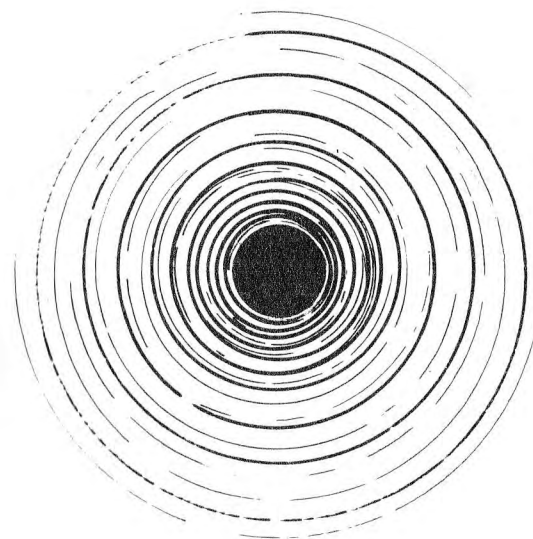


CONTACT
with
VIMALA THAKAR



no. 29
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Contact with Vimala Thakar

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Foreword

Vimala came to Boston last October to give a ten-day seminar. She arrived in a very weak physical condition having suffered a severe bronchial attack while in South America, where she was holding talks and retreats. Those of us gathered a day or so early realized that Vimala's condition was serious and wondered if there should be a seminar at all. But to our amazement, and it was indeed a minor miracle, at the appointed time Vimala appeared before us, even though she looked very ill. But once she began speaking, there seemed to be an inner strength pervading her words, imbued with that extra dimension which so touches the heart. And so, as the days passed, Vimala came to share her talks and her silence, came to answer questions, morning and afternoon, while outside, in the beautiful park surrounding the retreat centre, the trees gradually turned into a magnificent autumn display, famous in that part of the world, vying as it were with the pearls of inner beauty which were showered on us during those special days, those memorable ten days.

This number of contact is given over to two Boston talks and some of the answers to questions raised during the seminar.

Anita Sterner.

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The Gift

*I have come to sing
The song of life.
I know not how to teach.*

*I have come to love
The diversity of life.
I know not how to preach.*

*I have come to live
A sane, healthy life.
I know not how to lead.*

*I have come to enjoy
The perfume of life.
I have no message for you.*

*My heart is a lotus.
These words are petals.
This is my gift unto you.*

Living in wholeness

Boston, USA - October 1990.

We have promised ourselves that we would explore living in wholeness in this week-long gathering. I wonder if you have noticed that life has two expressions. One: non-individuated organic wholeness and two: individuated substances, objects and identities.

What we call space or emptiness is a non-individuated organic wholeness. It is one expression of life. There may be innumerable energies concealed in the emptiness, but there is this majestic emptiness of space by which we are surrounded whether we are inside the house or outside the house. In order to live in the wholeness of life one has to expose oneself consciously to this unindividuated wholeness, this manifestation of wholeness. To be with the emptiness of space, may be in the backyard of your apartment, may be in a nearby park, may be in your garden, to be with that space without any motivation, just to expose yourself to the embrace of space, of emptiness, and be in that embrace of emptiness, with innumerable energies contained in it, is one way of relating to the wholeness. Being unindividuated is unanalyzable. It is a mysterious wholeness, indivisible, non-fragmentable.

I wonder if you have noticed that when you expose yourself to the sunlight, another expression of unindividuated reality, you expose yourself to the sun and the energies contained in the light operate upon you. You have to be there effortlessly, you have to be there in a relaxed way, you have just to be there, not to do anything, not to seek anything. As the embrace of space vitalizes you, it operates upon you, in the same way the light and warmth of the sun vitalizes you without you having to move a finger. It is a relationship with

wholeness. I don't know if you have ever exposed yourself to the darkness of the night, sitting quietly in a state of non-action with the beautiful darkness, non-individuated darkness. Just as the light of the sun works like a stimulant and vitalizes, so the darkness pacifies, tranquillizes the tortured nerves, soothes them, relaxes them. The stress and strain of the day melts away when you are in darkness, letting it operate upon you is perhaps the best tranquilizer!

