nothing else. How can you come that close? How can you sit silently with closed eyes and look into yourself? You have to avoid, you have to escape, you have to run away. So anything will do.

And that's how things always happen. Whenever a society is in turmoil people become very much interested in occult, esoteric things. They start seeing UFO's, they start seeing beings from other planets, they start thinking of great things that are going to happen. They start going to the astrologers... and all kinds of nonsense .

Buddha brings a very sensible religion to the world. Empirical, experiential, existential. In Buddha's way, there is no God, no prayer.

And just think of your poor God, if he exists. What will his situation be? -- just think of him. All kinds of people praying and shouting at him and complaining. And it has been going on and on. Either he does not listen at all, or he must have gone crazy by now.

A great psychotherapist was asked by his student.... The student watched the great old man working from the morning till evening, continuously psychoanalyzing mad people, all kinds of nuts, listening to them. And he was dead tired by the evening, he was a young man. And the old man was as fresh as he was in the morning.

One day he could not contain his curiosity. He asked, "What is the matter? How do you manage? The whole day listening to such horrible tales, nightmares, and you never become tired?"

And the old man said, "Who listens?"

God must be avoiding you.

I have heard:

A man who had all his life been very pious, and had prayed to God continually at least ten hours a day, died, and unlike his miserable brother, who was an atheist, he died miserable and broke. His wife had left him, his partner had cheated him, his house had burned down, and his children were all delinquents. His brother, on the other hand, who had not prayed a single prayer in his life, was wealthy, had his health, a wonderful wife, fine children, and in short, a great time of it.

When the pious man finally came face to face with God, he asked, "Lord, I'm not complaining. You know I'm not complaining. When you took my house away, I prayed to you in thanks. I knew there was some good reason for it. And when my wife left, I again prayed in thanksgiving, because I knew you had a good reason for that; and when my children turned against me, again I prayed to you with thanks, since I know that nothing happens without your approval, and I have to bow to Divine Wisdom. But why did all these things happen to me who prayed to you ten hours at least every day, and not to my wicked brother who is an atheist?"

"Because," said the Lord in disgust, "you are such a NUDGE!"

You are such a bore. This man must have tortured God -- ten hours every day. Just think of poor God!

Buddha relieved man of God, and Buddha relieved God of man. Buddha's approach is such that if Friedrich Nietzsche had been born in a Buddhist land, he could not have written

that God is dead and that from now onward man is free. There would have been no need.

Buddha helped God disappear without any bloodshed. Nietzsche had to kill. Nietzsche says: God is dead; and not that he has died a natural death -- we HAD to kill him, just to be free of him. How can man be free with God? If God is there, then religion becomes nothing but obedience. If God is there, then religion is reduced to obedience.

That's why in Christianity you don't talk about freedom, you don't talk about MOKSHA. MOKSHA means absolute freedom. And absolute freedom includes freedom from God! Otherwise, how can it be absolute? If there is somebody to whom you are responsible and answerable, you can't be free.

Friedrich Nietzsche's statement -- God is dead and we had to murder him -- is just a reaction created by Christianity and its obsession with obedience. Christianity has created slaves in the world. Nietzsche HAD to utter that word, had to utter that statement. If Nietzsche had not done it, then somebody else would have done it. It was a need, it was inevitable.

Christianity leaves no alternatives... it leaves only two alternatives: either commit suicide, lose all your freedom, become a zombie in the name of God; or, murder God and be free. And both are ugly -- suicide or murder?

Buddhism does not give you such ugly alternatives. It simply says God is not the problem -- the problem is man. God is an escape from the problem. Look into man, find out your source inside, and all will be solved.

And remember again, Buddha is not an atheist. He is not saying there is no God, but his concept of God is totally different. When you come to the deepest core of your being, to your very source, you will know that you are God.

Christianity says: You are sons of God. Buddhism says: When you come to know yourself, you are not sons -- you are godhood itself. There is no God other than you, there is no God other than the universe. Hence Buddha never talks about God, because there is no God other than this. There is no that other than this. This is that. Existence is divine.

But to know this, no prayer is going to help. To know this, no philosophy is going to be of any support. To know this, one has to go utterly into oneself -- with only one question like an arrow piercing your heart: Who am I? And the deeper you go, the deeper you will see that you don't exist as an individual.

That is the meaning of Buddha's doctrine of anatta -- no-self. You will not come to see any self inside you. The whole idea of being a person will slowly slowly melt, and there will be a kind of presence but no personality. The individual will disappear and there will be the universal. You will not be separate from existence, you will find yourself one with the whole.

Now the sutras:

PITIFUL ARE
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT KNOW
NIRVANA AND ITS ETERNAL FELICITY!
HOW THEY GRIEVE
AT LIFE, DEATH, AND MUTABILITY!

PEOPLE SUFFER BECAUSE THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN their innermost no-self. Because they have forgotten their innermost presence, they have forgotten that they are one with the whole. How have they forgotten it? It is a natural rhythm. Whatsoever is given becomes so obvious that one tends to forget it. The new is remembered because it is such a

sensation. You pass through the same garden again and again and again, and naturally you tend to forget. Trees are there but you don't look at them, you take them for granted. The birds are singing but you go with your inner chatter.

Just think: if you had lived in a desert and suddenly one fine morning you had come across a beautiful garden with trees and birds singing, would you have passed the same way as you pass your garden every day! You would have danced, you would have shouted in joy. you would have sung, you would have exploded! It would have been a great experience, you would have become very very aware and alert. All inner chattering would have stopped. But you pass through the same type of garden every day, and you tend to forget.

Remember the first day you saw your woman or your man, how enchanted you were! how thrilled, how blissful! And now you sit with the same woman and you don't look at her face at all. It is a well-known fact that husbands cannot remember their wives' faces. Try. Try to remember how your wife looks, and you will be very much puzzled. You can remember how the neighbour's wife looks, what kind of sari she was wearing this morning -- your neighbour's wife, not your wife. Your wife you have not looked at for years. If suddenly her face is changed by a magician you may become aware after months or years -- because who ever looks at his own wife?

How long has it been that you have not touched her hand with a thrill, with a song in your heart? You take her hand in your hand; it is an empty gesture, you have to do it.

One day, a man came to his home and just saw his partner kissing his wife. The partner was very much afraid that the man would create trouble, but the man took the partner aside and said, "You puzzle me. I HAVE to kiss that woman -- but why you? I don' t see the point. I HAVE to kiss that woman but why you? Have you gone mad or something?"

Sooner or later, you tend to forget that which is available. Others know in what a beautiful house you are living; you don't know. Others know what beautiful children you have; you don't know. Others think that you are fortunate, this and that; you don't know.

This is the problem: because we are our own selves, and we have been always that, from eternity, it is natural to forget all about it. Because of this natural tendency, one has forgotten oneself. And one has become interested in others, in those ten thousand things -- the SAMSARA.

You go on rushing from one new sensation into another new sensation. You don't have any time to sit for medita-tion. People come to me, and if I tell them to meditate they say, "But we don't have any time." They have enough time to go to the movie, they have enough time to play cards -- you can find them gathered together in Somendra's room playing poker. They have time to gossip. But for meditation? Suddenly there is a scarcity of time. They have time to fight, be angry, they have time to read the stupid newspapers -- and how deeply they go into those newspapers! Those newspapers have become their gospels; they read every line, from the beginning to the end. But you talk about meditation and immediately, without a single thought, the reaction comes: "But we don't have any time!"

What are they really saying? They are saying that they are not interested in themselves. That they are not interested in sitting silently for one hour and looking into their own being. For what? They can earn money in that time, they can tend their shop, or they can do a thousand and one things. Why just go on gazing at your navel? For what? Nobody seems to be interested in oneself One is already there, so why bother? One is already that, so why bother?

Everybody is going out... but only when a person goes in does a person come to know what truth is.

Ikkyu says:

PITIFUL ARE
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT KNOW
NIRVANA AND ITS ETERNAL FELICITY!

Yes, they have to be pitied. They are creating their Own misery, they are creating their own agony and their hell. They are putting fuel into the hellfire. They have to be pitied because they don't know what felicity, what grace arises when you go in. They don't know what kind of benediction is waiting for them. They don't know that life takes a totally new colour, a new vibe -- the vibe of jubilation, the vibe of celebration -- when you go in.

And they are all asking for happiness, and they are all creating misery. People go on asking for happiness and go on creating misery; they have to be pitied. Ikkyu is right -- he says:

PITIFUL ARE
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT KNOW
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Go in, and you will come across the greatest treasure there is. And you will come to know that all that you have been seeking, down the ages, through so many lives, has always been available inside you, has been there from the very beginning, has been part of your nature.

And that's why you are missing it -- because you look without and it is within. You search out and it is in. So your search and the treasure never meet.

Before you go trekking the infinite ways of the outer world, have a little glimpse of the inner. Before you go searching out, this seems to be very pragmatic and realistic, to have a look within. Who knows? Buddhas may be right. And all the Buddhas cannot be wrong! Whosoever has looked within has found it, without any exception. And whosoever has been looking without has not found it -- without any exception, that too. All those who have been searching in the world have been failing and failing. Only frustration comes in the end, and failure.

Just think of those people -- a Gautama Buddha, a Krishna, a Christ, a Zarathustra, a Lao Tzu -- think of those people, how blissful they look, what fragrance they have. From where does it come? Just sitting silently by their side and one is thrilled, enchanted. These people have some magic, some miracle is constantly happening around them. From where does it come? They don't have any visible power of the world. They don't have anything that you think one needs to be happy.

It is reported: when Buddha came for the first time to Varanasi, he was staying outside Varanasi underneath a tree, a great banyan tree. It was evening and the sunrays were filtering the sunset, and the clouds were aflame with the setting sun. And through the thick foliage of the tree those red rays were falling on Buddha's face, and he was sitting there relaxed.

The king of Varanasi came on his chariot. Accidentally, he saw this man by the side of the road, sitting so beautifully. in such splendour. That man, that king, had everything that one can desire. And do you know where he was going? He was going to commit suicide! -- because he was tired, he was exhausted, frustrated. He had seen the futility of all and he had

decided, "Now enough is enough." And he was going on the chariot to the mountains to kill himself.

And then he saw on the road this beautiful man, this beggar, sitting there in such a let-go that even the sunset was nothing compared to his beauty. He was looking so golden. And a great silence was surrounding the tree -- it was not the silence of the tree, certainly, because the king had passed by many trees.

When a Buddha sits, he creates his own space. The Eastern scriptures say: Wherever a Buddha lives, a certain space is created around him. Those who live in that space start growing in spite of themselves. They are taken by the tide, they start riding on the wave of the Buddha. That is the meaning of 'Buddhafiield'.

It was utterly quiet! The king had never seen such silence, such pregnant silence, such alive silence. He had seen the silence that exists in the cemeteries. Because he had never seen a man like Buddha, he had no idea of what real silence is. For the first time it was there, almost tangible. You could have touched it, you could have taken it in your hand. You could have tasted it, you could have put it against your cheek and felt its coolness. It was there, so visible.

He stopped the chariot. He said to his charioteer, 'Stop! I will have to think again. If this man can be so blissful and so silent, maybe there is still something in life that I have not searched for. Forget about my suicide! This man has changed my mind, this man has changed my being. The presence of this man is enough of a proof that life can be lived in some other way too. I don't know what way in it...'

He said to the Buddha, "I have only one question to ask: I don't see anything around you, just a begging-bowl. How can one be so happy with just one begging-bowl? I am not happy with a great kingdom! And you look so utterly happy, so ultimately happy."

Buddha opened his eyes, those lotus eyes... and the king could not believe that he was suddenly bowing down and touching Buddha's feet. Something had happened in him -- just that look, those two eyes. Those two eyes behind which there was no person but only presence. Just a radiation. Those two empty eyes, and yet full of existence. Empty of the ego, but full of being. Those two knowing eyes must have penetrated that king's being like two rays of light. He was touched, moved.

Buddha said, "The situation that you are in, I was also in that situation one day. I can understand you. I was also the son of a great emperor. I have lived in the palaces, I have lived in luxuries, I know. I know the misery of having all and yet having nothing. I can understand you -- nobody will be able to understand you, but I can understand you. I was exactly like you! and I had also contemplated suicide many times, many many times.

"But I say to you: Look into my eyes. One day I was in the same state as you are in today. And I say to you, you can be in the same state one day in which I am -- because we are both the same."

Every man has a built-in possibility to explode, to bloom, to become a lotus.

PITIFUL ARE
PEOPLE WHO DO NOT KNOW
NIRVANA AND ITS ETERNAL FELICITY!
HOW THEY GRIEVE
AT LIFE, DEATH, AND MUTABILITY!

WHAT is PEOPLE'S GRIEF? What is their misery? Their misery is: they have created an

ego. They HAD to create it -- because they don't know their self, and one cannot live without a self. They don't know who they are, and one cannot live, cannot exist, without knowing who one is. So what to do? They have created a false self.

To search for the real seems to be arduous. To create a synthetic, artificial, plastic self seems to be very easy. We have created the ego as a substitute. It is a false center that gives us a feeling that we know who we are. But this false self is constantly in danger. It is false -- it has to be continuously supported.

Remember always, if you have to support something continuously, then it is false. The real remains of its own accord: the false has to be supported. If you have to remind yourself continuously that if you don't support it it will be gone, that simply means it is false.

The real cannot be gone; there is no way where it can go. The real remains. Just think: you have not looked into yourself for millions of lives -- still it is there. It does not need your support. It is your very ground. It supports you! How can it need your support? But the ego needs your support.

So if you have a certain amount of money in the bank, you have to go on growing that amount; otherwise, your ego starts feeling suffocated. If you have a certain prestige in the society, you have to go on increasing it. You have to go on puffing up your ego continuously; if you stop puffing, it starts dying. It is like pedalling a bicycle -- you have to continuously pedal it. If you stop pedalling you will fall. The ego needs continuous effort; it has to be created again and again.

That's why every day you are waiting for people to support you. Your woman had said yesterday, "You are a beautiful man." Now it is pointless to say it again and again, because she has said it once. But today also you are waiting for her to say that you are one of the most beautiful men. It is just a repetition. Now there is no point in saying it. She has said it! But you are waiting, and again it thrills you. And tomorrow again you will be waiting, and it will thrill you.

Pedalling.

Somebody respects you; he has to go on respecting you. In fact, he has to go on growing in his respect towards you, only then can your ego be supported.

And the problem is that you cannot keep this ego when you are dying -- because when you are dying, how can you support something? So when death comes, ego starts disappearing. You cannot pedal any more -- how can you go on bicycling when you are dying?

Hence the fear of death -- because death will destroy your ego. Death cannot destroy YOU but death is going to destroy your ego. Hence the fear of death. Everybody is afraid of death.

And be mindful: not only are you afraid of death, you are afraid of life too. Ego is afraid of life too, because in deep life experiences also it dies. When you really fall in love... why do you call it 'fall'? You fall from the ego. When you fall in love, the ego is shattered. That's why the real egoist never loves anybody -- he cannot, because he will have to descend from his ego tower, he will have to come down. He will have to hold the hand of an ordinary woman or ordinary man. He will have to behave in an ordinary way.

Many people become celibates, not because they are religious but just because they are egoists. It feels very good that you don't need anybody; ego feels very good. You need not bow down to anybody. In love one has to bow down, one has to surrender. One has to behave in a human way, one has to be a human being. Love is dangerous for the ego.

And love is life! If you are afraid of love, you are afraid of life. So in life situations also the ego is continuously afraid. It is a false thing, managed, somehow manipulated. It needs a

thousand and one props. And still it remains continuously afraid, because life goes on changing. Nothing ever remains the same, it is a river.

So how can you believe that today people are respecting you, tomorrow they will also respect you? How can you believe that tomorrow you will be able to keep to your ego? Who knows? Today you are a prime minister, tomorrow you may not be. Yesterday you were not a prime minister, today you are; there is no certainty for tomorrow. Just as you have snatched the prime-ministership from somebody else, somebody else is going to snatch it from you -- because millions of people are trying to become prime ministers; everybody is trying in his own way. How can you be safe? Where everybody is making all kinds of efforts to become the prime minister, how can you be safe? You can't sleep, you can't relax, you have to be continuously on guard. You have to watch where people are moving, what they are doing. Even the closest colleagues you have to watch, because they are the most dangerous. Because they are so close, they can topple you any moment. Even the colleagues are enemies.

Machiavelli says: In politics there are no friends, there cannot be. Machiavelli says: Don't reveal your secrets even to your friends, because if they turn some day and become your enemies then you will be caught, then you will be in trouble.

If you have money you have to be constantly afraid, because everybody is ready to grab it. That's how you got it in the first place, so you know the way, how to get it. In this life, where everything is constantly changing, you cannot remain certain.

So these three things are constantly creating misery, grief: life, death, mutability.

And the irony is that deep inside there is a space which is eternal, which never changes. There is a space in you which is timeless, is never affected by any changes in time, through time; remains transcendental, beyond. There is a space in you which is life, pure life, and knows nothing of death. There is a space in you which is pure love! And you are afraid of love and you are afraid of life and you are afraid of death and you are afraid of change.

This whole thing is happening because you have created a false substitute. The false substitute seems to be appealing because everybody is having it. People imitate. Have you just watched it? If your neighbour purchases a bigger car than you, suddenly you also need a bigger car. Just a moment before, there was no need; just a moment before, you had not thought about a bigger car. Now how, suddenly, has the need arisen? Because the neighbour has purchased one. Now he is having a bigger ego and your ego is threatened; you have to purchase a bigger car. Even if you cannot afford it, you have to purchase it.

People go on wasting their lives in such things which they don't need in the first place. People go on accumulating things which they don't need. People go on putting their money into things which they will never need, to impress people whom they don't like. This is something! People even go on putting their money into things -- money that they don't have. They may be getting it two years afterwards; they purchase a car in instalments. The money they don't have right now, but they have to put that money into a car that they don't need, to impress people that they don't like.

I have heard:

Two cows were grazing in a pasture alongside a highway when a milk truck drove by. On the side of the truck was printed: PASTEURIZED HOMOGENIZED, GRADE A, VITAMIN B ADDED. One cow turned to the other and said: "Makes you feel sort of inadequate, doesn't it?"

People are having such big balloons, balloons of egos, and one starts feeling inadequate.

Somebody is having this, somebody is having that -- and you start feeling poor. You are NOT poor! Comparison brings poverty.

And the really rich man is one who lives without comparison. How can he be poor? Drop comparisons and you are rich; then you will never be poor. Go on comparing and you will remain poor -- howsoever rich you become is irrelevant. You will always remain poor, because there will always be somebody who has more.

And there are millions of things, so there are millions of poverties. Somebody has a beautiful wife; you are poor. Somebody has a bigger car; you are poor. Somebody has a bigger house; you are poor. Somebody is taller than you, and you are poor. How many poverties! As many poverties as there are things.