Living in wholeness is living in relatedness to the darkness, to the light, to the space, to the emptiness. We have a mysterious relationship with them, not in passivity, not in inertia, but in love and concern you expose yourself. The same with water: when you swim and allow the energy of water to operate upon you, without owning, without possessing, you are with the cosmic, you are with the wholeness. So this motivation-free relationship through a simple exposure seems to be a very significant and important aspect of living in wholeness. You may go jogging in the morning and say: "I have been in the light, I have been with the earth, etc.", that's a different thing! One is talking of just being with the beingness of life, in an effort-free relaxed way. By living the relationship with them you are part of the cosmic mystery. It's no use denying that life is a mystery, it is just the same for me.

Then we come to another expression which is individuated expression of wholeness. The energies contained in the wholeness, contained in the emptiness of space, through their interaction, through their mingling with one another, begin to wear what you call substance or form. They begin to appear solidified and when we see these solidified energies wearing form we call them objects. This is the world of visible, tangible individuated expressions of wholeness: a tree, a plant, a blade of grass, a stone, a rock, a pebble on the sea-shore. We may name them, we may identify them, we may try to analyze their energies, utilize them, try to chan-

nelize those energies, make them subservient to our needs and requirements, but their individuation is not the result of our thought or our effort. It is the wholeness of life which plays the game with itself, of emerging into forms and substances, emerging into individuated expressions and merging back into the non-individuated ocean of wholeness.

As we have to live with the mystery of the wholeness, live our relatedness to it by relating to the non-individuated wholeness, we have to live with the individuated expressions also. These energies which appear solidified have tremendous dynamism in them. Through science you have even explored and analyzed the quantum of energy contained in an atom, electron, proton, neutron. That's just one aspect of the energy, not the totality. But we now know that what appears solid, what we call an object, what we call matter, is nothing but amalgamated energies. Through interaction they mingle and through mingling with one another they wear forms, they wear substance. It's a marvelous play that goes on in this wholeness of life.

So we have the privilege and responsibility of relating with the visible, the tangible, the individuated. And it is possible for us to relate to the innumerable objects, self-generated, self-sustained, having creative and destructive energies contained in them. Have you noticed the dynamic energies contained in a tiny seed? You sow the seed in the earth and it sprouts: a sapling, a tree, flowers, fruit...the tiny seed! Solidified energy! An expression of the wholeness of life.

We can relate to these objects through our beautiful senses with which we are gifted. We can look at them and kiss them with our eyes. We can listen to the sounds, we can smell, feel the touch, and so on. At the sensual level this relatedness with the visible and tangible has its own ecstasy. And these visible, tangible so-called objects or entities have many lessons to

teach us. We have to read the book of life and learn from it. Life is the teacher supreme, there is no better teacher than life and its dynamism. The visible and tangible objects are changing, it's a flux of change, they are never the same. When we relate ourselves sensually to them we can receive their energies. We can enjoy the fruits, the flowers, the grains, the cereals, the vegetables and so on. For our needs we receive and we give back our care and concern, nurture them: it's a relationship of give and take with nature. But as it is changing all the time, that constant flux of change teaches us a lesson: receive, use us to serve your needs, but do not get attached to us. This constant change that you see around in the material world is the best teacher of non-attachment. We do not have to read a book for it, because that which is changing cannot be held, owned or possessed. The relationship is based on the austerity of your needs, of your requirements.

At the sensual level to feel the beauty; a marvelous way of getting related. It is the beauty of life, if we learn the lesson of non-attachment, if there is a relationship of reception as for needs, not out of greed. Then there is a cultural field: the gardens, the forests, the lakes, the rivers, they contribute to the wealth of emotional experience. Life would not be worth living if we did not have the sensual level.

And as we grow from childhood into youth, into adulthood, into old age, there is the capacity of senses to change their inclination, without your effort, they go on changing. As the outer is changing, so the inner changes.