Drop comparison. But the ego lives through comparison.

SHAKA, AND AMIDA TOO,
WERE ORIGINALLY HUMAN BEINGS;
HAVE I NOT ALSO
THE FORM OF A MAN?

SHAKA IS BUDDHA'S NAME. He came from the clan of Shakas, hence he is called Shaka. Amida is a name of another Buddha, Amitabh -- amida is the Japanese form of Amitabh. But they both are human beings, Ikkyu is saying.

SHAKA, AND AMIDA TOO,
WERE ORIGINALLY HUMAN BEINGS;
HAVE I NOT ALSO
THE FORM OF A MAN?

This is what I mean when I say Buddhism destroyed theology and created a new kind of religion -- created an anthropological, a man-centered religion. Buddha gave such dignity to man as has never been given before or since. Buddha made man the highest peak of consciousness. Buddha loved man and respected humanity.

Buddha says: You are just like me! You need not be worried. If I can become a Buddha, YOU can become a Buddha. And to be enlightened is nothing special; it is your birthright.

WONDERFUL, INDEED,
THE LOTUS FLOWER OF THE LAW!
HOWEVER MANY AGES MAY PASS,
STILL THAT SAME COLOUR.

And what is Buddhahood? What is this Buddhahood every man can attain to? It is an inner opening, the opening of your inner core. Your inner core becoming a lotus.

WONDERFUL, INDEED,
THE LOTUS FLOWER OF THE LAW!
HOWEVER MANY AGES MAY PASS,
STILL THAT SAME COLOUR.

And it is unchanging, it is timeless, it is eternal. Once you have seen that flowering inside, death disappears. Once you have seen that flowering inside, fear disappears. Once you have seen that flowering inside, your life becomes fragrant. Your life becomes a song, a

celebration. Then life has benediction and beauty and beatitude.

This inner lotus, everybody is carrying it and nobody comes to be aware of it. Our whole awareness has become obsessed with things. Relieve your awareness from things, take an about-turn. And I am not saying take the about-turn for ever; I am saying just once in a while take the about-turn. That's what meditation is all about.

For sixty minutes every day, just forget about the world. Let the world disappear from you, and you disappear from the world. Take an about-turn, a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn, and just look inside. In the beginning, you will see only clouds. Don't be worried about them; those clouds are created by your repressions. You will come across anger, hatred, greed, and all kinds of black holes. You have repressed them, so they are there. And your so-called religions have taught you to repress them, so they are there like wounds. You have been hiding them.

That's why my emphasis is first on catharsis. Unless you go through great catharsis you will have to pass through many clouds. It will be tiring, and you may be so impatient that you may turn back into the world. and you will say, "There is nothing. There is no lotus and no fragrance, there is only stink, rubbish."

You know it. when you close your eyes and you start moving in, what do you come across? You don't come across those beautiful lands Buddhas talk about. You come across hells, agonies, repressed there, waiting for you. Anger of many lives accumulating. It is all a mess there, so one wants to remain outside. One wants to go to the movie, to the club, to meet people and gossip. One wants to remain occupied till one is tired and falls asleep. That's the way you are living, that's your style of life.

So when one starts looking in, naturally one is very much puzzled. Buddhas say that there is great benediction, great fragrance, you come across lotus flowers blooming -- and such fragrance that it is eternal. And the colour of the flowers remains the same; it is not a changing phenomenon. They talk about this paradise, they talk about this kingdom of God that is within you. And when you go in, you only come across hell.

You see not Buddha lands but Adolf Hitler concentration camps. Naturally, you start thinking that this is all nonsense, it is better to remain outside. And why go on playing with your wounds? -- it hurts too. And pus starts oozing out of The wounds and it is dirty.

But catharsis helps. If you cathart, if you go through chaotic meditations, you throw all these clouds outside, all these darknesses outside, then mindfulness becomes easier.

That is my reason why I emphasize first chaotic meditations and then silent meditations. First active meditations, then passive meditations. You can move into passivity only when all that is there like junk has been thrown out. Anger has been thrown out, greed has been thrown out... layer upon layer, these things are there. But once you have thrown them out, you can easily slip in. There is nothing to hinder.

And suddenly the bright light of the Buddha land. And suddenly you are in a totally different world -- the world of the Lotus Law, the world of Dharma, the world of Tao.

WONDERFUL, INDEED,
THE LOTUS FLOWER OF THE LAW!
HOWEVER MANY AGES MAY PASS,
STILL THAT SAME COLOUR.

THE CRESCENT MOON
BECOMES FULL, AND WANES,
AND NOTHING IS LEFT;

BUT STILL, THERE IN THE DAWN,
THE CRESCENT MOON!

INDIVIDUAL LIVES COME AND GO, but the eternal life remains. It is like the moon -- you see? For fifteen days it becomes bigger and bigger and bigger, and then comes the full-moon night. Then it starts becoming smaller and smaller and smaller, and then one night it has disappeared completely. But do you think the moon disappears or appears? The moon remains the same; it is always there. The appearance and disappearance is only of the appearance of the moon. The reality of the moon is always there.

THE CRESCENT MOON
BECOMES FULL, AND WANES,
AND NOTHING IS LEFT;
BUT STILL, THERE IN THE DAWN,
THE CRESCENT MOON!

So you live in two dimensions, on two planes. In the Upanishads they have the story, the parable or the metaphor, of two birds living in the same tree, absolutely alike. One bird sitting on the highest branch, utterly quiet, silent, unmoving, doing nothing, with closed eyes, somewhere in. The other bird on the lowest branches, jumping from one branch to another, hankering for this flower, for that fruit, competing with this or with that, jealous of this and that -- in a continuous restlessness.

Slowly slowly, the bird, the restless bird, becomes tired of restlessness. And one day he looks up and sees the other bird who is exactly like him -- exactly like him, just a replica -- and is so silent, is so restful, is so calm, so collected, as if the other bird exists not. There is only silence. The restless bird becomes attracted by this magic, starts moving towards the upper branch... the beginning of discipleship. comes closer and closer and closer and closer, and finally become one with the other bird.

And the Upanishads say these two birds are not two: two aspects of consciousness. And each one has these two aspects. On the tree of life your innermost witness is sitting right now. The Lotus Flower is blooming in all its beauty and grandeur and splendour. And you are jumping from one branch to another -- competing, jealous, angry, hateful, fighting, doing a thousand and one things and getting frustrated and frustrated....

Look up! And remember, 'look up' means exactly what is meant by 'look in'. 'Look out' means 'look down'; 'look up' means 'look in' -- they are synonymous. Look up or look in, and suddenly there is a being sitting inside you, a Buddha. And one starts moving, attracted by the charisma, by the magic of this silence, and one day becomes one with the innermost core.

All changes happen to this restless bird -- the rising moon, the waning moon. Nothing happens to the other bird -- the witness -- it is always the same.

WHENEVER WE SEE THEM, ALL ARE
JUST AS THEY ARE:
THE WILLOW IS GREEN,
THE FLOWER IS RED.

And nothing changes in the world, remember. When you go in, nothing changes in the world. Just you change, your attitude changes, your vision changes. The world remains the same, it goes on the same. Rivers go on flowing, the birds go on singing, flowers go on

blooming... the world continues the same. But you are no more the same.

And when you look at the outside from that inner vision, things also now have a new beauty.

WHENEVER WE SEE THEM, ALL ARE
JUST AS THEY ARE...

Now you can see things as they are. Before that, you have not seen things, never, as they are. For example, you are passing by the side of the garden of your neighbour, and a beautiful roseflower has bloomed. Can you see this rose-flower just as it is? You cannot; there is jealousy which will prevent you. It has bloomed in your neighbour's garden, not in your garden -- how can you enjoy it? In fact you are hurt, you are offended by it, because your own flowers look so tiny. There is comparison. You are not feeling good. Just see the nonsense of it. Such a beautiful rose, but the idea that "It is not in my garden, it does not enhance my ego," and you miss the beauty of it. Now you want to possess it.

You see a beautiful woman passing by, but she is somebody else's woman, not yours. You would like to possess this woman. You can appreciate this beauty only when you can possess. In fact, to possess beauty is to kill it. How can you possess beauty if you love it? It is impossible. To love and to possess are antagonistic, contradictory; they can't go together. The moment you possess beauty, you have already killed it. You have reduced it to a thing, it is a commodity.

Beauty can be loved, enjoyed, only when there is no possessiveness. So when a man has become transformed by his inner vision, when he has reached into his innermost core and seen all the games of the ego are false, and has settled there in the eternity -- the joy of it and the silence of it -- has become only a witness, then he opens his eyes: now he can see things as they are.

The flower is just a flower, it is nobody's. The beautiful woman is just beautiful, she is nobody's. How can a woman be somebody's? Suddenly existence appears as it is, all I-thou gone. And when I-thou is gone, conflict disappears. In that consciousness

THE WILLOW IS GREEN,
THE FLOWER IS RED.

The flower is not less red because it has bloomed in the neighbour's garden. The willow is not less green because it is not yours. The willow is not less green because you are sad. Have you watched it? Things change with your mood. If you are happy the moon looks beautiful and very happy. And when you are sad the moon looks sad and very miserable. You project your moods on things.

When a man has reached to his ultimate core, there is no more any projection. He sees things as they are. He is never unhappy, never happy now; all those dualities are gone. He remains non-dual, he remains eternally silent, calm and quiet and blissful. Now things are as they are...

THE WILLOW IS GREEN,
THE FLOWER IS RED.

Buddhism helps people to attain to great aesthetic sensibility. It is not an accident that

Zen masters write poetry. Nobody has ever heard of Catholic monks painting, nobody has ever heard of Hindu sannyasins painting. Buddhism released great creativity into the world. Why? Other religions have been very uncreative, other religions have been very very dull -- the flavour of life is missing. They have not helped people to dance, to sing, to paint, to play.

Zen seems to be the best that has happened up to now.

My vision of religion is also that of creativity. You come closer to God through creativity, you come closer to the creator through creativity. Creativity should be one of the fundamental criterions of a religious person.

Create! Let creativity be your religion, and you will never be lost again. The more you create, the more you will grow in. It happens both the ways. If you create more, you grow in more. If you grow in more, you create more.

If religion is just negative and life-denying it becomes ugly, it becomes a monster. When religion is creative and helps you to see the greenness of the world and the rosing of the roses and helps you to hear these birds in a crystal-clear way, helps you to feel and be sensitive to the silences, pauses in existence, to the sounds... helps you to be in such a harmony that you can feel the harmony of the whole.... To feel the harmony of the whole is to become holy.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #12

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The first question

THOUGH YOUR LECTURE WAS QUITE SERIOUS AND DEEP YESTERDAY, THERE WERE STRANGE TICKLES AND LAUGHTER ARISING IN ME. SOMEWHERE DEEP WITHIN, THERE WAS A SENSE OF HUMOUR AS A SUBTLE UNDERCURRENT. TEARS OFTEN ROLLED DOWN!

DO THE MOMENTS OF CLARITY AND INSIGHT GIVE BIRTH TO SENSE OF HUMOUR? AND WHAT ARE THE TEARS?

YES, CHINMAYA, CLARITY ALWAYS BRINGS A SENSE OF HUMOUR. One starts laughing, not at others but at oneself. At the whole ridiculousness of the ego games, at the whole stupidity of human mind. And when there is laughter, tears are not far away; they are aspects of one energy. They are not diametrically opposite, they are complementary.

Whenever there is deep laughter, there are bound to be tears following it. And whenever there are deep tears. Laughter will be coming soon. They go together, they are parts of one climate the climate of clarity, depth, insight.

You may be surprised to know that schizophrenics cannot laugh -- and a person who cannot laugh has something of schizophrenia in him, is mentally ill. Schizophrenics start laughing only when they are getting out of their schizophrenia. It has been observed that the psychoanalyst can terminate the treatment once he sees the schizophrenic laughing. This is a fact of great importance.

So many so-called saints are really schizophrenic -- they cannot laugh. And if you cannot laugh, how can you weep? how can you cry? Both become impossible. When laughter and crying are impossible, your heart is completely dosed. You don't have any emotions, you start living only in the head. Your whole reality consists of thoughts. Thoughts are dry -- they cannot bring laughter, they cannot bring tears. Tears and laughter come from the heart. And clarity is not of the mind, clarity is of the heart. Confusion is of the mind.

So, Chinmaya, it has been a good experience. Your schizophrenia is disappearing; I can terminate the treatment. Laugh more, cry more, become a child again. Seriousness is your disease: drop seriousness.

And never be confused between seriousness and sincerity -- seriousness is not sincerity. Sincerity need not be serious; sincerity can have laughter, can cry, can weep. Seriousness is a blocked stage of mind, a stage where you cannot flow. A state of unflow stagnancy. Serious people are ill people.

Religion has been destroyed by serious people. And there is one thing about the serious people that you have to be reminded of again and again: serious people are very articulate, because they live in the head. They are logic-choppers. They can express well. And because they have no heart, because they cannot feel, they are very authoritative. A man of feeling cannot be authoritative -- how can compassion be authoritative?

And a man of feeling always hesitates; he cannot make dogmatic statements. The man of feeling whispers, per-suades. The man of feeling cannot convince; he comes indirectly, like a subtle breeze. But the serious person, the person who lives in the head, the schizophrenic, he is articulate, verbal, logical, rational, loud, authoritative. And because of these qualities, he starts gathering a following.

All political leaders are schizophrenic. The crowd follows them because of their dogmatic statements; their dogmatic statements convince people. People are very vague, un-certain, insecure -- they need somebody to make them feel secure. He may be a fool, he may be just like an Adolf Hitler....

It is a great puzzle to those who ponder over human problems how Adolf Hitler -- a mediocre person, of below-average IQ -- could convince a country like Germany, an intellectual country, an intelligent country, a country of professors, philosophers, thinkers. How was it possible that this idiotic person, Adolf Hitler, could convince people? And such an intelligent race!

To me, it is not a problem at all. I can see through and through how it happened. Adolf Hitler was dogmatic. Whatsoever he said, he said it absolutely. Only a foolish person can be dogmatic.

Lao Tzu hesitates. Lao Tzu says: I walk as one walks in cold winter in a cold stream. Everybody is certain except me. I am uncertain, I hesitate. I cannot claim knowledge, because all is so mysterious.

Now, Lao Tzu is not going to convince people. If you hesitate, nobody is going to follow

you. People ARE in deep confusion. People need somebody to shout loudly in their ears -- so loudly that they are convinced: "This man must be true, this man must be in the know about things. How can he shout so loudly? how can he argue so loudly? Only truth can be so loud." They are mistaken.

And these dogmatic people go on repeating. Adolf Hitler continued to repeat the same theme. Slowly slowly, when all untruth is repeated again and again it starts appearing like a truth. And people need somebody to lean to. They are uncertain, they need somebody who is absolutely certain.

Politics is dominated by schizophrenics. Religion is also dominated by schizophrenics. Because these people are very very articulate, convincing, they lead masses, religions are founded, churches are founded, organizations are made.

Jesus could not manage to lead many people -- do you know? It has been estimated that he had a following not bigger than five hundred. And when he was crucified, thousands gathered to jeer at him. He had only twelve close disciples, only twelve -- a man of the qualities of Jesus! What happened? Was he not convincing?

He was not convincing the way people need. He was saying things in a mysterious way -- in parables, in metaphors, in poetry. He was not logical, he was utterly illogical. He was vague. He was hinting, pointing, but he was not assertive.

Christianity was not born with Christ, it was born with Saint Paul -- who must have been a schizophrenic, certainly. First he was against Christ -- his name was Saul -- and he was so against that he wanted to destroy all the Christians and all the followers. He was moving towards the country where Jesus' followers were slowly slowly gathering, slowly slowly becoming courageous, slowly slowly starting to teach people, spreading the message -- he was going there to argue, to discuss, to defeat.

And on the road something happened. He was possessed by the spirit of Christ -- that's how the story goes. He fell down on the road, dust in his mouth. He could not believe it! He saw Jesus. He asked forgiveness, he became converted -- from Saul he became Paul. And this man was the founder of Christianity.

Now, what actually happened in psychological terms? This man must have had a split personality, he must have been a schizophrenic. Nobody appeared -- no Christ appeared. But he was so much against Christ -- that was one part of his mind which was against -- and he was completely unaware of another part. When he went deep into that part which was against Christ, the pendulum swung from one extreme to another extreme. That's how it always happens.

He was going to persecute Christians -- that small number of people who were talking of Jesus and remembering old things and the man and the beauty of that man. And the suffering that he went through for them, and the message that he had given to them -- slowly slowly the word was spreading. And this man was going to persecute these people. And he was able to argue well. Jesus' followers would not have been able to convince him; he would have convinced them. They were simple people, innocent people -- farmers and fisherman and carpenters -- not very educated either.

But when you go to one extreme, then the pendulum swings of its own accord. It swung, it moved to the other extreme. The other part of his being took possession of him. That's what actually happened. He had a dream, a vision -- there was no Christ, but he saw him. And he was convinced and he was converted. And this schizophrenic created the whole Christianity. He was going to persecute Christians: he converted the whole world to Christianity. He created the church.

It has always been so. Whenever a religion is born, sooner or later schizophrenics will catch hold of it. They are great leaders; they convince people. Their impact is great, their slogans convert people. They are loud, logical; they collect proofs, they argue.

Because of these people, no religion remains pure for long. The really religious persons are those who are not articulate, who are innocent. Who are simple, meditative, loving -- they cannot convince anybody. They simply live the religion. But they cannot create great religions; great religious empires they cannot create.

It is good that humour is arising in Chinmaya. Allow it, don't crush it. Help it to come, let it surface. Humour will join your split parts, humour will glue your fragments into one whole. Have you not observed it? When you have a hearty laugh, suddenly all fragments disappear and you become one. When you laugh, your soul and your body are one -- they laugh together. When you think, your body and soul are separate. When you cry, your body and soul are one; they function in harmony.

Remember always: all those things are good, for the good, which make you one whole. Laughter, crying, dancing, singing -- all that makes you one piece, in which you function as one harmony, not separate. Thinking can go on in the head, and the body can go on doing a thousand and one things; you can go on eating, and the mind can go on thinking. This is split. You walk on the road: the body is walking and you are thinking. Not thinking of the road, not thinking of the trees that surround it, not thinking of the sun, not thinking of the people who are passing, but thinking of other things, of other worlds.

But laugh, and if the laugh is really deep, if it is not just a pseudo-laugh, just on the lips, suddenly you feel your body and your soul are functioning together. It is not only in the body, it goes deepest into your core. It arises from your very being and spreads towards the circumference. You are one in laughter.

Or in crying, or in dancing, or in singing! Whatsoever makes you feel ONE IS good, is meditative, is prayerful.

The second question

IS THE PURPOSE OF THE THERAPY GROUPS TO BRING THE PARTICIPANTS TO THEIR NATURAL SELF? IF SO, ISN'T THE EFFORT TO BE NATURAL UNNATURAL? IF NOT, WHAT IS THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURAL AND UNNATURAL?

THE PURPOSE OF THE THERAPY GROUPS is not to bring the participants to their natural self -- not at all. The purpose of the therapy groups is to bring you to the point where you can see your unnaturalness. Nobody can bring you to your natural self; there can be no method, no technique, no device, which can bring you to your natural self -- because all that you will do will make you more and more unnatural.

Then what is the purpose of a therapy group? It simply makes you aware of the unnatural patterns that you have evolved in your being. It simply helps you to see the unnaturalness of your life, that's all. Seeing it, it starts dispersing. To see it is to annihilate it, because once you have seen something as unnatural in your being, you cannot persist in it any longer. And seeing something as unnatural, you have also felt what IS natural -- but that is indirect, that is vague, that is not clear. What is clear is this, that you have seen that something is unnatural in you. Seeing the unnatural you can feel the natural. Seeing the unnatural, you cannot support it

any more. It existed because of your support -- nothing can exist without your support. Your co-operation is needed.

If you co-operate something exists. Certainly the unnatural cannot exist without your co-operation. From where will it get the energy? The natural can exist without your co-operation, but the unnatural cannot exist. The unnatural needs constant support, it needs constant care, it needs constant control. Once you have seen that this is unnatural, your grip on it becomes loose. Your fist opens of its own accord.

The group is not a device to open your fist. It is just to help you see that what you are doing is unnatural. In that very seeing, the transformation.

You ask: IS THE PURPOSE OF THE THERAPY GROUPS TO BRING THE PARTICIPANTS TO THEIR NATURAL SELF?

No, that is not the purpose. The purpose is simply to make you aware of where you are, what you have done to your-self -- what harm you have been doing continuously and you are still doing. What wounds you are creating in your being. On each of the wounds is your signature -- that is the purpose of the group, to make you alert about your signature. That it is signed by you, that nobody else has been doing it. That all the chains that you have around yourself are created by you. That the prison you live in is your own work. Nobody is doing it to you.

Seeing it, that "I am creating my own prison," how long can you go on creating it? If you want to live in the prison, that's another matter -- but nobody ever wants to live in the prison. People live because they think, "Others are creating the prisons, what can we do?" They always go on throwing the responsibility on somebody else. Down the ages, they have found new and different devices, but the purpose remains the same: throw the responsibility on somebody else.

And you will be surprised at what excuses man has been trying to find. In the ancient days, man used to think, "This is the way God has made us, so the responsibility is God's -- what can we do? We are just creatures, and we are the way he has made us. We have to live this misery. This is destined."

That was a trick. You are relieving yourself of all responsibility. But it happens that when a trick has worked for long it becomes a cliché. It works no more; people are fed up with it. They start searching for new ideas, but the purpose remains the same.

Marx says it is the society, the economic structure of the society -- the exploitation, the exploiters, the imperialists, the capitalists, they are doing the harm, they are the reason. Again you are relieved of the responsibility. So what can you do? The slavery is imposed upon you, you have been MADE miserable. Unless the revolution Comes nothing is going to happen. So you can postpone.

And the revolution never comes; it has not happened yet. Not in Russia, not in China -- nowhere. The revolution never comes; it is just a postponement. Man is as miserable in Russia as he is anywhere else, as much in the mire of the mind as anywhere else. Jealousy is as much in Russia as anywhere else. Anger is as much, violence is as much. nothing has changed.

Freud says it is because of the upbringing. In your childhood you have been brought up wrongly -- what can you do? It has already happened; now there is no way of undoing it. At the most, you can accept it and live it. Or you can go on fighting unnecessarily -- but there is no hope.

Freud is one of the greatest pessimists ever. He says there is no hope for man, because in childhood the pattern is settled -- settled for ever. Then you go on repeating the pattern. Again the responsibility is thrown. So your mother is responsible. And the mother thinks what can SHE do? -- her own mother is responsible... and so on and so forth.

These are all devices, but the purpose is the same -- different devices for the same purpose. What is the purpose? To take responsibility off your shoulders.

The group therapy is to make you aware that neither God is responsible nor is society responsible nor are parents responsible. If there is anybody who is responsible it is you? A group process is a hammering of this simple fact -- that it is you who are responsible. And this hammering has a great significance. Because once you understand that "This is ME, I myself am doing wrong to myself," then the doors open. Then there is hope. Then something is possible.

Revolution is possible through responsibility, individual responsibility. You can transmute; you can drop those old patterns. They are not your destiny. But if you accept them as your destiny they become your destiny. It is all a question of whether to support them or not.

And I am not saying that parents have not done something to you, remember. And I am not saying that the society has not done anything to you -- I am not saying that either. The society has done much, the parents have done much, the education and the priest, they have done much. But, still, the ultimate key is in your hands. You can DROP it, you can drop the whole conditioning. Whatsoever they have done, you can erase it -- because your consciousness at the deepest core always remains free. That is the purpose of a therapy group, to bring this truth home: that you are responsible. 'Responsibility' is the MOST important word in a group-therapy process. Nobody wants to take the responsibility, because it hurts. Just to see the point, "I am the cause of my misery," hurts very much. If somebody else is the cause, one can accept it, one is helpless. But if I am the cause of my misery, it hurts. It goes against the ego, it goes against the pride.

That's why group therapy is a difficult process, hard. You want to escape -- from encounter, from tao, from primal therapy, you want to escape. Why do you want to escape? Because you have always believed that you are perfectly right, you are perfectly good -- others have been doing harm to you.

Now the whole thing has to be changed; you have to put everything upside-down. Nobody is doing any harm to you. And if they are doing any harm, it is through your co-operation. So finally you are responsible, you have chosen it. You say, "My husband is doing harm to me" -- but you have chosen THIS husband, in fact, only so that he can do harm to you. You wanted to be harmed and that's why you have chosen THIS husband, THIS wife.

Just watch people who go on changing their wives. You will be surprised -- again and again they find the same type of woman. It is a difficult thing to find the same type of woman, but they find. And within six months they are complaining again. And the complaints are exactly the same.

I have heard about one man who married eight times, and again and again he managed to find the same type of woman. Just see the point: the point is that he has a certain kind of mind, a certain conditioning. In that conditioning, only a certain type of woman appeals to him. A blonde or a brunette -- a certain kind of woman appeals to him. The long nose, the black eyes, or something. Always he is attracted by a certain kind of woman. And then that woman starts doing the same things. And then he is puzzled -- and he was thinking he was changing the woman.

You ARE changing the woman, but you have not changed your mind! So your choice remains the old, because the chooser is the old. It is not going to help; you will be in the same trap. The colour of the trap may change, the fiber of the trap may change, but the trap is there and you will be trapped again and again. And the same misery will arise.

Group therapy is a great process of understanding "What I have been doing to myself!" And if you go still deeper... where no group therapy has yet gone, not even primal therapy. But Buddha has gone deeper. He says: If you have chosen a certain kind of parent, that too is your choice.

See the point. Millions of foolish people were making love when you were hovering to take birth. But still you have chosen a certain couple -- why? You must have a certain idea; it is your choice. And then you say, "My parents have done harm to me." In the first place, why did you choose them? Then your wife, your husband... and you think they have done harm? Then the society -- who has created this society? You have created this society. It does not come out of the blue.

The beggar on the road has not appeared suddenly from the blue. WE have created him. If you want to become rich, somebody has to become a beggar. And seeing the beggar you feel very sorry. Whom are you trying to deceive? And you still carry the idea of becoming rich. If you want to become rich, somebody is going to become a beggar. If you want to become somebody, then somebody will not be able to reach that fame, name. It is a competitive world. You don't want wars, but you are violent -- in everything you are violent. And you condemn wars.

And have you seen the pacifists and their processions How violent they look! Their slogans against war, their shouts against war -- and sooner or later the procession turn into a riot. And they are burning cars and destroying offices and burning buses and trains and attacking the police -- and they had gone to protest against war!

Now what is happening? These people are violent people; war is just an excuse. Their protest is nothing but their expression of violence. They are not concerned about war, they are using it as a pretext.

This society is created by you. And then you say that society is responsible.

NOBODY IS RESPONSIBLE EXCEPT YOU. This is one of the hardest truths to accept. But once you accept it, it brings great freedom, it creates great space. Because with this, another possibility immediately opens up: "If I am responsible then I can change. If I am not responsible, how can I change? If I am doing it to myself, then it hurts but it also brings a new possibility -- that I can stop hurting myself, I can stop being miserable."

A group process is not to make you natural; it is to make you aware of your unnaturalness, of your phoniness.

IS THE PURPOSE OF THE THERAPY GROUPS TO BRING THE PARTICIPANTS TO THEIR NATURAL SELF?

No, not at all. The purpose is just to make them aware of the unnatural self. And then the natural self comes of its own accord. Nobody can bring it -- when the unnatural disappears, the natural is found. The natural has always been there, hidden under the rubbish. Unnatural gone, you are natural. You don't become natural; you have always been natural. How can one become natural? All becoming will lead you into unnaturalness.

IF SO, ISN'T THE EFFORT TO BE NATURAL UNNATURAL?

Yes, the EFFORT to be natural is always unnatural. But to understand the unnaturalness is not the effort to be natural, it is simple understanding. Seeing that you have been trying to squeeze oil out of sand, when you have seen the futility of it you drop the whole project. Seeing that you have been trying to pass through a wall and hurting your head, seeing it, you stop passing through the wall. You start looking for the door.

Yes, exactly like that.

IF NOT, WHAT IS THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURAL AND UNNATURAL?

Natural is that which you have been given as a gift -- a gift from the whole. Unnatural is that which you have created -- by teachings, scriptures, character, morality. The unnatural is that which you have imposed upon the natural, the given. The natural is from God, the unnatural is from yourself. Take away all that you have imposed upon yourself, and God will burst forth into a thousand bloomings in your being.

Somebody asks Jesus, "What is your fundamental message?" And he says, "Ask the fowl and the fish and the flower."

What does he mean "Ask the fowl and the fish and the flower?" He is saying: Ask nature!

My message is: Allow nature to take possession of you; don't try to create any character. All characters are wrong. Be characterless. Don't create any sort of personality; all personalities are false. Don't be a personality.

Then, slowly slowly, you will see something arising from the deepest core of your being. That is nature. Its fragrance is great. It is good; it is never bad. And it is not cultivated, not at all. Hence it has no tensions in it, no anxiety; you need not maintain it.

Truth need not be maintained. Only untruths have to be managed, maintained, need much care and maintenance. And still they are untrue and they never become truth. And only truth liberates.

The therapy available here is not to make you natural. Nobody can make you natural -- God has already done that. The problem is not to learn how to be natural: the problem is how to unlearn the unnatural.

The third question

HOW TO BE TOTAL? HOW TO GIVE EVERYTHING?

VIDYA, ONE CAN BE TOTAL ONLY WHEN ONE IS NOT. Only emptiness can be total. If you are, you can't be total. Your very presence will be a disturbance in your totality, your very presence will continue interfering with your totality.

That's why Buddha says: Become a nothingness. Just look deep into yourself and Let the cloud of the ego disperse. Let there be empty sky... in that empty sky there is no division. Clouds divide. When there are no clouds, the sky is undivided, one. Thoughts divide. When there are no thoughts in you, there is totality. And remember, even the thought of totality will be a divisive factor.

Now you ask: HOW TO BE TOTAL.

This is an idea. Listening to me, again and again seeing the grandeur of totality, a greed arises in you: HOW TO BE total? But you have missed the whole point. How can you ask such a question? Totality is not something that you have to be. If you do something, you will remain partial. Doing can never be total, only non-doing can be total. When you are a non-doer, when there is nobody doing anything, there is totality.

Totality is absence of all doings, all thinkings, all that divides. Totality is silence, utter stillness.

Don't ask: How to be total? Just ask: How to see why I am not total?

Remember, that's why Buddha's path is known as VIA negativa, via the negation. It does not talk about positive things, it simply talks about the negative.

Don't ask how to be natural. Just ask how not to be un-natural. Don't ask how to be total. Just ask how not to be untotal, non-total. Just seeing is the question. Sometimes you ARE total -- just see in those moments what happens.

Making love, sometimes it happens, you are total. That totality is called the orgasm. Mind stops for a moment. The frenzy of love, the madness of two energies meeting, merging -- the mind is surpassed, transcended. The mind is pushed aside; the mind is no more needed in that space. All thoughts disappear, time Stops, and suddenly you are total.

That's why people are so much in love with love -- in spite of all the saints. They don't bother about the saints. People go on loving -- they pay lip-service to the saints but they go on living and loving; they don't follow them. They know that they have only one moment of ecstasy, and that is love.

If you have gone to Khajuraho you must have seen the ecstatic expression on the faces of MAITHUNA figures -- lovers in deep ecstasy. Even the stone has become ecstatic. Those stone statues, that sculpture, has great poetry, has great softness. Those creators must have been of immense experience; to turn stone into loving ecstasy is great art. I have seen many things, but nothing compared to Khajuraho. Khajuraho remains the greatest wonder on the earth: transforming stone into ecstasy. The faces show something of the transcendental; time HAS stopped. There are no thoughts in the heads; all division has disappeared.

These moments are holy moments, because they come from the whole.

You ask me: HOW TO BE TOTAL?

Just look in some moments when you ARE total, just to see the taste of totality. Listening to music sometimes it happens. Or watching a sunset. Or listening to me. If you are deep in love with me, it happens; it happens again and again every day. I can see on your faces the same expression as is there on Khajuraho statues. You disappear; something stops deep down in you. There is no movement, everything is utterly quiet -- and you are total.

I give you the taste of totality every day. And Vidya, you ask me: HOW TO BE TOTAL? Just allow these moments more and more; don't miss a single opportunity. Looking at the trees, look so deeply that you disappear in the look. Listening to the birds, forget yourself completely. And so on and so forth....

Every moment there is a possibility to be total. Whatsoever you are doing, be absorbed in it so utterly that the mind thinks nothing, is just there, is just a presence. And more and more totality will be coming. And the taste of totality will make you more and more capable of being total.

And try to see when you are not total. Those are the moments which have to be dropped slowly slowly. When you are not total, whenever you are in the head -- thinking, brooding,

calculating, cunning, clever -- you are not total. Slowly slowly, slip out of those moments. It is just an old habit; habits die hard. But they die certainly -- if one persists, they die.

I have heard about a man whose wife died. And he was sitting late, very late, in the pub. And somebody asked, "Why do you go on sitting late still? Because you used to tell me that it is because of the wife that you sit in the pub so long. But now the wife is dead!"

The man suddenly stood up. He said, "Thank you! I had completely forgotten -- just old habit!"

Just a few months before, it happened: the defence minister of India, Jagjivan Ram, spoke somewhere in the south. For one hour he criticized the Congress party and Indira Gandhi. He himself has been in the Congress his whole life; he was a defence minister in Indira's government too. Then he changed the party, became part of Janata party. For one hour he spoke against the Congress party, and in the end he asked the audience: "Please vote Congress."

Just old habit -- must have been doing this for fifty years: "Vote Congress!"

Habits die hard. To be untotal is just a habit. And sometimes, in spite of you, totality happens. So just watch those moments -- when it happens, how it happens. Learn some secrets from those moments and move in those moments more and more. And see when it is not happening -- get out of those moments, slip out. It is not a science, it is ; knack. It is a very very subtle art.

You ask: HOW TO BE TOTAL? HOW TO GIVE EVERYTHING?

It is not a question of giving everything. On the contrary, it is a question of recognizing the fact that you have nothing. This idea of HOW TO GIVE EVERYTHING? is again egoistic. What have you got to give? You are beggars -- everybody is. You have nothing to give.

And you ask: HOW TO GIVE EVERYTHING?

The very idea of giving is meaningless. When you have something to give, it gives itself, it shares itself. When you are happy, happiness spreads. When you are blissful, it overflows. One never asks "How to give?" One simply GIVES! One cannot do otherwise. That state finds its own way of expression and sharing. When you have a song it sings itself -- not that you have to ask "How to sing it?" It bursts forth in jubilation, in a great shout of joy. The shout may be wordless, may be meaningless, but that is not the point.

What is the meaning of 'hallelujah'? There is no meaning in it. It is not a word at all, it is just a shout of joy. You are saying that you have something which cannot be said. You are saying something which has never been said and cannot be said.

But when it is there it happens. When the clouds come and they are full of rain they don't ask, "How can I give everything?" They simply start giving -- they start showering. When the flower opens it does not ask, "How can I share my fragrance?" In fact, what can the flower do? There is no question of doing. The fragrance is already on the way, on the wing. It has started moving!

When you have, sharing happens. When you don't have, only then do these questions

arise: "How to give? How to share?"

Every evening, people come to ask me: "How to share?" And my problem is that I don't see anything that they are going to share! There is nothing. When you don't have anything, this question arises: "How to share?" This question keeps you happy that you have something to share but you don't know how to share. This keeps you unaware of the fact that you don't have anything to share -- because when you have, it happens spontaneously. You cannot resist it, it has to be given forth. There is no way to avoid, it is inevitable.

So first thing, you ask: HOW TO BE TOTAL?

Not to be is to be total.

Second, you ask: HOW TO GIVE EVERYTHING?

Know that you have nothing. And wait... and wait in silence, in patience. Something will start flowing out of your being. It will take you unawares. It will be a great surprise -- that you have started sharing!

And the most difficult thing in the world is to see that you don't have anything -- the most difficult, because it feels so bad that you are empty, that you are a beggar. People go on pretending that they have....

Just the other night, Big Prem's mother came to see me. She has been here for many months. Now, within two or three weeks she will be leaving, so she came to see me for the first time. For so many months she has been here, but avoiding me. Protecting herself, defending -- listening to me, and yet not listening to me. Seeing me, and yet with closed eyes. Being here with my people, but keeping aloof.

Last night she was there to see me, and I asked her to become a sannyasin -- now it is time. And she said, "I cannot become, because I am a roman catholic. And I BELIEVE in God, and you are against beliefs, and I cannot Leave my belief. And God has been very good to me.

Just the idea of becoming a sannyasin disturbed her deeply. She immediately became defensive. That's why I had asked -- to bring her whole defence mechanism to the surface.

Now she says, "I believe in God, and I cannot drop this belief" I asked her, "Do you believe in your belief more than you want to know God? God is not so very significant, it seems. Your BELIEF in God is more significant. I am saying to you that if you drop your beliefs you will be able to see God!"

But she says, "No. I cannot drop my belief. How can I drop my belief? Why should I drop my belief? God I been very good to me."

As if God has not been good to everybody else. God is simply good! That is the meaning of the word 'God': unconditionally good. It is not so that it is good only when you believe in God. Then what kind of God will it be? If you believe, he is good; if you don't believe, he is bad. If you believe, he brings blessings to you; if you don't believe, he brings curses to you.