To witness the change inner and outer and to move with it without trying to hold on: you don't hold on to childhood because it is beautiful. You cannot get stuck up into youth, it's a marvelous phase of living and you enjoy it, you live it thoroughly with the fullness, wholeness of your being, but then it has to give place to adulthood and then old age,

ripening, maturing through growth. Non-attachment inwardly and outwardly is a lesson that the sensual, the sexual teach us.

Living is a movement of learning, discovering personally, understanding the truth behind the fact and feeling the mystery behind the truth. If we get attached to the impulses contained in the biological structure and use the body to exploit those sensual capacities or sexual capacities to escape boredom, to run away from fear, to exercise domination, to exercise possessiveness, to gratify anger, to gratify the urge for being violent, if we pamper, suppress, repress or exploit it, not responding to the needs of the body, we misuse the sensual, the sexual, the biological structure with its tremendous wealth which is an expression of the wholeness of life. If we do not exploit for our psychological purposes but respond to the sexual impulse or the impulse of appetite or thirst, or impulse to sleep and so on, beautiful impulses which have their spontaneous momentum unrelated to knowledge, it's part of life, it's so sacred, then the relationship of the sensual with the outer, the relationship of the sensual and the sexual to the inner growth is something fantastically beautiful.

Behind and beyond this visible and tangible world - the individuated solidified energies which we call objects - is the world of the invisible which we call occult, the transcendental, the extra-sensory which cannot be touched by the senses. It has been possible to know about these invisible energies through the capacity to think, to imagine, to calculate with the help of mathematics, physics, engineering, science and so on. So many energies have been discovered with the help of the brain and its various faculties, various capacities. You can touch an object, you analyze it, you experiment upon it, you explore and discover the energies contained in it, the invisible energies, and you learn to relate to them. Civilization has been based upon the utilization and channelization of

these invisible energies. In the wholeness of life these energies also have a role to play. As it has been done in Europe and America with the help of science and technology, the people living in Asia, right from the Middle East, Persia, Georgia, Caucasian Mountains, parts of Russia right up to the whole of Asia, China, South East Asia and so on, there have been efforts to discover these invisible energies through the science of yoga, with the help of mantra which is metaphysics of sound energies, science of using sound energies, tantra, mantra yoga. The orientals have worked hard through centuries on finding out ways of relating to the invisible energies contained in the occult, the transcendental, through meditation, tantra yoga, mantra and so on. That's one aspect of being related to the wholeness of life. It's quite an adventure and because it is dealing with the invisible it's quite a dangerous field to tread, though it has been explored and there are sciences, methods, techniques, procedures, systems of getting related, of living in relationship with this invisible.

And we have an invisible part in ourselves, behind the sensual, the sexual. There is what you call the psychological structure. If you tear the body apart you cannot find it anatomically speaking, but it is there: what we call the past, the psychological structure. We have our own invisible past developed through civilization and culture. The orbit of ideation, conceptualization, defence mechanism, have patterns, all invisible. You won't see it through your X-ray machines as you won't see chakras or the points of acupressure and acupuncture with your screens and X-ray machines. It is a different way of touching the reality within you. So, comparable to the invisible outside, there is an invisible aspect of life, of wholeness, within us, within the body, behind, beneath, deeper than the sensual which can be touched, which can be understood.

So there is the visible and the invisible. The invisible for us is the psychological. And beyond the invisible is the trans-psychological inside us. And beyond the invisible in the outside world is the infinite. The visible, the invisible, the infinite.

The biological, the sensual, then the psychological: thought, experience, knowledge. The collective unconscious (your conscious, sub-conscious, unconscious) and beyond that the trans-psychological, the abode of love, compassion, peace, humility, etc. You know living in wholeness implies cognition of all this.