Josephine thinks that God has been good because she believes. God is simply good! -- believing or not believing makes no difference. The sun shines on both the theist and the atheist. When the moon comes it shares its joy with everybody -- communist and capitalist. There is no distinction. God is good! But people go on thinking this way.

Really she is saying, "If I drop my belief then I am afraid God will not be good." What kind of trust is this? And she says, "I cannot drop my belief."

And I said to her, "Your hands are empty -- I see your hands are empty. You don't have anything in your hands." But she wouldn't listen.

God is not important to her -- her belief. And what is .I belief? Just hiding your ignorance, pretending that you know. It is very difficult to know that you don't know. It is very difficult to see that you don't have anything, that your hands are empty. This is the courage that I am trying to create in you -- to see that you don't have anything, that your hands are empty, that you are empty, that there is no being inside, that all beliefs are just tricks to create the feeling that you have something.

When one becomes so utterly naked and nude and empty, and all disappears and all is dropped from the hands, then comes the great, radical change. One is transformed. In your emptiness, one day you become full. And out of emptiness, fullness is born. And the sharing is inevitable; nobody can stop it, there is nobody to stop it.

The fourth question

YOU SAY THAT YOU WANT THE NEW COMMUNE TO BE SEPARATE FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD. WHAT I SEE IS THAT THE ASHRAM IS THE MARKETPLACE. PLEASE COMMENT.

SAMVEDANA, THE COMMUNE HAS TO BE SEPARATE from the rest of the world -- that does not mean that it has not to be a marketplace. That does not mean that it has to be some other world. It is going to be THIS world, with a different quality to it. It will be a marketplace with meditation and love in it.

I am not against the marketplace. I am not against the mundane, I am all for it. But the mundane can have a suffused quality of the sacred. I am not against the ordinary; the ordinary, lived rightly, becomes extraordinary.

My commune is not going to be a monastery. Yes, it will be a marketplace -- with a difference. It will not be a monastery and it will not be the ordinary marketplace. It will be something that transcends both and implies both. It has to be like that, because man is body and soul together. The body needs the marketplace, the soul needs a monastery.

Up to now, the monastery has existed against the marketplace -- soul against body. And the marketplace has existed against the monastery -- body against soul. I don't want to divide you. I want to create individuals here, not divided, split personalities. I accept all; the world is beautiful. The monastery has to become a marketplace, the marketplace has to become a monastery.

It will be separate from this world -- not because I am against the world, but because right now this world won't allow a new wave to arise. It will crush it. The new wave has to be protected. The commune is going to be a nursery. Once my sannyasins have become strong enough, then there will be no point, no problem. They can move into the world, they can go into the world and be in the world. But only once they have become strong trees. If they are very soft small plants, just budding, they will be crushed by the world.

The commune is going to be a nursery. And the commune is also going to be a marketplace, because all your needs have to be fulfilled. I am not against your needs. I am not against anything. I am not life-negative. My approach towards life is not that of an ascetic. My commune will create people who are together -- Buddhas and Epicuruses, both together -- who enjoy the life, and enjoy God too, and don't create any division.

When the meditation is released, the marketplace becomes a temple. And you can see it happening here too. The people who are working here, their work is their worship.

Josephine was saying to me about her daughter, Big Prem -- she cannot believe that she works ten hours every day, typing, typing, typing... with no holiday! And still she seems to be very happy. She could not believe her own eyes; she has watched her for many months.

It looks to you as if she is typing for ten hours. On the surface it is so; deep down something else is happening. It is a love affair with me. Those are my words she is typing. It is worship, it is her prayer, it is her devotion.

And if you love your work, there is no question of any holiday. All days are holidays. each moment is holy.

My commune is going to be of THIS world, and yet a opening for the other. It has to be rooted in the earth -- in fact only when something is rooted in the earth can it grow unto the sky. A tree, to go high in the sky, to whisper with the winds, to dance with the sun, to have a dialogue with the stars, needs first to go deep down into the earth, ha to spread its roots to the deepest layers of the earth.

You don't say to a tree, "You are contradictory: you want to rise high in the sky, then why are you spreading your roots into the earth? This is a contradiction." Yes, it is a contradiction as far as logic is concerned. But life is not logic. The tree will laugh at your logic and will call you foolish -- because if there are no roots deep in the earth, there will be no branches in the sky. The tree can move only proportionately, in the same proportion -- as it goes deep, it goes high. Depth brings height, in the same proportion. It is always balanced.

The marketplace is the earth. My commune is going to be a marketplace. It will be rooted in the earth, it will have roots deep into the earth. And still it will dance with the winds, sing with the sun... it will rise higher into God.

Where God and the world meet, there real religion exists.

So, Samvedana, you must have some condemnatory idea about the marketplace. The marketplace has not to be dropped but transformed. Nothing has to be dropped, everything has to be transformed. Whatsoever is given to you is given with a purpose; it can be used. The same thing can become manure and can create great fragrance in roses. And if you cannot do that and you go on collecting manure in your house, it will stink. And it is the same manure. It stinks if you collect it. If you spread it on the soil. it brings thousands of roses, and that fragrance that is not of this world, that freshness that is not of this world.

Each and everything has to be transformed.

My commune has to be magical.

The fifth question

RENE DESCARTES SAYS, "COGITO, ERGO SUM -- I THINK, THEREFORE I AM." THERE IS ANOTHER STATEMENT WHICH IS NOW GOING ROUND IN THE WEST: "COITO, ERGO SUM -- I LOVE, THEREFORE I AM," OR, "I COPULATE, THEREFORE I AM." WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO STATEMENTS?

FIRST, BOTH ARE WRONG. Because I think, therefore I am is to put things upside-down. Your being is first; your thinking arises later on. Your thinking cannot become a proof for your being. Being precedes, being is first; thinking is later.

And Descartes is not aware, he is not aware of the Eastern approach at all -- that there

comes a moment when thinking can be dropped again, and still you are. That's what happens in meditation: thinking is no more, but you are. So thinking is arbitrary, non-essential. It is not essential to "I am."

He says: "Cogito, ergo sum -- I think, therefore I am." No: "I am, therefore I think." But that is only one dimension. "I am, therefore I feel" -- that is another dimension. "I am, therefore I love"... but everything is preceded by " am." That pure existence, that amness, precedes all.

So both statements are false, not true. But if you have to choose between the two, then the second is far better. First is "Cogito, ergo sum -- I think, therefore I am." Second is "Coito, ergo sum -- I copulate, therefore I am." The second is far better than the first. Because thinking is of the head -- very fragmentary. Copulation is more total, more orgasmic.

The second statement can be approved by the whole philosophy of Tantra. The first is ordinary, the second is extraordinary. But one has to remember that being precedes all. You are in the beginning, and you will be in the End. And all else is in-between; like dreams, things come and go.

I have heard:

A villager, an old man, was sitting on his fence watching the traffic go by. Many cars were passing, and trucks and buses, and he was enjoying. A car-driver stopped, seeing the old man, very old -- must have been eighty or more -- enjoying himself so much just sitting on the fence. And he asked, "What is the matter, old man? You look so happy. I cannot sit on the fence for more than a few minutes; I will become so restless. And you look so happy and so silent. I am always on the go -- from one place to another, from one town to another. Only that keeps me happy. I am a traveller, a born vagabond. You are just the opposite."

The old man laughed and he said, "Son, there is not much difference. You go in your car seeing fences pass by. I sit on my fence seeing cars pass by. There is not much difference. It is all the same."

In the beginning I am, in the end I am. In the middle, a thousand and one things happen -- what Zen people call 'the ten thousand things' happen. But it is all the same. Misery and happiness, ecstasies, excitements and agonies, pains and pleasures -- just dreams on the way. The source remains uncontaminated. And to return to the source is the whole process of coming to truth.

The sixth question

NOTHING TO DO, NOWHERE TO GO. YOU SAY IT SO CLEAR. YOUR WORDS FALL LIKE A CRYSTAL-CLEAR WATERFALL ON MY HEAD. SOME KEEP DANCING IN MY HEART. YET I WONDER. WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?

PRAGEETA, I WONDER TOO -- because we are not really doing anything here. That's what we are doing: we are learning how to be in a state of non-doing -- WU-WEI.

And the last question

Osho...

SOMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAVELLED, GLADLY BEYOND ANY EXPERIENCE, YOUR EYES HAVE THEIR SILENCE: IN YOUR MOST FRAIL GESTURE ARE THINGS WHICH ENCLOSE ME, OR WHICH I CANNOT TOUCH BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO NEAR

YOUR SLIGHTEST LOOK WILL EASILY UNCLOSE ME THOUGH I HAVE CLOSED MYSELF AS FINGERS, YOU OPEN ALWAYS PETAL BY PETAL MYSELF AS SPRING OPENS (TOUCHING SKILLFULLY, MYSTERIOUSLY) HER FIRST ROSE.

OR IF YOUR WISH BE TO CLOSE ME, I AND MY LIFE WILL CLOSE VERY BEAUTIFULLY, SUDDENLY, AS WHEN THE HEART OF THIS FLOWER IMAGINES THE SNOW CAREFULLY EVERYWHERE DESCENDING;

NOTHING WHICH WE ARE TO PERCEIVE IN THIS WORLD EQUALS THE POWER OF YOUR INTENSE FRAGILITY: WHOSE TEXTURE COMPELS ME WITH THE COLOUR OF ITS COUNTRIES RENDERING DEATH AND FOREVER IN EACH BREATHING

(I DO NOT KNOW WHAT IT IS ABOUT YOU THAT CLOSES AND OPENS; ONLY SOMETHING IN ME UNDERSTANDS THE VOICE OF YOUR EYES IS DEEPER THAN ALL ROSES) NOBODY, NOT EVEN THE RAIN, HAS SUCH SMALL HANDS

E. E. CUMMINGS

Thank you, Katya.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

Chapter #13

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SINCE THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
IS LITTLE BUT GRIEF AND PAIN,
WHY SHOULD WE BE SO RELUCTANT
TO RETURN TO THE SKY OF OUR NATIVE PLACE?

TO WRITE SOMETHING AND LEAVE IT BEHIND US,
IT IS BUT A DREAM.

WHEN WE AWAKE WE KNOW
THERE IS NOT EVEN ANYONE TO READ IT.

THOUGH WE DO NOT PREACH THE DOCTRINE,
UNASKED THE FLOWERS BLOOM IN SPRING;
THEY FALL AND SCATTER,
THEY TURN TO DUST.

WE ARE BORN, WE DIE.
ALL ARE THE SAME,
SHAKAMUNI, DARUMA,
THE CAT AND THE LADLE.

TO HARDEN INTO A BUDDHA IS WRONG;
ALL THE MORE I THINK SO
WHEN I LOOK AT A STONE BUDDHA.

A fable is told of a centipede with arthritis who sought the advice of a wise old owl. "Centipede," the owl said, "you have a hundred legs, all swollen up. Now if I were you, I would change myself into a stork. With only two legs you will cut your pain by ninety-eight percent, and if you use your wings you can stay off your legs altogether."

The centipede was elated. "I accept your suggestion without hesitation" He said. "Now just tell me, how do I go about making the change?"

"Oh," said the owl. "I would not know about the details -- I only make general policy."

Buddhism is not interested in general policy. It is not interested in philosophical speculation. It is interested in the details of life, its sufferings and their causes. It does not give you outlandish solutions. It does not provide you with new dreams. It simply looks face to face into life. It does not bring God in, or heaven and hell. It does not create a theology at all -- because all theology is an effort to escape from the real problems of life.

So sometimes it happens to philosophers, to theologians, that Buddhism seems to be not a religion at all, because it does not talk about paradise, it does not talk about the eternal soul. It talks about the suffering, the misery, the frustration, the anxiety, the anguish of life.

Many have thought that Buddhism is pessimistic -- it is not. It simply wants to face the life as it is, and life IS misery, and life is anguish. The easy way to avoid it is to escape into abstraction, to move into some dreamlands, to start thinking, about something else, to spin and weave theories so that you can hide the fact, the wound of life.

Buddhism is very earthly, earthbound, factual. It wants you to encounter life, because only through encountering the anguish of life is there a possibility of transcendence. But people don't want to face life. They are afraid. They are frightened. Deep down they know that life is anxiety. To face it means to become anxious, troubled. To face it means it will become impossible to live. To face it means you will be paralyzed -- paralyzed by fear, paralyzed by death, because life is death and nothing else.

Everything is dying every moment. All is disappearing into death.

Buddhism says escaping into abstractions is not going to help. Going into the details of life is really going to help. It is hard, it is arduous, it needs guts -- but that's the only way to face it.

Down the ages, priests have been exploiting people. They have been giving people easy

routes to escape by. They have been deceiving people. Priests have never allowed people to become literate, to become intelligent, because if people become literate and intelligent they will be able to see through the whole game that priests have been playing around.

The priests have depended on the ignorance of human beings, and they have tried to keep human beings as ignorant as possible. The religious scriptures should not be allowed; people should not read them. In India, only Brahmins were allowed to read the Vedas, because if people are allowed to read the Vedas, then how long can you pretend that there is something in it? There is nothing! People will see it. And once they have seen it, how are you going to deceive them? How are you going to exploit them?

The power of the priests and the politicians depends on the ignorance of men. Buddhism brings a totally different light.

Buddhism says: Forget about the Vedas and the Upanishads; don't be worried about them. Your life is enough to go into -- that is the real Veda. The only book that has to be read is the book of life, and the only wisdom that is possible is through reading the book of life. Become intelligent.

Buddhism is the religion of intelligence. The word 'buddha' comes from 'buddhi' -- buddhi means intelligence. It is only through intelligence that one can become aware.

Priests were very angry against Buddha. They uprooted his religion from this country. And the day priests succeeded in uprooting Buddhism from this country, this country fell from intelligence, became stupid, and has remained stupid since then -- because this country's greatest flowering was Buddha. It was the culmination of centuries of work, effort. It was a culmination, a climax. The days of Buddha were the days of the greatest peak of this country; this country knew the sunlit peaks. Once Buddha and his roots were destroyed in this country, it fell from those sunlit peaks into the dark valleys .

But priests were very happy. People were again ignorant. People were again asking them what to do and what not to do -- and they were dishing out old recipes which have never worked.

I have heard:

An illiterate millionaire decided to leave his money to a small local college. The son was not ready to be cut out of the will. He knew that his father was ignorant and a prude, so he said to the old man one day, "Father, I hope you are aware that at that college, the one you've decided to give all your money to, the boys and girls matriculate together!" The father looked startled, and the son continued, "Not only that," he said, "but both boys and girls use the same CURRICULUM!"

Now the father's face began to darken, and the son leaned forward to whisper, "But the worst of all, Father, before a girl can graduate she has to show her THESIS to the dean!" "That settles it," roared the father. "That school won't get a penny from me!"

The priests have lived on that down the ages -- just big words. People don't know what those words mean. Big words uttered with great solemnity and seriousness, and people have been thinking something great is happening. Nothing has happened! People have remained ignorant, people have remained miserable. Nothing has happened through the concept of God and heaven and soul and all that -- nothing has happened. People have remained irreligious. In fact, people have become more and more dull. The more they have believed in these big words, the more dull they have become.

Buddhism brings a totally different dimension. It says religion is not in the books. It says religion is not in great words, big words, complicated philosophies. Religion has nothing to

do with linguists, with language experts. Religion has something to do with the quality of your life. If you can bring intelligence into your life, religion explodes.

And nobody can give it to you. Only you can give this gift to yourself -- the gift of intelligence. Everybody is carrying in himself the potential. The potential has to be polished; the potential has to be worked out, helped, nourished. Each man is born as a seed of great intelligence. Each man is born as a Buddha. No need to beg for knowledge, for wisdom; you contain it. Just search within .

But priests are not interested in it, because if a person starts searching within he will stop going to the temple, to the mosque, to the church. If he starts looking within he will not ask the priest, the rabbi, the pundit. For what will he ask anybody? He will have his own light. He will be a light unto himself.

That's why priests were so angry against Buddha. They were not so angry against Mahavir -- Jainism has continued in India -- but they were very much against Buddha. What happened? This man must have brought some new light. This man must have been a breakthrough in human consciousness. What was his contribution? His contribution was this -- that each man can be a light unto himself; that no man needs to follow anybody, to imitate anybody; that no man needs to take orders from anybody, commandments from anybody. And if you continue to take commandments from somebody, you will remain less than a man, you will remain a robot.

Religion is not obedience: religion is rebellion. And through the religion of obedience, what has happened? People have become more and more sophisticated, cultured, pretenders, hypocrites, but deep down they remain the same. Nothing really has happened. Just the surface has become more shining; something like a decor, a decoration has happened. But human consciousness has remained primitive, unevolved.

I have heard:

There was a convention of missionaries from all parts of the world. Each one reported how with his fiery speeches, his pioneer work, and his exemplary conduct, he had converted the natives to Christianity.

Among those reporting was a missionary from the cannibal area of Africa. He, too, boasted of his progress with the natives. After all the reports had been submitted, a question was directed to the missionary from the cannibal area: Had he stopped the cannibals from eating human flesh?

The missionary answered that he had not stopped cannibalism, but while formerly they were eating, with their hands, he had achieved the great goal of having them eat with knives and forks.

That's how religion has succeeded. People remain the same -- they are still cannibals, but now, instead of eating, with their hands, they eat with knives and forks.

Buddhism wants to change your very roots. It is a transformation. It is a way of living on another plane of consciousness. These sutras are just glimpses of those details.

The first sutra:

SINCE THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
IS LITTLE BUT GRIEF AND PAIN,
WHY SHOULD WE BE SO RELUCTANT
TO RETURN TO THE SKY OF OUR NATIVE PLACE?

LIFE IS A JOURNEY FROM NOWHERE TO NOWHERE. Nothing attained through it. Nobody has ever attained anything through life. People run, and they run fast. and they go on gathering speed, but they never reach anywhere. They work hard, they labour hard, but nothing ever happens out of that work, nothing is created.

Millions of people have lived before you, and where are they? Disappeared into the dust, dust unto dust. And we will disappear into the same dust sooner or later. All our achievements will fall into dust and disappear. Thousands of civilizations have existed and disappeared with no trace.

Life seems to attain nothing -- it is much ado about nothing, much fuss about nothing; a tale told by an idiot, full of fury and noise, signifying nothing.

This is the first encounter that one has to go through. If you want to understand Buddha, you have to look eye to eye into life. Don't shirk. Don't look sideways -- look direct into life. What is the meaning of life? What does it attain? What does it come to finally? To nothing. Just like a great dream -- beautiful palaces in the dream, and a great kingdom in the dream, and by the morning, when you awake, all is gone and gone for ever. In fact, it was not there at all. You had only believed that it was there.

Your success is your belief...

Just the other day I was reading about a man -- he was a mad man. He was put into a hospital and treated. His problem was that he believed that he was Alexander the Great. After three years of treatment, psychoanalysis, psychiatry and electric shocks and insulin shocks and all that, one day the doctor came to the patient and said, "Now you are cured. You can go home."

The man started crying and he said, "Yes, I know I am cured. But what kind of cure is this? When I came I was Alexander the Great -- now I am nobody, just nobody! What kind of cure is this? When I came, I was so elated. When I came, I was somebody special. Now you have reduced me to nobody! And you call it 'cure'? Cure me again, back to my old state. At least I was somebody."

Your success is your belief. Your fame is your belief. They are projected dreams.

NOW there is a consensus among those who work in the deepest depths of the human mind that ALL human beings are neurotic. It is not that a few people are neurotic -- all are neurotic. The difference is of degree.

Pascal is reported to have said that man is a mad animal; the only animal who has gone mad, berserk, off the track; astray. Pascal has said that is the original sin, that man is no more a natural animal. Something unnatural has happened to him, something at the very core of his being. HE has become alienated from himself, from his own source.

The normal people that you see walking on the roads, doing their business and the office and the factory, are just normal for the name's sake. Nobody is normal. Only once in a while, a Buddha, a Christ, a Krishna, is normal -- once in a while. All people are abnormal.

And what is the abnormality? They go on believing in this dream of life. They go on believing in new dreams. If one dream is frustrated, they immediately create another.

They never give a gap. One desire fails you -- you are ready again to move into another desire. In fact, before a desire starts failing, you start creating a new desire so you have some house to abide in. One hope disappears, you create another hope. But you go on hoping. And you go on seeing death happening everywhere, and still you go on hoping. Hoping against all

hope: this is the neurosis. Seeing that everything falls into dust and disappears, still you are thinking to become famous, successful.

Life is a journey from nowhere to nowhere: a vicious circle, a dream-journey. And that too not a very sweet dream either, but a nightmare. Want and woe, grief and pain, suffering and suffering -- what do you attain to? Just see the taste on your tongue: what taste have you attained? Just suffering and suffering.

All joy is just a hope. Suffering is reality, joy is a hope. And the hope never happens. The hope is like the horizon: it only seems to be happening there somewhere, but it never happens in you. You go on rushing towards the horizon and the horizon goes on rushing away from you. It exists not! It exists only in your idea.

To be bitterly frustrated with life is the beginning of wisdom. To see the futility of life is the beginning of a totally new journey -- the inward journey. Otherwise, you go on being enamoured of one thing or another.

Just look: you have lived thirty years, forty years, fifty years, sixty years -- what is the gain? Look into your hands: they are empty.

When Alexander died he told his ministers, "When you carry my body through the streets, leave my hands hanging outside the coffin."

They were puzzled. They said, "For what? Nobody has ever heard of it. And that is not done."

And he said, "But it has to be done."

"For what?" they inquired.

And Alexander said, "So that people can see that I am also going with empty hands. I worked hard, I struggled hard -- but nothing is the only taste on my tongue. My hands are empty. I would like people to see that Alexander is dying as an utter failure!"

Everybody dies that way. But to recognize it that late is meaningless. To recognize it in the middle of life is of great import, because then the radical change becomes possible. Buddha realized it when he was only twenty-nine -- just young, just married a few years before, and his child was born one month before. Suddenly one day, he saw the dream disappearing. And how did it happen?

He was passing... he was going to participate in a celebration, the annual celebration of the youth of his country. And on the way he found an old man. He asked his charioteer, "What has happened to this man?"

And the charioteer said, "Sir, this happens to everybody sooner or later. Everybody becomes old."

Buddha said, "So I am also going to become old."

Just see: he is not concerned about the philosophy of old age -- why old age happens, how it can be prevented -- he is immediately concerned with his own being. He asked, "So am I also going to become old?"

And the charioteer said, "It is difficult, sir, to say, but I cannot lie either. Everybody is going to become old -- you are included. Nobody is an exception."

And Buddha said, "Then turn the chariot back to the palace. Then for what am I going to participate in the festival of youth? -- I have become old. If I am going to become old, I have become old! I am no more young; that youth was a dream. If it is going to disappear like that, it is meaningless to think about it, to cling to it."

Coming back home, they came across a dead man. The dead body was being carried and

Buddha asked, "What has happened to THIS man?"

And the charioteer said, "The next step -- after old age this happens. One dies."

And Buddha was so young and so radiant, and something changed in his very chemistry. His face became pale. He closed his eyes. The charioteer was very much afraid. And the Buddha said, "Then, if life is going to disappear like that, before it disappears I have to search. Now I cannot waste a single moment."

Just when they were entering the palace door, they came across a sannyasin, an ochre-robed sannyasin. And Buddha asked, "What has happened to this man? Why is he in ochre?"

And the old man said, "This man has become aware of old age, this man has become aware of death -- hence he has renounced all that stupidity that everybody lives through. He has become a sannyasin; he has renounced hopes. He is searching withinwards. Before death comes he wants to know what this life is, from where it comes, to where it goes.

That very night Buddha escaped from the palace. He became a sannyasin.

What IS sannyas? Sannyas is the recognition in the midst of life that life is a fleeting dream.

SINCE THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
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EVERYBODY KNOWS THERE IS SUFFERING. We pretend that it is not, but pretensions are pretensions. Only very stupid people can pretend for long. The more intelligent you are, the sooner the recognition comes that life is fleeting, it is just a soap-bubble. And that too full of suffering! Have you not suffered? But what keeps you alive then? If life is such a suffering, why don't you collapse? Why do you go on and on? What keeps you going on? Hope.

The hope is there like the horizon waiting ahead. It says, "Up to now life has been suffering, but that has not to be the case for ever. Tomorrow things will be better. With this woman you are suffering; with another woman things will be better. With this job you are not happy; with another job you will be happy. With this rotten car you are feeling miserable, but there are beautiful cars; you can have a better one. With this much money, of course, how can one be happy? But money can be earned." Just being nobody you are feeling that life has no meaning -- become somebody and life will start giving meaning and colour.

These hopes go on and on pulling you, somehow keeping you together. Hope is the glue that keeps you together: otherwise, you will fall into pieces.

And what I am saying is not speculation. Just look into your life and you will see the truth of it. What is keeping you together? It is not life that is keeping you together; life has been hitting you hard from every nook and corner -- from every direction life is hammering you. It is hope. Hope functions like a buffer. The shocks of life are absorbed by hope, and one goes on living and waiting for the tomorrow. And the tomorrow never comes. And whatsoever comes is never that which you had been hoping for.

You go on thinking that everybody else is happy EXCEPT YOU -- and that is the situation of everybody else too. They think you are happy. It is a mutual deception. The grass is always greener on the other side of the hedge. And so is the case with your neighbour too: he thinks the grass is greener in your lawn.

People go on pretending to others that they are happy. They have to, otherwise it will be

so impossible to live a single moment. Deep down they are suffering and they are full of tears, and on the surface they go on maintaining a smile. But that smile becomes a poisonous phenomenon. You see everybody else smile and you see everybody so happy that you think, "Only I am suffering. If I do a little more work, if I work a little harder, if I become a little more aggressive in my ambitions, I will reach. Look! -- others have reached. Somebody has become the prime minister, somebody has become the president -- I can also work it out. I still have life left."

This is the whole game that goes on.

Somebody asked George Bernard Shaw, "What is politics?"

And George Bernard Shaw said, "The king of the mountain game. One kid gets atop a big pile of dirt and the others try to displace him -- that's politics."

The one who has reached somewhere pretends that he has attained. Nothing has been attained. But now he has to save his face too, otherwise people will say, "Then what have you been doing? If nothing has been attained by becoming the president of a country and you have devoted your whole life for it, how stupid you have been!" So when a person becomes the president of a country, he goes on smiling, and he goes on pretending that whatsoever he wanted he has achieved. This is just a face-saving device. Deep down he knows all has failed; deep down he knows now there is no hope. But what is the point of saying it to people? -- because they will laugh and they will think you are stupid. And they will think, "Your whole life you worked for this position, for this power, and now you have arrived and you say you have attained nothing -- so your whole life has been a wastage?"

Nobody wants to see it, that "My whole life has been a wastage" -- it goes against the ego. So those who arrive on those big piles of dirt, who reach atop, they start declaring that they have attained.

In life there is no attainment; there cannot be. That is not the nature of life. Life fails, it fails utterly. Whether you fail or succeed makes no difference -- the failure is the same. Those who fail, certainly they fail; but those who succeed, they ALSO fail, and in the same proportion. To see this is of great import.

A great thinker, Ruskin, has said that in life there are only two disappointments: to desire a thing and not to get it, and to desire a thing and to get it. Only two disappointments. If you don't get it, certainly you are disappointed. But if you get it, then too you are disappointed -- because whatsoever you were hoping is not attained through it. It is something else. That hope was YOUR projection; it was not reality.

It is like you saw a coloured stone shining in the morning sun and you thought, "This is a kohinoor!" and you rushed. Not only you -- many rushed; the whole town became involved in it. And the more people got involved the more you thought, "There must be something in it. When so many people are rushing towards it, there must be something in it! because so many people can't be wrong."

Remember always: so many people can't be right! It is very rarely that a person is right; so many people can't be right. Whenever you see a crowd going to some place, forget all about it; just drop the idea. So many people can't be right. The majority consists of very very mediocre people. But one starts believing in the crowd.

I have heard:

A speculator in oil leases died and went to heaven, only to find the place so crowded that

he could barely find room inside the door. The speculator hit upon a trick which he hoped would relieve the congestion. He produced a scrap of paper and a pencil from his pocket and scribbled a note: "Oil discovered in hell," which he dropped on the floor.

Soon the note was picked up and read. The man who read it whispered to a few other persons and slipped away. Those in whom he had confided similarly whispered to others and followed him. There was a regular exodus in the direction of the reported strike.

Watching the procession, the man who had started the rumour grew more and more restive. At length he could stand it no longer. "There may be something in this thing -- I guess I'd better look it over," he said as he joined the stampede.

Even if YOU create a rumour and many people start believing in it, finally you will believe in it too. It is a very very mutual deception. Create a lie, let people believe in it, and finally you will believe in it. So many people believing in it -- there must be something in it. You must have been wrong thinking that it is a lie. Accidentally you must have stumbled upon a truth, otherwise so many people can't believe in it.

So many people rushing towards a coloured stone on the street in the morning sun, and all are thinking that it is a diamond, a very valuable diamond. But when you reach... if you don't reach, of course you suffer. You will always carry the wound. If you reach, then it is just a coloured stone then too you suffer.

Failure fails, success fails too. To see this is to let hope evaporate. It does not matter whether you die rich or poor. It does not matter whether you die as a sinner or a saint. It does not matter whether you die well-known or unknown, famous or notorious. Death comes and destroys everything.

Death is very democratic; it does not believe in hierarchies. It does not bother whether the person was a peon or a prime minister. It simply comes! and dust falls into dust and disappears. It won't help you in any way that you are rich; it won't help you in any way that you are famous; it won't help you in any way that you are a great emperor, this or that.

If you can see it while you are alive, then something is possible -- something which is beyond life and death.

I have heard:

There was a fellow, an army man, posted in the South Pacific, who happened to contract, in the usual way, a very strong and particularly annoying venereal disease -- and moreover, it was not the ordinary type of venereal disease either, but something completely out of the ordinary in every respect.

To begin with, this fellow's private parts became so swollen he had to wear pants fourteen sizes larger than usual. And they turned the most peculiar shade of purple, and also orange -- with polka-dots and stripes all around as well! It was, in short, a mess, and nobody knew what to do. The doctors he consulted had no idea how to treat it -- the best they could offer was to cut it off, which the fellow said he would absolutely never allow. So it came to the point when he decided to go back to the island from where he had got this peculiar disease, because he figured they would be familiar with it, which it turned out was correct. They knew exactly what it was -- boy, was he relieved!

"You mean you won't have to amputate it?" he asked the island doctor.

"That's right," the doctor said.

"I knew it, I knew those doctors in the States were full of baloney!" he told the doctor. "They all said that it would have to be amputated."

"Oh, no," the doctor soothed, "it will fall off by itself in a few days."

But what consolation is that?

Success fails, failure fails -- all fails. And the ultimate is death. It is not a consolation that you will be dying rich. It is not a consolation that you will be dying famous. It makes no difference. Beggar or king, poor or rich, death comes and simply effaces your whole life.

That is the meaning of Ikkyu's sutra:

SINCE THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
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AND HE RAISES A VERY PERTINENT QUESTION, that life is misery, suffering, an utter failure -- still, WHY ARE WE SO RELUCTANT TO RETURN TO THE SKY OF OUR NATIVE PLACE?

One should think, when life is such a failure, people would start turning inwards easily. That is not the case. And there is a strange mechanism working. My own observation is that if life were not such a suffering people would be moving inwards more easily; because life is such a suffering, they go on hoping more and more. To deny suffering they create bigger hopes. They cannot turn back. To deny suffering, to make suffering look small, they create bigger mountains of hopes, and those hopes go on pulling then outwards and outwards.

This strange phenomenon has to be understood. Whenever you are in suffering, you need a great dream to come out of it, a great hope, some kind of inspiration, some vision in the future, some paradise somewhere, so that you can pull yourself together again and jump out of the misery. But that big hope is going to become a big misery again -- and then you will have to come out of it and you will have to create a still bigger hope. This is how one goes on and on, away and away from oneself.

Watch people, and watch yourself; it is very difficult to drop misery, very difficult. One clings to it. There is nothing ELSE? Just watch yourself if there are two alternatives available to you. One is: be empty, there will be no misery and no joy; and the other is: don't be empty, be somebody, something, but you will have to suffer, misery will be there. And you will always choose misery instead of emptiness.

Emptiness frightens people more than misery. And the innermost core is empty. Nothingness scares people more than suffering. Nobody wants to be a nothing -- and our innermost nature IS nothingness, hence we cannot accept it. We go on searching, we go on trying to become somebody, something. And if we cannot have joy, at least we can have pain. If we cannot have pleasure, we can cling to agony. But there is one consolation: at least there is something to cling to; we are not just empty.

That's why people are so reluctant.

I observe every day.... Couples come to me: they are both miserable, but not ready to leave each other. At least life seems to be full -- full of misery, but at least full; full of poison, but the cup is full. An empty cup, not even poison to fill it, seems to be more difficult to accept. The woman feels that to be alone will be more difficult than to be with a man who is simply creating misery for her and nothing else. And the man thinks that to be alone in the dark nights, and nobody around, will be more miserable than the nagging woman who is driving him crazy. At least somebody is there to nag him, somebody is there to look forward

to, somebody is there to be afraid of, somebody is there to escape from... at least somebody is there. You can do something with somebody. You can sit in the hotel late in the night and enjoy the time because of the woman who is at home -- you can escape from her. But if there is nobody -- even escape becomes difficult, even that joy of escape is no longer available.

I see them in misery, they say they are in misery, and they have been in misery for seven years, ten years, and not for a single day has there been any happiness, and they are tired and they are weary, but when I tell them to separate... it is so simple! Why create misery for each other? "No, we cannot separate, we cannot leave each other." Then suddenly they start thinking they love each other. This is strange!

If you love each other, then why do you create misery for each other? But the moment somebody suggests separating, suddenly a great desire arises and great understanding that "No, I love the woman and she loves me so much." And they start thinking of days which have never been there, and beauties which have never been there. And they start hoping again that maybe tomorrow things will be different.

Ten years they have tried hard. Nothing has happened. But they say, "One day more... who knows?" People go on hoping. And this hope ultimately leads you into death and nowhere else.

To drop hope is to become religious. To attain to a spiritual hopelessness is to become free of misery. Remember, the word 'hopelessness' is of infinite beauty. It is not just absence of hope -- it is absence of hope and hopelessness both, because when the hope has disappeared, how can you be hopeless? To be hopeless, hope is needed; it is the shadow of hope. When the hope has gone completely and you have seen it through and through and you have dropped it, hopelessness also disappears of its own accord. You are left without hope, without hopelessness -- and the purity of it and the benediction of it.

And then only does one come to know one's inner sky: it is empty as the sky. And that is our native place. That is from where we come, and that is where we should go, and that is where we should be. To be in that state is to be without suffering and agony.

Keep it in mind: pleasure is only when it is not; when it is, it is not. Pleasure always disappears, so we have always to search for it. That is the original sin. Don't taste an apple because you are going to have to go looking for another one right after, and then there is no end to it. One thing leads to another, and so on and so forth. And you become entangled in ten thousand things, then it becomes very very difficult to come back home. You have invested yourself in so many things that it becomes almost impossible to get out of those entanglements.

The religious person is one who is not entangled anywhere, who has no hope, who has no future, who does not live in the tomorrows, who lives now, here. And see: in the beginning I told you life is a journey from nowhere to nowhere -- with the religious person life becomes a journey from nowhere to now here.

I am reminded of a small story:

There was a great atheist. He had written in his drawing-room with big letters: God is nowhere. Then a child was born to him, a small child was slowly growing, learning words. 'Nowhere' was a big word for the small child and he was trying to spell the sentence, so he said, "God is now here." He made two words out of 'nowhere' -- now, here. But it became a transformation in the life of the father.

Hearing the child reading, "God is now here," the father attained to a kind of satori. He had never thought about that. Nowhere was nowhere! "Nowhere can turn into now here?"

Suddenly he was awakened to a totally different kind of space. The innocence of the child became a door, an opening.

Life is from nowhere to nowhere, but it can be from nowhere to now here. That's all meditation is about: turning nowhere into now here.

To be now and to be here... and suddenly you are trans-ported from time into eternity. Then life disappears, death disappears. Then for the first time you know what is. You can call it God, or you can call it nirvana -- those are all words -- but you come to know that which is. And to know it is to be liberated, to be liberated from all agony, from all suffering, from all nightmares.

To be now here is to be awake. To be somewhere else is to be in a dream -- then and there are parts of dream. Now here are not parts of dream but reality, parts of reality, part of existence.

TO WRITE SOMETHING AND LEAVE IT BEHIND US,
IT IS BUT A DREAM.
WHEN WE AWAKE WE KNOW
THERE IS NOT EVEN ANYONE TO READ IT.

AND WHATSOEVER WE ARE DOING IS SO FUTILE, as if in a dream somebody wants to write a poem with the idea that when he will awake in the morning he will be able to show the poem to others. People will love it and enjoy it. But when you awake in the morning, there will be no poem, and all those people you had seen in the dream will not be found again; there will be no one to read it either. But that is all our life consists of.

TO WRITE SOMETHING AND LEAVE IT BEHIND US,
IT IS BUT A DREAM.
WHEN WE AWAKE WE KNOW
THERE IS NOT EVEN ANYONE TO READ IT.

The idea of being remembered in history, having a name, leaving a name behind, is carried by almost everybody. That is a vicarious kind of immortality: you want to live through others' memories. You know death is coming; now the only way to live is: live through others' memories, do something so others will remember you. If you can do something good, good; otherwise do something bad -- but do something so that others will have to remember you.