This is not a man-made world, except for the thought structure. Now we must turn to another aspect of living in wholeness and that is our relationship to the man-made world. Not only the thought structure inside us but outside, between the self-generated, self-sustained wholeness by which we are surrounded in non-individuated and individuated forms, between that and ourselves is a man-made world of socio-economic political structures: nations, states, their relationships, jobs, business, trade, schools and so on. There is the man-made world which cannot be avoided. This man-made world, the human society, however imperfect, has been growing: passing through capitalism, socialism, communism, the rise and fall of communism as an ideology, as an empire in the twentieth century, modifications in the capitalist system, Gandhian philosophy in India - a very interesting phenomenon as the rise and fall of communism in Europe is. So many experiments have been going on: agriculture, industrialization, automation, cybernetic revolution, mechanization of life, depending more on machines than upon one another, spending more time with machines than with one another, the breaking up of families as a primary unit of society, the cult of individualism, then the isolation resulting from the culmination of individualism. You know society in all parts of

the world has gone through so many changes and is still changing.

The collective instinct for survival pushes the human race towards new experimentations and we are seeing the dawn of a new spiritual awakening where there is a willingness to examine and reconsider what was once worshipped in the 18th and 19th and the first half of the 20th century. The ecological imbalance in the post-industrial revolution days has stirred the psyche of the human race. We have started looking at our lives: "Where have we gone wrong? Where was the mistake, psychically, socially, economically? What can we do?" It's a beautiful period to live in, thrilling, in the midst of devastation, killing, violence, we see the silver lining of the black clouds of destruction, this new awakening.

So we have to live in the man-made world. Here is the opportunity to choose, to select, to find out how much physical and cerebral exertion the body can take. How much stress and strain it can take, because growth does require exertion. If you remain in inertia, if you remain passive, inactive, always postponing decisions and actions, there is no growth. Then you stink of atrophy of energies. One has to find out in this man-made world, which is extremely complicated, a way, with the elegance of simplicity, find out how much you can take comfortably, how much you can assimilate and then without comparing yourself with anyone else, you decide how much time you are going to devote in socialization, without being unfair to your psycho-physical structure. And there will be the test whether we exploit the body and the psychological structure for our greed, for our ambition, for our lust, knowing full well that this is a man-made world created for the convenience of living together. Do we attribute absolute value to the bank balance? Do we attribute all the sense of security to money? To respectability? What are the absolute values, what are the relative values?

Question: "What is communion and what causes communion?"

Boston, USA - October 1990.

I presume that we know what is communication which takes place with the help of words understood by the speaker and the listener. Communication involves a conscious effort at sharing itself. The act of listening is a sharing. Speaking and listening are two ways of sharing. The act of listening is a sharing of energy as the act of speaking is.

But in the event of communion there is an effortlessness, there is a happening, that transports you psycho-physically into a dimension of non-duality. For example you go to listen to a concert. Till you enter the hall there is a conscious effort to go to the place, secure a seat and occupy it. After that your energy of listening and the energy of music act upon each other, they mingle, intermingle, they get blended together and produce a third energy which could be called the energy of ecstasy. If you listen to classical music, all the value judgements get suspended, the very existence of the I, the me, the self gets suspended as it were and the intermingling of energies of music and listening charge the atmosphere, and I think everyone of us must have gone through such an event, such a happening.

You are walking in a garden and you look at a flower. The energy of perception reaches the flower and the energy of colour, energy of scent, the energy of beauty emanating from the flower mingle with your energy of perception and produces what you call the event of joy. You were not seeking pleasure from the flower.

You are walking down the street and you see children and the beatific smile on the faces of the children. The interming-

ling of your perception and the energy of innocence radiating through the smile of the children produce a third kind of energy which you might call love.

So communion is transportation psycho-physically into a realm of non-duality, where duality is not resolved through a conscious effort but it suddenly melts away or gets dissolved in what you call communion.