This gives a kind of consolation: "I will be gone, but I will be remembered." But what is the point? Even if people remember you for centuries, what is the point? -- you are gone, and you are gone! Their remembrance will not create you. Their remembrance will not give you any life. And who bothers to remember anybody?

I have heard that in a school the teacher was telling about Adam and Eve, and a small boy was getting very excited about the whole story. It was a history class and the teacher was teaching history from the very beginning, from Adam and Eve, and she asked the boy, "Johnny, you look so much interested in the story -- what is the matter?" And Johnny said, "I would have loved to be Adam.

The teacher said, "You are not happy being what you are -- why should you have loved

being Adam?"

He said, "For one thing at least, if I was Adam I would not have to read history."

Who wants to read history? Who is interested? Some stupid kings, some stupid prime ministers -- who bothers? You were a prime minister; do you think somebody is going to bother about you? Just small children will be forced to read about you; they have to be forced, threatened, punished, rewarded. And then, too, once they have given the examination they will forget all about you. And more: they will be angry at you and will never be able to forgive you.

Could not you just have lived like an ordinary man? Why did you become a prime minister? Just to torture children?

But everybody has that idea of leaving a name -- footprints on the sands of time. All is nonsense. Live the moment. Live the moment in its truth, in its nowhereness, and forget all about the future. There is no other time, and there is no sense in any tomorrow.

THOUGH WE DO NOT PREACH THE DOCTRINE,
UNASKED THE FLOWERS BLOOM IN SPRING;
THEY FALL AND SCATTER,
THEY TURN TO DUST.

IKKYU SAYS BUDDHA HAS NOT PREACHED THE DOCTRINE -- he has simply shown it, not said it. THOUGH WE DO NOT TEACH THE DOCTRINE... because the ultimate truth cannot be preached. It can be shown but not said, it can be indicated. And it is everywhere! It is happening all around.

The dead, pale leaf falling from the tree is the sermon -- sermon about the whole life, sermon about death. The morning dewdrops disappearing, evaporating in the sun -- a sermon on life! That's how life disappears. Don't be too much attached to it. Don't become possessive about it. It is going to happen to you too -- you are not more than dew-drops on grass leaves.

Have you seen a dewdrop slipping out of a grass leaf... going, going, going, and gone? Mahavir has used exactly that metaphor. That's what life is: a dewdrop on a grass leaf, slipping slowly slowly slowly slowly. One moment it was there, another moment it is gone. One moment we are here, and another moment we have gone.

And for this simple moment, how much fuss we make -- how much violence, ambition, struggle, conflict, anger, hatred. Just for this small moment! Just waiting for the train in a waiting room on a station, and creating so much fuss: fighting, hurting each other, trying to possess, trying to boss, trying to dominate -- all that politics. And then the train comes and you are gone for ever. And you will never be heard of again, and never be seen again. And you will never see those people you were fighting with, and you will never see the woman you tried to possess, and you will never see the man you nagged to death.

See it.

Buddhism is not a doctrine. It is simply an effort to spell life as it is. It simply opens the book of life to you to read -- and it is everywhere!

THOUGH WE DO NOT PREACH THE DOCTRINE,
UNASKED THE FLOWERS BLOOM IN SPRING;
THEY FALL AND SCATTER,
THEY TURN TO DUST.

And that is the whole of Buddhism, the whole taste of Buddhism. Flowers blooming one moment, another moment they are gone, fallen into dust... disappeared. We arrive on the earth, the spring comes and we bloom, and then we are gone, and dust is left behind. And all chatter, and all those miseries, and all those agonies... we unnecessarily suffered. All those nightmares of defeat and victory, of failure and success, and all that turmoil... for no purpose at all.

Buddhism is a simple indication towards life. Buddha says: LOOK at life! Dhamma is preached every moment. It is in every grass leaf and in every star. Just see: life IS momentary, and death comes, and death inevitably comes. Seeing it, how can you become possessive? Seeing it, how can you become jealous? Seeing it, how can you become money-minded? Seeing it, how can you become a miser? Seeing it, how can you go on killing each other?

Seeing it will be a transformation. Life is so momentary. A silence will descend suddenly, and not a practised silence either. There is no need to practise. Just seeing this point, a silence will descend in you, a peace will arise in you. In that very moment of silence and peace you will be able to see, your eyes will become clear.

THOUGH WE DO NOT PREACH THE DOCTRINE,
UNASKED THE FLOWERS BLOOM IN SPRING;
THEY FALL AND SCATTER,
THEY TURN TO DUST.

WE ARE BORN, WE DIE.
ALL ARE THE SAME,
SHAKAMUNI, DARUMA,
THE CAT AND THE LADLE.

WE ARE BORN, WE DIE. ALL ARE THE SAME. The great democracy of death. All are equal. Death is absolutely communist. Life differentiates -- death never. Life makes people different; death turns them into oneness, alike. Life depends on boundaries, distinctions, definitions. Death comes and effaces all.

WE ARE BORN, WE DIE. ALL ARE THE SAME. And there is no difference. SHAKAMUNI -- Buddha -- DARUMA -- Bodhidharma -- THE CAT AND THE LADLE, all alike! There is no difference. A dog dies or a Buddha dies, there is no difference.

See this penetration of death. It takes all away -- then why cling? What is the point of clinging? When death is going to take all away, WHY NOT UNCLING ON YOUR OWN? In that unclinging you will be able to see something which is of absolute value. If you uncling from everything -- from the body, from the mind, from the property, from the land, from the wife, from the husband, from the children, from country, from religion, church -- if you uncling from everything, then what is left for death to take away? You have dropped them yourself; you have dropped them of your own accord. Then what is left for death? Nothing is left.

THIS dying, dying to all and everything, this unclinging, is the meaning of sannyas, renunciation. Then nothing is left for death -- you have already dropped it. No work is left for death -- you have conquered death. Now death cannot take anything away from you. Whatsoever it could take away has already been renounced. Now what is left in you? -- only a witnessing, a silent awareness, uncontaminated by possessions, uncontaminated by desires and longings.

THIS awareness is Buddhahood. This awareness is the ultimate experience. And only this awareness is what we are all searching for, but searching for in wrong ways. This is awakening.

TO HARDEN INTO A BUDDHA IS WRONG;
ALL THE MORE I THINK SO
WHEN I LOOK AT A STONE BUDDHA.

BUT REMEMBER, DON'T HARDEN YOURSELF. This has to be remembered because it happens. If you see life is fleeting, death is coming, one need not possess anything, you start becoming hard -- because you think if you are hard enough you will be able to renounce. You are not renouncing by understanding, you are renouncing by hardness. You miss the point. Then again ego arises, because all hardness is ego.

That's why monks become too much egoistic. They think they have renounced the world -- as if they have done something great. Thinking that they have done something great shows their ignorance. If the world is momentary, what have YOU done? YOU have simply seen its momentariness, that's all.

In the morning you don't go shouting in the neighbourhood, "I have renounced the palaces of my dream!" People will laugh, people will say you are mad. A dream is a dream! You cannot renounce it. You cannot catch hold of it, you cannot renounce it either. A dream is a dream. If you know it, it disappears; if you don't know it, it remains.

Those people who say they have renounced their children, their wives, their family, their world, their money, their bank balances, are simply saying that those dreams are still real for them. They are escaping from those dreams, but those dreams are following them; those dreams will haunt them wherever they are. They may sit in a Himalayan cave, but those dreams will go on coming again and again. They are there; they have left them deep down in the world, but they are realities. They are afraid. Why this fear? Nobody is ever afraid of a dream. Known, all fear disappears.

And these people harden. Go and see a Jain monk, how hard! His whole effort is to shrink; he lives in a kind of shut-upness: he closes himself from everywhere. He is so afraid of life that he will not look at a woman; he is so afraid of life that he will not stay in a householder's house.

He is so afraid that he remains hiding behind himself. He closes all doors and windows. He becomes very hard. He becomes almost stone.

This hardness is not liberation. This hardness is not nirvana. This is a kind of suicide! Afraid of death, he has committed suicide -- but what kind of gain is this? Afraid of life, he has not reached to some higher plane of consciousness. Afraid of life, he has relapsed back. Out of fear, he has become paralyzed.

He will fast because he is afraid that if he eats well then sexuality will arise -- because if you eat well, natural energy is created and your biology goes on creating sex hormones. He is afraid of food, hence fasting. He is afraid of seeing a woman because he knows his mind. Looking at a beautiful face, again something will be stirred in him, something will arise. He knows those desires are there. He has renounced objects, but those desires are inside. Objects you can renounce, but how can you renounce desires? They are part of your being.

So he is afraid. If he comes in contact with an object of a desire, the presence of the object may help the desire to bubble up, to surface. He cannot sit with a woman alone and be at ease; he will be very restless. Now, what kind of liberation is this? This is not a higher

stage -- this is a lower stage than the ordinary! This is a pathological stage. And, naturally, to protect himself he hardens himself, he becomes thick.

That's why, in the so-called saints you will not find intelligence at all. They become thick. They have to become thick, because even intelligence is a danger. They have to become more and more unintelligent: they relapse into a certain kind of idiocy. They eat less, they fast more, they sleep less; they torture their bodies in a thousand and one ways. If it is cold they will sit naked so the skin becomes hard. If it is hot they will sit by the side of a fire, so slowly slowly all sensitivity is lost -- because with sensitivity they are afraid sensuousness can come any moment. If you are sensitive, sensuousness is just behind it. They become like stones rather than becoming like flowers.

A Buddha has to be like a flower -- infinitely sensitive, open. A Buddha cannot remain in a shut-upness; a shut-upness is a state of pathology. A Buddha is utterly open, available -- available to the winds and the sun and the moon, available to... to the whole. Because he has seen the futility of life, now there is no fear. He has seen all the dreams through and through. He has looked, meditated upon them, and has gone beyond them. The only sign of a Buddha is his softness, his delicateness, his utter delicateness.

Ikkyu is right. This sutra is of great importance -- remember it:

TO HARDEN INTO A BUDDHA IS WRONG;
ALL THE MORE I THINK SO
WHEN I LOOK AT A STONE BUDDHA.

I have heard about Ikkyu: a young monk came to see him and the master asked, "What do you desire from me?"

The young monk said, "I have come in search of enlightenment."

Ikkyu asked, "Where have you been before? Have you been to somebody else?"

He said, "Yes, I have been with a certain master."

"And what have you learnt there?"

The monk said, "I will show you -- I have learnt yoga postures." And he sat in a SIDDHASANA -- in a Buddha posture -- with closed eyes, unmoving.

Ikkyu laughed, hit him hard on the head, and said, "You fool! We don't need any more Buddhas -- we have many stone Buddhas in this place. You get away from here. No more stone Buddhas here!"

And it was true, because he used to live in a temple where there were ten thousand stone Buddhas. He said, "We are tired taking care of these ten thousand. Now we don't want any more. Get lost!"

But that's what people learn in the name of religion -- they become stone Buddhas.

My emphasis is that you should be soft, open, feminine, flowerlike, flowing. The more flowing you are, the more sensitive you are, the more alive you are, the more you can be now here. And to be now here is to be really a Buddha.

Buddhahood is not a kind of hardening. So wherever you find somebody hard, wherever you find a mahatma absolutely hard, know well that this is the wrong place to be. Look for softness, for love, for compassion -- because out of a hard person only violence can arise.

And sometimes it happens: the person may believe in non-violence, but out of a hard person only violence is possible, non-violence is not possible. My own understanding of Jain monks is -- I have seen many of them -- they teach non-violence, but they live in deep

violence. Of course, they don't kill others, but they kill themselves -- that is the same. They are not aggressive towards others; they have turned their aggression on themselves; they have become their own enemies. They torture themselves, and they enjoy that torture. They are masochists. They need psychiatric treatment.

A real man of awakening is not hard, he is not frozen. He has melted. The ice has disappeared into water. And finally water disappears into vapour. The first stage of Buddhahood is melting from the ice as water, and the second stage is disappearing even from water into vapour. Then one becomes part of the sky. Then one has come home.

TO HARDEN INTO A BUDDHA IS WRONG;
ALL THE MORE I THINK SO
WHEN I LOOK AT A STONE BUDDHA.

Remember this sutra -- because you are in search of Buddhahood, that's why you have gathered around me. That's why you are here! Knowingly, unknowingly; deliberately, accidentally -- but you are here for the sole purpose of becoming Buddhas. Remember this: don't become hard.

That's why my insistence is so much on singing, dancing, chanting, loving. The emphasis is just to keep you flowing, melted. The ego wants to freeze, the ego can be there only if you are hard. The ego disappears if you melt. So all that helps melting is good, and all that helps hardening is bad.

Be alert, because freezing yourself into a certain pattern is very easy, freezing yourself into a certain character is very easy. To live characterlessly, melted, is very difficult -- but that is the real challenge. A real man accepts that challenge that "I will NOT create a character. I will live moment-to-moment, without a character, out of my consciousness, not out of my conscience.

A man who lives through conscience becomes hard. A man who lives through consciousness remains soft. Why? Because a man who has some ideas about how to live, naturally becomes hard. He has continuously to carry his character around himself. That character is like an armour, his protection, his security; his whole life is invested in that character. And he always reacts to situations through the character, not directly. If you ask him a question, his answer is ready-made. That is the sign of a hard person -- he is dull, stupid, mechanical. He may be a good computer, but he is not a man. You do something and he reacts in a well established way. His reaction is predictable; he is a robot.

The real man acts spontaneously. If you ask him a question, your question gets a response, not a reaction. He opens his heart to your question, exposes himself to your question, responds to it. You hear the answer for the first time; he also hears the answer for the first time. It was not managed, it was not prepared, it was not ready-made. Your question stirred it; your question created the situation for it to happen, AND so on.... All his responses are spontaneous. He does not live according to an ideology. He simply lives without any ideology -- just like a river.

A river does not carry a guidebook, it does not carry a map. It does not know where the ocean is -- just a vague longing for the ocean is enough. Then it starts moving, slowly slowly finding its way. Sometimes going to the north and sometimes going to the south and sometimes moving to the east and sometimes to the west... zigzag. It is not like a railroad track. Each moment decides. Wherever it can find a lower space, it moves into it, and feels it is coming closer to the ocean -- because the ocean is the lowest space. Finding a low place, it

is moving towards the ocean. The ocean is far away; you cannot see it, but the river reaches it.

Have you ever heard of any river missing the ocean? And without guidebooks, and without maps -- a miracle that no river has ever missed! No river can miss.

Consciousness is a river. Don't carry guidebooks. Don't be a Hindu and a Mohammedan -- these are carrying guide-books. Just move slowly slowly, spontaneously, alert. sensitive, alive to EACH moment, totally alive -- because there is no tomorrow, there is no next moment. This way one comes home one day, one evaporates, one disappears. That is the day when one has come.

Your disappearance is the beginning of the real to appear in you. Your disappearance is the appearance of God. Remember it. This is one of the MOST important things to remember; otherwise, the so-called spiritual people, sooner or later, harden. And the moment they harden, they have destroyed all possibility. Then they are not becoming more and more intelligent, aware. They are becoming dull and dead.

Never become a mahatma, dull and dead. Be alive. Become innocent of all character, of all ideology, of all perfectionist ideas. The man who is a perfectionist is bound to become a neurotic. And all hard people are neurotics. Only soft people are divine -- the softer, the more divine.

That's why you cannot see God, because he is so soft, so soft that he is invisible. You cannot see God because he is so soft, you cannot touch him. You can become Gods, but you cannot see him, you cannot touch him.

Take It Easy, Vol 1

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The first question

WHAT IS A MYSTIC?

I don't know, Purna, and nobody else knows either. That's why a mystic is called a mystic. Something indefinable, something very elusive, something that cannot be grasped, that cannot be comprehended. Not that it is something special -- it is very ordinary. That makes the mystery ten thousandfold.

A mystic is in a state of natural being. He is the most ordinary man, he has renounced all extraordinary desires. All desires are basically to become extraordinary, to become somebody. A mystic is one who IS and who has no desire to become anybody else. A mystic is a state of utter contentment, a state of no movement. He is not going anywhere, he has no goals, not motives. He simply is. He has stopped all desires to know; rather, he has started living.

There are people who go on searching for knowledge, They are anti-mystic; their whole effort is how to demystify life. That's what knowledge means. Knowledge means how to know each and everything -- so that life can be demystified, so that the wonder of life is killed and man can become absolutely a boss, a manipulator. So that man can control everything.

Knowledge is an effort to control, knowledge is power. All curiosity, all desire for knowledge, is desire for power.

Science is non-mystic. A scientist is just the anti-pole, the other extreme, of being a mystic. He is trying to poke his nose into reality, to find out its secrets. He is trying to undress reality. He is trying to see reality so that reality can be manipulated.

The mystic is one who has come to see the point that there is no way to know the reality, because we are part of it -- and how can the knower know itself? There is no possibility. It is an impossible search, it is doomed to fail.

A mystic is one who has become mature enough to be able to live without knowledge, to be able to live in ignorance, to be ready to live. He is not worried about knowing. He does not make it a condition that "First I have to know, then I will live. How can I live without knowing? If I am to love, first I have to know what love is -- only then can I be loving. If I am to enjoy, first I have to know what enjoyment is, otherwise how can I enjoy?"

He makes questions out of simple phenomena. He goes on creating questions, he transforms everything into a problem. That is the state of the non-mystic.

The mystic is one who has relaxed, who says, "There is no need to know what love is -- still you can love." Knowledge in no way helps -- on the contrary, it hinders. If you know everything about love you will never be able to love. It is a blessing that you are not capable of knowing what love is. It is a blessing that God has made it an utter mystery, otherwise nobody will ever love. Once you know, love will disappear. Awe will disappear from life; your eyes will not know that quality of wondering. You will become smug, you will become satisfied with your knowledge, You will become dull -- knowledge makes people dull. The more knowledgeable a person is, the more dull he is, the more insensitive he is.

The mystic has come to see the point that knowledge is not possible. That the life, existence, God, or whatever you call it, is basically not only unknown but unknowable. All effort to know is futile. Relax and live.

The mystic lives, the non-mystic thinks. The non-mystic thinks, "How to live? How to love? How to be?" The mystic simply is. He is so much occupied with living that he has no energy for knowing. And the paradox: because he does not bother about knowing, he comes to know in a deeper way. It is not knowledge, it is experience,

And the man who tries to know, never comes to know. His very effort is egoistic. The seeker after knowledge is a rapist; he is violent, aggressive.

The mystic loves life, and in that love mysteries are opened, veils upon veils are removed. But the mystery deepens; it is not finished. One door opens, and you see another door. That opens, and you see another door. Deeper and deeper you move, but there is no end to depth.

I was reading:

A Yugoslav peasant who, reading the newspapers, came more and more often upon the word 'dialectics' wanted to know what the word meant, but nobody could tell him...