What causes communion? If there is an openness, if there is a receptivity and if there is a state of attentiveness, not passivity, not inertia, not distractedness, but a sheer state of motivation-free attentivity, in that receptivity communion takes place, transmission of energies take place. This can happen even during verbal communication. If one is not very eager to compare, to evaluate and to judge what is being said or communicated, if one is not impatient and eager to acquire some new piece of knowledge through communication, if there is an effortless relaxed listening, then perhaps the energy behind the words or the energy pulsating in the words and your listening, motivation-free listening, they mingle together and create what is called communion.

The multi-dimensional nature of consciousness

Boston, USA - October 1990.

We are not one-dimensional creatures, our consciousness is not one-dimensional. The biological aspect of our life, the organic component of our wholeness, has its own energies manifested through impulses and their movement. The biological is governed by the laws of nature which govern the non-human species also. We share the laws of nature: of birth, growth, decay, death, the femaleness, maleness, the sex-instinct, sex-impulse, appetite, thirst, impulse of sleep and so on. We share that with the non-human beings and fellow species. This dimension of our life could be called the sub-moral dimension.

Morality, ethics, codes of conduct, codes of value cannot be applied to the movement of the biological energies. That is why one would like to call them a sub-moral dimension, they have their own momentum. These energies and their movement cannot be criticized or condemned in terms of morality or ethics.

The second dimension which we call the psychological is the moral dimension of our life. With the help of thought and knowledge and experience we have built societies, we have built the states and the governments to run the states, the nations, the international laws and now perhaps laws for global economy and so on. Morality has relevance in social life.

We live as individuals on the biological level, but we live as citizens of local communities and members of the global human community. Therefore norms and criteria of the behaviour and codes of conduct become necessary, inevitable. We do not live like herds of animals or flocks of birds. We have

created 'society'. As we have created the conceptual world of thought and knowledge, of measurements, of values, we have also created societies. That is a moral dimension of our life, and morality implies conditioning, culturing, refining, sophisticating, modifying, qualifying. All these processes culminate in what you call an aesthetic social life.

It has been the desire and also the effort of the human race to include the sub-moral into the moral dimension. The way the human beings respond to the movement of the biological impulses is qualitatively different from the way the non-human species respond to the same impulse. The way a human being responds to the sex-impulse in sex relationship is qualitatively different from the way a non-human animal would respond to the same impulse. There has been an effort to respond to the sub-moral biological impulses by correlating them to the totality of life, to life as a citizen of a community, to life as a member of the global human family.

It seems to me that it is this correlation to the totality of our life which might have led us to the creation of a family, the idea of a family, the idea of a husband and a wife, and not only a male and a female. It must have been the aesthetic way, a refined way of responding to the sex impulse. The way we respond to appetite and the way we feed the body is qualitatively different from the animal way. We have created a science of diet, we have our kitchens, we have correlated the movement of appetite and the response to appetite.

The growth of human culture and civilization is an attempt to be attentive to the biological impulses and respond to them not only on the biological level but on the psychological level. We started weaving the psychological and the physical together which gave us the civilization, which gave us the languages, fine arts, music, dancing, idea of relationship - brother, sister, mother, father. Even though we analyze them

for the sake of understanding, the biological and the psychological have been woven together and we refer to them as psycho-physical behaviour.

So we have the sub-moral and the moral dimension. In the sub-moral we have to respond and the nature of the response being civilized, cultured, involves correlating the movement and the response to the totality of our life. In the moral dimension there has been a great struggle and the struggle still continues: how to balance authority with freedom, how far is authority necessary.

For social life you need law and order, you need the protection to the person and property of a citizen. So you created a state and constitutions, governments to run the state. Authority was relegated, individually and collectively. But if the state becomes anti people, if the state becomes dictatorial, then it becomes the moral right to fight against the state, to resist the authoritarianism of the state.

Family was created as an aesthetic and social way of responding to the sex impulse, to channelize the sex energy, to educate it in restraint. But in these efforts authority was created: suppression, repression came in by the back-door. Religions and their scriptures added stiffness and strictness. Ethics lost its pliability. The family became too authoritarian and there was a revolt, there was a resistance against the authoritarianism of the parent, of the husband against the wife. So there has been a struggle to balance authority and freedom.