Communists talk too much about dialectics -- dialectical materialism, dialectical evolution. Hegelians also talk about dialectics -- that life moves through thesis, antithesis, synthesis; that everything moves through struggle, conflict with the opposite. And each synthesis becomes a thesis again, and it goes on and on....

So this peasant went to the priest who said, "It is simple and I'll explain it to you -- in a concrete example. Two men, one clean and one dirty, are walking towards the river. Which one will take a bath?"

"The dirty one," said the peasant.

"No, why should he? He is already used to his dirt. It is the clean one who will want to remain clean. Let us see it one more time. Two men, one dirty, one clean, are walking towards the river. Which one will take a bath?"

"It is simple," the peasant said. "The clean one, for he will want to continue in cleanliness."

"No," the priest said. "Why should he, since he is already clean? It is the dirty one who will want to become clean. Let us see it one more time. Two men are walking towards the river. Which one will take a bath?"

"Both," the peasant said -- confident he has finally caught up with 'dialectics'.

"Neither," the priest said. "For why should they? The clean one is already clean and the dirty is used to dirt."

And so on and so on....

That is how the man who is looking for knowledge moves -- this way, that; that way, this way... he goes on zigzag. He goes on arguing for, and then he starts arguing against, then he starts arguing for -- because each for leads to against, and each against leads to for.

Atheists become theists, theists become atheists, Christians become Hindus, Hindus become Christians... and this goes on, this search for knowledge. The West comes to the East, the East goes to the West -- see the absurdity of it. The Eastern seeker of knowledge goes to the Western universities. He hankers to go to Oxford, to Cambridge, to Harvard. And Western seekers of knowledge are coming to the East, to the Himalayas.

What is this nonsense all about? Thesis becomes antithesis. Everyone changes and turns into one's opposite sooner or later, because you get tired of OnE position and then you start thinking of the opposite position. The opposite seems alluring, new, unfamiliar, seems like an adventure. Then you get tired of that and you start moving again. By that time you have forgotten that you have been in the first position before. That's how people go on moving.

This has been my observation, that if you are a man in this life there is every possibility that you were a woman in your past life. If you are a woman, there is every possibility that you were a man in the past life. A man becomes tired of being a man and starts thinking that there must be some joy which is not available to him but which is available to women. And a woman becomes tired of being a woman and people go on changing.

Now science is making it available; even in one life you can change. Sooner or later, by the end of this century, people won't wait that long for another life -- why bother ? Three years you have been a man, enough is enough. Now why not try being a woman? And it is chemically possible now, physiologically possible; you can be changed. Then you can try the

woman. Then within a few years you will be tired and you will start thinking again of being a man. That's how things go.

People get tired of heterosexuality, they become homosexual. Homosexuals become tired of homosexuality, they become heterosexual. Thesis, antithesis. And there is synthesis too -- bisexuals.

In every possible way, man goes on moving from one extreme to another. And sometimes he gets tired of both, then tries some synthesis.

A mystic is one who has dropped the whole search, the whole project. He does not look for any truth. He simply enjoys the simple things of life. The breakfast in the morning, the shower, the morning walk, a child giggling on the street, a dog, a crow crowing -- he enjoys these small things. He is not concerned about the distant: his whole concern is immediate.

And that is the whole approach of Zen. Understanding Zen, you will become a mystic. Then each moment is such joy, such glory, such splendour. And each moment is so precious. Once the hankering for knowledge is dropped, everything takes on a grandeur. Just a pebble on the beach is so beautiful...

Look at the lilies of the field, how beautiful they are. Not even Solomon was attired, in all his glory, like one of these.

Then THIS moment is all. A mystic is one who knows no time; time has disappeared from his mind. He lives in this moment and in eternity. He is not worried about birth, he is not worried about death, he is not worried about becoming. It is becoming that keeps you away from yourself -- he has dropped ALL ideas of becoming. He is not trying to become. He simply is. And when becoming disappears, being is revealed. That revelation of being is the state of being a mystic.

People are trying the impossible. Becoming is the most impossible thing. You ARE -- how can you become? How can you become that which you are not? And what is the need to become that which you are? Just see the impossibility of it. You can't become that which you are not; you need not become that which you are. A is A, and A cannot become B. And, of course, A has no need to become A; it is already A. This simple understanding is mysticism. I have heard:

There was once a man who owned a beautiful garden. One day he trapped a hummingbird who was eating his finest fruits. The bird promised him three wise teachings as the price of his release. The man agreed.

Safely out of reach, the bird said, "Do not regret the irrevocable. Do not believe the impossible. Do not seek the unattainable," and burst into laughter. "If you had not let me go, you would have found inside of me a pearl the size of a lemon."

Enraged, the man climbed up the tree after the bird. As he came closer, the bird flew higher. With the man in frenzied pursuit, the bird flew to the highest branch of all and walked to its very tip. The man came scrambling after; the branch snapped, the bird flew off, the man dropped to the ground with a thud.

Bruised, he picked himself up and gazed ruefully at his tormentor. "Wisdom is for the wise," the bird admonished. "I told you not to regret the irrevocable, but no sooner did you let me go than you came after me again. I told you not to believe the impossible, yet you believed that a bird my size could contain a pearl the size of a lemon. And I told you not to seek the unattainable, yet you climbed a tree to catch a bird. You are a fool!"

The mystic is a wise man. He is wisdom incarnate. Not knowledge, remember -- wisdom.

Knowledge is a search after the impossible. Wisdom comes out of relaxing into your being. A mystic is a relaxed person, he is in a let-go. Immense is the joy, unexpressible is the bliss. Relax and see. Be and see....

The second question

WHY DO I ALLOW WOMEN TO HOLD POWER OVER ME, TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ME? THIS OLD RUT MAKES NONSENSE AT HEART. I WANT TO GET OUT.

ABHIYANA, DO YOU KNOW? -- women love a deluded man. They are always searching for a deluded man, somebody who is mad and insane. Because the insane is very attractive: the mad, the deluded, has a certain magnetism. He is full of possibilities, dreams. Women love a dreamer.

And men ? Men love a sane woman -- otherwise, they will REALLY go mad -- to keep them back on the earth. The woman represents the earth. A man needs a woman because he has no roots in his own being. He needs a woman, the warm earth, the dark soil, where he can have his roots and remain rooted in the earth. He is afraid -- he has wings but no roots. And he is afraid that if he is not holding to the earth he may be gone, he may disappear into the infinite sky and there may be no coming back. That fear keeps people running after women.

And a woman has no wings. She has roots, great roots; a woman is pure earth. And she is afraid that if she remains alone she will never be able to Fly into the unknown. A woman can't be a dreamer like a man. It is not just accidental that women have not created great poetry or music. They don't have wings, they are very earthly, very pragmatic, very real -- and sane, of course. They are so sane, that's why they don't write poetry. You have to have some insanity to write poetry. You have to have some delusions, megalomania, then only can you write poetry.

A woman makes a laundry list, not a poem -- a shopping list. Her concern is immediate. She talks about the neighbours; she is not worried about Vietnam or Israel. She simply laughs at the people, at men -- why are they so much concerned ? And they get into such excitement! If something is happening in Israel, it is happening in Israel -- why are you worried ? And the woman in the neighbourhood has escaped with somebody else -- that is the real thing; it is so immediate.

Women are not interested in gospels, they are interested in gossips. Both the words come from the same root. When it is about the faraway it is a gospel, when it is about the close-by it is gossip. When it is immediate it is gossip, when it is ultimate it is a gospel.

Man cannot live without woman, because then he loses roots. He simply becomes a vagabond. Then he belongs nowhere, Just see a man who has no woman: he belongs nowhere, he has no home, he becomes a driftwood, just waves take him anywhere -- unless he gets entangled with a woman somewhere; then the home arises.

Researchers say that the home is the creation OF THE woman. If man had lived alone, there would have been no home and no civilization either. He would have been a wanderer, a hunter; he would have gone from one corner to the other corner. Look: man is trying to go to the other planets; no-one has reached the moon. And women simply laugh at the whole lunacy. Mm? Men must be lunatics, they are so much interested in reaching the lunar, the moon. For what? You can't do shopping there. There seems to be no point at all! And there

are no people, no gossiping, nothing of the sort -- just empty desert.

Man without woman is a wanderer, a vagabond. Hence, sooner or later, he needs to get rooted. The woman becomes his earth. Unless a man finds something in him that can become his earth, unless the man finds his own inner woman, he will have to look for the outer woman.

Yes, there have been men who have lived without women -- a Buddha or a Jesus. But they too have not really lived without a woman -- they found a deeper woman in their own being. Because man is both man and woman, and woman is also both woman and man. It has to be so, because you come from two persons -- your father and mother. Your father has contributed the man in you, your mother has contributed the woman in you. Each person is fifty percent man, fifty percent woman.

Unless you turn inside yourself and find your woman or man there, you will have to look outside, The outside is a substitute.

You ask me: WHY DO ALLOW WOMEN TO HOLD POWER OVER ME?

Because without them you will be insane. And the same is true about women -- without men they will be too sane, and to be too sane is also a different kind of insanity. To be too sane becomes heavy; to be too sane, then you cannot sing, you cannot dance, So a woman needs somebody who can dream for her, and a man needs somebody who can become a home for him.

This is a must -- unless you have found your other polarity inside yourself. When a man has found the other polarity inside, he becomes a total orgasm. Then there is no need to look out. Still you can go on loving women, but there will be no clinging. And you will not become possessive or possessed. When you have found your unity inside, you will still be loving men but it will not be an obsession, it will be just a sharing. And then love is a joy. Then love has a totally different quality; otherwise, it is going to have something of fever in it. The fever has to be there, for a certain psychological reason.

If you cannot be alone, naturally you feel powerless before the woman or before the man. If you cannot be alone, then your woman is your need, then you are dependent on her. And you are annoyed -- your independence is lost. You are annoyed because SHE is having so much power over you. You cannot forgive her. And the woman cannot forgive you either, because without you she is simply earth. The sky disappears, the stars disappear. Without you she is just earth -- dark, waiting for somebody. Waiting for somebody to come and bloom into her being, waiting for somebody to release her fragrance.

Have you seen a woman without love and one in love? They smell differently -- actually, they smell differently; their fragrance is different. When a woman is alone she has sadness all around her: depressed, lonely, forlorn, in a despair, just anxiety. The moment she falls in love she starts blooming. Something immediately opens up. Then she has beauty.

A woman not in love shrinks, closes up; she starts living in a shut-upness. She closes the doors and the windows. There is nobody to wait for -- why keep the windows open or the doors open? She starts living in a kind of grave; she is no more alive. She starts dying, she becomes suicidal. Just mathematics, just arithmetic, just sanity, is not enough. Some poetry is needed to keep balance.

And man alone looks lost; he does not know who he is. Unless he sees himself in the eyes of a loving woman, he will never know who he is. He can go on doing Amida's Enlightenment Intensive and go on asking "Who am I? Who am I?" And no answer will

come -- unless he looks into the eyes of love. Only then will he be reflected, only then in the mirror will he see who he is.

The woman gives him form, substance, The woman makes him aware of who he is. By her love she creates the man. It is not only that you are created by your mother in her womb; you are created by each woman whenever you fall in love. Whenever you fall in love the woman gives you shape, colour, polish; she makes you human. Otherwise, man will be very very barbarous, violent, aggressive, uncaring, uncompassionate,

But the problem is that both depend on each other and both feel hurt -- nobody wants to depend. And on whomsoever you depend, you will never be able to forgive him or her. You will take revenge,

That's why lovers go on fighting. The fight is nothing but to show that "I am still independent -- what do you think?" The fight is just to feel that "I am still independent. If I want I can leave her." The fight is just... the woman thinks, "I am not so dependent on him. I can still bloom alone. I will still be happy without you -- what do you think of yourself?"

Hence they fight, just to test their independence. But within hours the fight is gone and they are hugging each other. Because the moment they start separating from each other, they start feeling suffocated, hungry, thirsty. They start losing whatsoever they had. The warmth is missed, the man starts feeling cold. And if there is nobody to hold the woman she starts feeling absolutely lonely.

If there is no love we are all alone. If love is not possible, then loneliness is the truth and has to be accepted. Only love gives you glimpses that loneliness is not ultimate.

You ask me: WHY DO I ALLOW WOMEN TO HOLD POWER OVER ME?

IT IS NOT A PERSONAL QUESTION, ABHIYANA. Every man allows that power. And resists it. Every husband becomes a hen-pecked husband -- every, I say. There is no other kind of husband. Whatsoever the pretensions, the only kind that really exists is the henpecked husband.

When the tree takes so much nourishment from the earth, it becomes dependent; it cannot remain independent. It is a simple phenomenon. And when the earth sees its own joy. its celebration, its potential, being expressed by the tree -- the green foliage and the red flowers, and the branches raised high into the sky -- that the earth always wanted, to have wings, and now they are there -- how can the earth remain independent?

Man and woman exist in a kind of interdependence, Independent, they are half -- hungry, starved for the other. Interdependence is the truth -- but then independence is lost.

It is not an accident that all the monks of the world, down the ages, have been escaping from woman. The woman represents the world. They are really escaping from the feeling that they are dependent; they want to be independent.

This is a human phenomenon, not personal at all.

The woman cannot feel happy without a man. Without a man she cannot flow in dreams. A deluded man is more attractive than an ordinary man. That's why women fall in love with people who have great illusions about themselves. An ordinary man is one who has no illusions; no woman is attracted towards an ordinary man. A deluded man looks magical. He has magic, His eyes flare up with something unknown, and that is the desire of the woman. He has the sense of possibility -- that sense of possibility gives him the quality of magic.

In nature, watch: the bird with the best dance and the best song gets the best female. And so is the case with human beings too. Ever observe how many good-looking women hang

around the musicians, singers and actors? For what? Something magical, something not of this earth, something of the beyond -- and they immediately become attracted. This is a natural attraction; both fulfill each other. And this is going to remain.

You ask me: I WANT TO GET OUT.

You will have to get in. You cannot get out so easily -- everything has a price. Get in, as deeply as possible. Don't be in such a hurry. If you get out, and you are not mature enough to get out, you will have to get in again. Go through the whole lot, go to the very end of it. See it through and through.

Meanwhile, go on meditating and seeing the phenomenon. Don't take it personally, it is not personal, If you take it personally, you misunderstand the whole thing from the very beginning. It is something between man and woman, nothing between you and your woman. It is something between man-energy and woman-energy, it is something between masculine energy and feminine energy.

Just watch it as a detached observer. Don't bring your small egos in it -- they are irrelevant. They create a mess, they don't help any understanding. Just see what is happening with your energies. And, slowly slowly, that very meditation will help you to be able to find a woman within you -- she is there.

And the day that happens and you start turning in, then you can get out. By getting into yourself to such a depth where you can find your inner woman... it is there. If you are a man, then your conscious is masculine, your unconscious is feminine. If you are a woman, then your conscious is feminine, your unconscious is masculine. Just dive deep into the unconscious.

And that is what meditation is all about. Go on loving, go on experiencing the joys and the miseries that love brings. They are all needed to make you ripe and mature. And meanwhile go on meditating. Both these processes, love and meditation, if they continue simultaneously, slowly slowly will make you aware that whatsoever you are finding outside can be found inside in a far better way.

And ONCE that happens, then your unconscious and conscious meet, you become ARDHANARISHWAR -- you become man and woman together. Then there is a difference, a total difference; your quality is no more the same. Then you can still love a woman, but it is no more a dependence. It is now a sharing. You can still love a man, but it is just pure joy, it is just overflowing energy. You have so much that you have to give it to somebody. But you can be alone too -- and as happy as together.

When a man is capable of being alone and AS happy as when he is together, then he will never be in the grip of anybody else. He will not feel that "Somebody holds power upon me." Then you will not be fighting with your woman or man, because then there is no question of fight. Then you are two independent people sharing out of your independence, sharing out of your immense freedom. But there is no necessity to share, it is for no other motive -- just because you are overflowing. Then you don't feel hurt, then you don't feel that you have become a slave. Then you remain a master and she remains a master. And nobody possesses anybody. All possessiveness disappears.

Why does this possessiveness come in the mind again and again? Why are you so jealous and so possessive? The reason is; you are dependent, you are afraid. If your woman leaves you tomorrow, you are afraid you will lose your earth. And what are you going to do in the cold nights, being lonely? You cannot imagine yourself lonely. It frightens. Hence you are

afraid: if your woman is laughing with somebody else, talking to somebody else, you become suspicious. Or if your man has gone to the movies with some other woman, you boil, you become feverish. You are sitting on a volcano, you are ready to explode into ugliness. Why? Why so much possessiveness, jealousy? The fear. Who knows? He loves you, he can love another woman. He loves you as a woman, his love for woman is still alive -- he can find another woman. And may be the new is more attractive than the old -- naturally -- the unfamiliar more attractive than the familiar. He has become completely aware of you. Now it is a kind of repetition, you know it. He still loves you, but it is a kind of repetition. It has lost that glamour, it has lost those beautiful beginning days; those honeymoon days are no more there. Things have settled in a routine. Now you are afraid. He may fall into somebody else's love and may have again those honeymoon days. And you will be left alone.

Fear arises. Death arises in you. You have to stop it -- you have to create a China Wall around your man or around your woman. You have not to allow him or her to have any kind of relationship with anybody, any friendship with anybody, so that you can be certain that tomorrow also he will be available to you.

But the more you become possessive, the more relation-ship becomes ugly, the more relationship becomes repulsive. The more you become possessive, the more it becomes a boredom. And the man at least starts dreaming about other women, the woman starts thinking about other men. Deep inside, they are no more together; just physically they are together.

And the more you see it happening, the more panicky you become and the more you possess. Possessiveness is the poison that kills all love. But that seems to be bound to happen, almost inevitable. In this state of dependence it is bound to happen.

You can only be non-possessive, non-jealous, when a different kind of love has arisen in you which is no more dependent, which needs nobody, which simply goes on overflowing. If somebody partakes, good, you are grateful. If nobody partakes, very good, you are alone, absolutely happy.

The third question

YESTERDAY YOU COMMENTED ON THE CREATIVITY OF BUDDHA'S RELIGION. SINCE COMING TO YOU, MY URGE TO CREATE HAS SLOWLY DROPPED AWAY, WHILE I'VE BECOME MORE SENSITIVE, MORE OPEN, MORE ALIVE. EVERYTHING FEELS FINE AS IT IS, MORE THAN ENOUGH, AND TO ADD TO IT BY MAKING ANYTHING ELSE WHATEVER, SEEMS LIKE PAINTING THE RIVER.

RISHI, THAT IS TRUE. The creativity that you ordinarily know is not the creativity I am talking about. The ordinary creativity is nothing but an ego trip. You want to show to the world that you are somebody -- a painter, a sculptor, a poet, a musician. You want to show to the world that you are somebody. Your creativity is not really creative, it is just a prop to the ego.

When you come to me, THAT kind of creativity will start disappearing -- because in the first place it was not real creativity. All that creativity will simply disappear from your mind. But you will become more sensitive, more open, more alive. Just wait -- out of this aliveness, sensitivity, openness, another kind of creativity will take possession of you soon. You will be possessed by something from the beyond. It will not be your ego trip; you will be just a

vehicle, a hollow bamboo. And the music will flow through you -- it will not be OF you, it will only flow THROUGH you. You will be just a hollow bamboo, a flute. You have only to allow it.

And for that I am preparing you. The openness, the aliveness, the sensitivity, is nothing but making your bamboo as hollow as possible, so when God starts singing through you, you don't hinder him.

God is the only creator. The ordinary creativity comes from the ego: "I am the creator." That's why you see the ordinary poet and the painter so egoistic. It is difficult to find more egoistic people than the artists; they are very egoistic. Always fighting amongst themselves like dogs -- criticizing each other and fighting and barking, and everybody pretending that he is the only authentic, original, creative person, and everybody else is just phony. Why does this happen to artists?

The reason is simple: the creativity is not yet from the beyond, it is not of the transcendent. It is very tiny. They are simply bragging about themselves.

This happens here to many people every day. So many people come to me. They say, "We want to become therapists, we want to become healers, we want to become this and that..." Seeing that the therapists are important people, healers are important people, they are doing something extraordinary, everybody that comes here sooner or later starts thinking that he has to become a therapist or a healer.

This is not creativity. This is just finding a way, a means, for the fulfillment of the ego. And if the ego is there, you cannot be a real therapist. Real therapists are rare. A real therapist is one who is ready to let God work through him -- and that is the definition of a real healer. Therapy means healing. A healer is not a healer; a healer is just a passage for God's healing forces to flow through. He cannot claim

So if you move towards healing with the idea that "I have to become a healer, then I will be somebody important, doing great miracles around," you will never be a healer. How can you be a healer? Because the very condition of being a healer is dropping the ego.

It is very rare to find a healer, very rare to find a therapist. I am training my therapists, my healers, here. The whole training is that they should disappear. They should not be there, they should become absent. And through the absence of the ego, some presence, some unknown presence, starts working through you. That brings miracles to life. That is a real phenomenon, not a created, believed-in thing.

So when you come to me, whatsoever you have been doing, if it was not real it will disappear. And it is good that it disappears. If it was real, then it will be enhanced immediately. That too is good. But I am not here to support anything unreal.

This Buddhafield is going to take everything away from you that is ego-centered, ego-oriented. Then, slowly slowly, one day you will be surprised by the arrival of a new energy knocking on your doors. The sun has risen, you are not to be found, and the poetry arises and the painting happens. You cannot even sign it; you cannot say, "This is mine." At the most, you can be grateful that "God has chosen me as a vehicle, as a medium."

The fourth question

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CONTENTED PIG, A DISCONTENTED SOCRATES, AND A NATURAL MAN OF ZEN?

YOU WILL HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THESE FIVE CATEGORIES. First, the contented pig. It has nothing to do with pigs, remember: all these categories are of human beings. The contented pig is that man or woman who lives in an unconscious way; who simply vegetates, who has no awareness -- hence there is no discontent. Discontent presupposes a little awareness.

If you are unconscious and somebody is doing surgery on you, you will not feel any pain. How can you feel pain? To feel pain, consciousness is needed. That's why in surgery we have to give anaesthesia, so the man falls completely asleep in a coma. Then you can cut, remove parts of the body without any pain. Otherwise, the pain is going to be unbearable.

A contented pig is that kind of man who lives in life absolutely like a robot, a zombie. Who eats, walks, goes to work, comes home, makes love, reproduces children, and dies, never becoming aware of what really was happening. Just moves from one thing to another in a kind of daze.

The second is the discontented pig. He is still unconscious, ninety-nine percent unconscious, but one percent of consciousness is arising. The first ray of consciousness has penetrated; one is becoming aware of the pain and the anguish and the anxiety of life. People avoid the second state; they want to live in the first.

The first state is that of the materialist. Don't think, don't contemplate, don't meditate upon anything. Don't become conscious -- consciousness is dangerous. Remain unconscious. And if sometimes in spite of you some consciousness happens -- because life has so much pain that sometimes it can happen that just the pain can give you a little consciousness -- then go and take drugs, tranquillize yourself. Or alcohol is there and other intoxicants are there. Just dull yourself again, back into your anaesthetic life, into your unconsciousness. Fall again into that anaesthesia.

The discontented pig is one who is coming out of this anaesthesia. Have you ever been into anaesthesia? Slowly slowly, when you start coming out of it, you start hearing a few noises around -- the traffic noise, the doctors walking, the nurses talking. Slowly slowly, you start feeling some pain in those parts of the body where the operation has been done. Slowly slowly, you come back.

The discontented pig is one who is coming out of the anaesthesia of life, who is becoming a man. It is painful -- to be a man is painful, to remain a pig is very painless. Millions have decided to remain pigs.

When the discontent arises, you are becoming religious: the first approach towards God.

And the third state is discontented Socrates. You are fully alert about the pain, and you are divided. You are two now: the pain is there and you are there. And life becomes almost unlivable, the pain of it is so much. Something has to be done -- either you fall back and become again a pig, or you start moving and become a Buddha.

The discontented Socrates is just the midpoint. Below, at the lowest, is the pig. Above, at the highest, is the Buddha, the real, natural man of Zen. Discontented Socrates is just in the middle, in the middle of the bridge. And there is every possibility that you will fall back -- because the old is known, and the future is unknown. Who knows? If you go ahead, pain may increase even more -- who knows? You have never known that state ahead. But you know one thing -- that at the back there was a moment when there was no pain. Why not fall back into it?

That's where people start becoming interested in drugs. That is falling back, that is a regression. Man cannot be freed from alcohol and such intoxicants unless man is but on the way towards Buddhahood. No government can prevent people from alcohol; they will find

ways. Because life becomes so unbearable, one has to forget it. Either one has to become a Buddha or one has to become a pig. One cannot remain in the middle -- the middle is such a torture.

The fourth state is contented Socrates. You start moving ahead, you don't go back. You move more and more into awareness, you move more and more into meditation. Your thinking is transformed more into a kind of meditateness. So the fourth stage is contented Socrates: consciousness and unconscious are being bridged.

And the fifth state is: no contentment, no discontentment; no pig, no Socrates. All is gone, all those dream have disappeared. Neither conscious nor unconscious, but a new thing, transcendence, has arisen. This is Buddhahood. This is what Zen people call the natural state of man. Purified of all junk, cleaned of all dust. Purified of all poisons and the past and the memories, SANSKARAS, conditionings. You have come home.

The pig is completely unconscious. The natural man of Zen is completely conscious. Between these two are those other three states. These five states have to be pondered over. Find out where you are, and start moving from there.

The goal is not far away. Sometimes it can be reached in a single step, in a single leap. All that is needed is courage. It is out of fear that people fall back into the old rut.

If I can teach you courage, I have taught you all. If I can help you to be courageous, then I have made you religious. To me, courage is the MOST important religious quality. More important than truth, more important than honesty, more important than anything else. Because without courage, nothing becomes possible -- neither truth nor love nor God.

The sixth question.

WHEN IS MIND AGAINST ITSELF?

Always .

The last question

DURING YOUR DISCOURSE YESTERDAY, YOU SPOKE ON HOW WE CAN MOVE FROM BEING LIKE ICE TO BECOMING LIKE WATER, THEN EVAPORATING. YOUR WORDS PROMPTED A FEELING I HAVE BEEN GETTING FOR A FEW MONTHS NOW -- A FEELING OF GREAT AFFINITY FOR AND ATTRACTION TO WATER. I REALLY LOVE TAKING SHOWERS AND TO GO FOR A SWIM IS MY IDEA OF PARADISE. I WANT TO BECOME THE WATER AND MERGE WITH IT. BUT I GET OUT OF THE WATER FEELING FRUSTRATED -- I CAN'T QUITE MAKE IT.

IT IS THE SAME WITH LOOKING AT A RIVER OR LAKE -- THE DESIRE FOR UNION IS THERE, BUT THE REALIZATION SEEMS BOTH SO CLOSE AND YET SO FAR AWAY.

CAN THIS TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT MYSELF?

BY THE WAY, I'M A PLUMBER.

CHAITANYA SATTVA, METAPHORS ARE METAPHORS -- don't take them literally. When I say: Melt, let your ice become water, and evaporate, let your water become

vapour -- I am talking in metaphors. All that I am saying to you is metaphorical, because that is the only way to say it. But don't become too much attached to metaphors, otherwise you will miss the point.

Water is beautiful! and a love for swimming is beautiful. But if you take the metaphor too seriously and if you stretch it too far away, you will create trouble for yourself. That's what has happened to you, that's what has happened to many people here. They listen to me, they jump upon one metaphor that appeals to them, they take hold of it, and they start thinking; that they have got something; of the truth.

A metaphor has to be understood and dropped! and forgotten! A metaphor is dangerous. If you take it too seriously, you miss the point. A metaphor is only an indicator, it is a way of saying.

It is good if you understand what I mean by 'melting'. You are not ice, certainly not. Had you been ice it would have been so easy -- you would have melted in the Poona heat automatically! You are not ice, certainly not. Things are more difficult.

Metaphors are simple. They have to be simple, because they want to relate something which cannot be related in any other way. Melting has to be understood. By 'melting' I mean become loving -- because love melts. The warmth of love -- not the Poona heat -- the warmth of love melts you. 'Become water' -- what do I mean by saying that? I mean become a flow, riverlike, but not that you have to become a river. You have been a river somewhere millions of lives before. You have lost that, you have gone far away from it, and there is no need to go back to it. You have evolved much.

Hence, the desire remains there. When you go to the sea and you feel a great attraction towards the sea, a gravi-tation almost, a pull, do you know from where it comes? Millions of lives before, you have been in the sea, you have been a fish, life started there. And our bodies have not forgotten it yet; they never forget anything, their memory is absolute.

The body knows the thrill, the freedom, the flow of the ocean. So when you see ocean waves, you cannot resist. Something pulls you: "Come into the ocean? It is your fish inside.

Do you know that in the mother's womb for nine months you swim in almost the same kind of water as in the sea -- with thE same chemicals, in the same proportion? Do you know? Inside your body, eighty percent is sea-water. Just don't take salt for a few days and you will feel so tired, because that sea-water is not getting as much salt as it needs, and the fish is feeling thirsty, tired, worried.

Eighty percent you are still water! And the water is exactly of the same kind as sea-water. That's why, why it is full moon you feel great upsurges of energy in you!. Exactly like the ocean -- when it is full moon the ocean is affected. Eighty percent you are also ocean! You are bound to be affected.

In your small ocean, in your tea-cup, storms arise. Many more people go mad on the full-moon night than on any other night. That is only one side of the story: many more people become enlightened too on the same night! Buddha became enlightened on a full-moon night. He was born on a full-moon night, he became enlightened on a full-moon night, he died on a full-moon night. He must have. been a great fish.

So when you are attracted to the ocean... something deep in your memories is ingrained. That's what happens When you go to the lake and to the river, to a swimming pool -- or if you cannot go anywhere, then just sitting under your shower. The falling water on you stirs the memories in the body. The body feels relaxed, happy. The body. feels nourished, rooted, centered.

But that is not what I mean. Enjoy all these things, these are beautiful things -- I am not

against them, I am all for them. But my metaphor has some other meaning. When I say 'melt' I mean love. Create as much love heat in you as possible. Only that can melt you. When I say 'become water' I mean become a flow -- don't remain stagnant. Move, and move like water.

Lao Tzu says: The way of the Tao is a watercourse way . It moves like water. What is the movement of water? or of a river? The movement has a few beautiful things about it. One, it always moves towards the depth, it always searches for the lowest ground. It is non-ambitious; it never hankers to be the first, it wants to be the last.

Remember, Jesus says: Those who are the last here will be the first in my kingdom of God. He is talking about the watercourse way of Tao -- not mentioning it, but talking about it. Be the last, be non-ambitious. Ambition means go uphill. Water goes down t searches for the lowest ground, it wants to be a nonentity. It does not want to declare itself unique, exceptional, extraordinary. It has no ego idea.

That is what I mean when I say become water: drop the ego. Drop ambition. Don't struggle for the top of the hill and don't start moving upstream. Go with the stream, down the stream, seek and search the lowest -- because only in the lowest will you find peace and tranquillity and silence. And only in the lowest will you find the inner emptiness I have been talking about all these days. When you start striving to be somebody, you will not be empty. You will become full of bullshit, you will become garbage.

Go downward. Search the lowest depths and disappear there... one thing.

Second thing: the water is soft, feminine. The water is non-aggressive, it never fights -- it makes its way without fighting. It is from water that the Chinese and Japanese learnt the secret art of judo or jujitsu. Winning without fighting, conquering through surrendering -- WEI-WU-WEI.

Learn from the water one thing: that it comes across great stone walls, granite walls. It does not fight, it goes on flowing silently. If the stone is too big it finds another way, it bypasses it. But slowly slowly the granite is dissolved into water, becomes sand. Ask the sands of the oceans from where they have come. They have come from the mountains. They will tell you a great secret: "Water wins finally. And we were hard, and we knew... how can water will ' So we were very very settled. We could not believe that this poor water, so soft, unharmed, unharmed, non-violent... how can it destroy us? But it destroyed us."

That is the beauty of the feminine energy. Don't be like a rock! Be like water -- soft, feminine. And victory IS yours.

Remember Jesus again: Blessed are the meek, for theirs is the kingdom of God.

The meek? -- the watercourse way -- they will. It takes time, but they have patience. They have no idea of winning, that's why they win. The people who want to win are defeated by their very idea, because they start struggling, and in struggling they dissipate their energy.

That's what I mean when I say 'become water' -- melt, become water.

And what do I mean when I say 'evaporate'? That is the ultimate -- that is learning how not to be, that is learning the art of absence. The vapour simply disappears, you cannot catch hold of it, you cannot even see it. You can see it only when it is turning into vapour -- al-d Soon it is gone, and soon it is invisible.

A Buddha is seen only when he is in the body. Once the body is dropped, you will not be able to catch hold of him. He is simply gone, he has become part of the ultimate sky. That is the ultimate -- to disappear. Buddha calls it ANATTA, no-self. Shunyata -- emptiness, nothingness. Nirvana -- cessation.

So when I use these metaphors, always remember they are metaphors. Poetic ways of saying, things which cannot be said in any other way.

You ask:

DURING YOUR DISCOURSE YESTERDAY, YOU SPOKE ON HOW WE CAN MOVE FROM BEING LIKE ICE TO BECOMING LIKE WATER, THEN EVAPORATING. YOUR WORDS PROMPTED A FEELING I HAVE BEEN GETTING FOR A FEW MONTHS NOW -- A FEELING OF GREAT AFFINITY FOR AND ATTRACTION TO WATER.

GET ATTRACTED TO WATER, feel affinity with water. Feeling? affinity with any element of nature -- water, fire, sky, earth, air -- is immensely helpful. But that's not what I meant.

I REALLY LOVE TAKING SHOWERS AND TO GO FOR A SWIM IS MY IDEA OF PARADISE.

Sattva, you are a good man. That's how one should think of paradise. Do you know about Jain monks? They don't take a shower, they don't take a bath. Never go to a Jain paradise, otherwise you will be in difficulty. There will be no showers. And plumbers, of course, will not be needed. They are so much against the body that even a simple joy like a shower seems to be too much of a luxury.

See the pathological mind, how it works. Afraid that if they take a shower they will be enjoying the body -- the joy that will come, and the gladness that will spread all over the body. They are so against the body, how can they take a shower? They stink. They don't brush their teeth because that is a kind of beautifying of the body. And for what? The body has to be dropped, the sooner the better. The body has to be felt as horrible, so make it as horrible as possible. Make it horrible for yourself and for others too!

It used to happen in the past: Jain monks and nuns used to come to me to see me. Now they have become too afraid, they don't come. And even if they want to come, their followers won't allow them. They used to come; it was such a difficult thing to talk to them, because their breath smells so badly that one really feels that the body is horrible. Their bodies smell so badly.

What have people been doing on this earth? Negating life.

My approach is that of affirmation. I am in love With life. t is fleeting, it is momentary -- but who says that it is not momentary and it is not fleeting? Still you can love it -- even more so because it is fleeting. You can pour all your love. Tomorrow it may not be there.

Go on loving, go on being as much in celebration as possible, in all the ways possible.

You say: I REALLY LOVE TAKING SHOWERS AND TO GO FOR A SWIM IS MY IDEA OF PARADISE. I WANT FO BECOME THE WATER AND MERGE WITH IT.

That is taking, the metaphor too tar. Good! -- when swimming in a river feel one with the river. Feel the river pass through you. But please don't become water itself, otherwise how will you come back? And who is going to do the plumbing in the ashram? Please don't do that; you have to come back too.

And that will not be a real thing, either. If somebody thinks he has become water, he has simply gone mad. If somebody thinks that he has become the tree, he has gone mad. It is the

same -- somebody thinks he has become Napoleon and somebody has become Alexander the Great... it is the same! Now you are doing the same trick with water, but it is madness.

Enjoy the unity, the affinity, the synchronicity with water, the harmony! But there is no need to become water -- there is no need.

I WANT TO BECOME THE WATER AND MERGE WITH IT. BUT I GET OUT OF THE WATER FEELING FRUSTRATED...

Naturally. If you want to merge with it and then you have to get out of it, the frustration comes. It is your idea of getting merged with the water that is creating the frustration. You have to get out of it as you got in it! Enjoy being with it but don't become obsessed, and then the frustration will disappear.

I CAN'T QUITE MAKE IT.

There is no need.

IT IS THE SAME WITH LOOKING AT A RIVER OR LAKE -- THE DESIRE FOR UNION IS THERE BUT THE REALIZATION SEEMS BOTH SO CLOSE AND YET SO FAR AWAY.

It is bound to be so. You are trying to live a metaphor. A metaphor has to be understood, not lived! Live LIFE! understand metaphors.

The word 'God' is not God. Don't start living the word 'God' -- that's what people are doing. The word 'love' is not love -- don't start living the word 'love' -- that's what people are doing. 'Love' is just a symbol to indicate towards something which is far more complex, far simpler, far bigger and more infinite, than the word can contain. Only silence can contain it.

CAN THIS TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT MYSELF?

Certainly. It tells one thing -- that you take words too seriously. That you don't understand that which is hidden behind the words, that you don't understand that which is between two words -- in the intervals and the gaps. You jump upon the words and you try to carry them in your life. Your life will become false, phony, pseudo. Avoid it.

BY THE WAY I AM A PLUMBER, you say.

By the way, I am also a plumber. I plumb into the depths of your being. And when somebody starts leaking, I have to fix them. And when somebody's nut-bolts become loose, I have to make them tight again. Or when somebody's nut-bolts are TOO tight I have to make them loose.

By the way, I am also a plumber....