Due to the industrial revolution we developed a way of living where the family, as a primary unit, broke down. And there was an idea of sex freedom, sex revolution in the twentieth century. So families broke down on the one hand due to the industrial revolution and on the other hand as a revolt

against the close family or authoritarianism. But the breakdown of the family did not enhance the freedom of the individual. The breakdown of authority did not result in more freedom for the individual. It resulted in chaos, in anarchy: children of broken families, single parenthood, children of unmarried mothers and inhibitions and complexes among those children. Now the realization is dawning that the breaking up of the family, the chaos, the anarchy emotional and social and the inhibitions and complexes with which the children have to grow up, the sense of insecurity in which the children live, is once again a cultural problem.

Growth helps to resolve old problems but it throws up new challenges, new problems. It's only dead people who have no problems! Life and growth imply challenges. That is why life is worth living. That is why it is necessary to learn, and living becomes a movement of learning and discovering new aspects of life, new perceptions of life.

As we respond to the biological impulses, it is necessary for us to respond to the human past, the total human past, the total human knowledge and experience contained in us. As we have to be attentive to the movement of impulses on the biological level, we have to be attentive to the movement of thought and knowledge and experience timelessly going on within us. It requires effort. You go to school, you learn the three R's - reading, writing and arithmetic. You get acquainted with the past: the whole mechanism of mind, the whole biology and chemistry of thought movement. You have to make a cerebral effort to acquire knowledge and handle it, to get acquainted with the past and handle it. This is the realm of effort. That is what we call the psychological dimension or the moral dimension, because we do not live in isolation. We live in society. We may go on experimenting with the texture of society, with the fibre of human relationships, we may explore new dimensions, new dynamics. But we, as the human

species, will be living in societies and therefore we can not avoid the science of ethics or morality: norms, criteria, curtailment of personal freedom, relegation of authority and so on.

It is a huge drama to be played out and every one of us has to enact a role in it whether you work as a teacher, a politician, a doctor, a lawyer, a surgeon, an engineer or whatever. You enact your role in this huge drama. You enact your role as a husband, wife, father, mother and every role has to be played with certain norms and criteria, sanctioned by society, agreed upon by all, acceptable to all. That is what the play implies. Knowing full well that you are enacting a role you put in all your energy, talents, and you play it in as best a way that you can. This is the beauty of living as a citizen, living as a member of a family, a community. And now due to science and technology, we have a global family. The whole globe has become like a small village, you can reach from one end to the other in hours, you can listen to what is happening at the other end of the globe nearly simultaneously. So much exchange going on, intermingling, you cannot escape the neighbourhood of Iraq or Southern Arabia, or Russia, or Japan and so on. It is marvellous what we have done to our lives with the help of science and technology.

Along with handling the past, the knowledge and experience, we have conferred upon ourselves a new responsibility through automation and cybernation. We started transferring many activities to machines. First we thought that we would transfer manual work which we felt was drudgery. So agriculture got mechanized. But we did not stop there, we started transferring our own cerebral activities to machines. You will come across children in your own country who cannot calculate without the help of a calculator: addition, subtraction, multiplication and so on. They need a calculator because you have provided them with it. That capacity has been transferred to machines, memory has been transferred to ma-

chines. In the latest generation of computers in Japan they are trying to feed in emotions. We have created a problem for ourselves. What are we going to do with our cerebral and emotional capacities, when we are transferring all these to the computers? Because a capacity that is not used gets atrophied, it rusts. How to live with machines that we have created without losing our creativity, without letting our in-born qualities and talents get atrophied? This co-existence with machines is going to be quite a big cultural problem. We have transferred entertainment to the electronic media, sports, games have been commercialized. You can rent or hire wombs and surrogate motherhood, not as an emergency or necessity in exceptional cases, but it has nearly become commercialized in some countries. The whole of life is getting commercialized.

The more you commercialize, the more you mechanize life, the more you lose the sensitivity, the tenderness, the compassion, the warmth of human relationships. The problem is how to retain your sensitivity, the warmth of human relationships, otherwise de-personalized societies and dehumanized ways of working will impoverish us inwardly, culturally. Affluence outwardly and cultural pauperization inwardly. That would create a very big contradiction and we will get culturally retarded, culturally regressed. Not that we should run away from technology and science. You can't. But the problem is now to co-exist with the machines without losing the quality, the elegance of our humanness. This co-existence with high technology is quite a dangerous cultural challenge. Effort is necessary.

On the sub-moral it was a response and correlation, but here effort, a conscious effort, exercising all the capacities and especially the cerebral capacities to have a wonderfully refined, alert, sensitive brain, sharp brain, all that is necessary. To see to it that there is no chaos in the thought movement,

such a vast territory of emotions, sentiments, patterns of behaviour, conditioned reflexes, powers, ideas and so on, to see to it that there is no chaos in the psychological dimension of our consciousness becomes a responsibility and a privilege, both. To be human, to be multi-dimensional implies this.

Now let us move to the third, not the third as the final, nobody can give a final word about the wholeness of life, but we are tentatively referring to the third, the trans-psychological. Moving from the sub-moral to the moral, now we come to the a-moral or non-moral dimension.

You cannot apply any code of conduct, norm or criteria to love. Love is not of the mind. Love may get expressed through sex, heterosexuality, homosexuality or whatever, but love is not based upon sex, it is not of mind, it is not of thought. It is something that is rooted in the deepest layer of your being which is timeless, which is thought free. The yearning for freedom, the craving for freedom, whether we are able to live the freedom is a different question, but in every human heart there is an un verbalized yearning for unconditional freedom. Freedom is not a thought, a concept, an abstraction. I call it a trans-psychological dimension. Beauty is not something that can be constructed by the mind. It is something that opens up and manifests with maturity, with holistic growth. Beauty radiates from innocence. Innocence is not of thought, it has nothing to do with ignorance. Innocence, humility, beauty, love, joy, sorrow, they are not related to the movement of thought at all, they are not related to the movement of time, they have nothing to do with memory, they are not a response to memory. The source of all these seems to be the potential unconditioned energies contained within us. In order to let this trans-psychological dimension operate in our lives, effortlessness of total relaxation of the psychological, of the moral, of the thought movement, is vitally necessary.

The state of meditation is a state of unconditional effortlessness, unconditional relaxation of the psychological dimension. The biological goes on, the breathing in, the breathing out, the blood circulation, the functioning of the digestive organs, all that goes on. It is part of nature. You may cultivate the process of breathing and teach yourself pranayama, you may see that there are no toxins in your blood system, you may see that the immune system in your body works properly and nothing interferes with it. But this unconditional relaxation of the psychological, of the moral, that which has been built by human hand and human thought, systematically built bit by bit through centuries, that effort has to subside.

In our way of living, the handling of the sub-moral and the moral through effort, through the movement of thought, is something we have got used to, but we do not realize that for living in the wholeness of life effortlessness is also inevitable in daily living.

For example I have conducted a verbal investigation about what is god, divinity, what is the ultimate reality, what is nature. I have conducted an investigation on the verbal level. I have observed the mechanism of mind and thought. After having done this (i.e. the verbal investigation and the personal encounter through observation) is it not necessary that the movement of effort ends completely? It has lost its relevance. I have seen what is contained in the thought structure, what is implied in its movement, seen the relation between the psychological and the physical. After having seen it, having seen the known, the past, is it not necessary that the enquiry at the intellectual level, academic theoretical level, enquiry at the verbal level ends completely? I let it go.

Intellectual enquiry is not a life-long occupation, it has a limited purpose. The description about the divinity does not

enable me to feel the presence of the divinity. The movement of knowledge has to subside, has to end and leave the space for emptiness or silence, for the feel of the trans-psychological, the feel of the unconditioned to take place. It is not something that I can grasp with the help of words, it is not something that I can reach through my senses. The reliance upon the brain, the reliance upon verbalization, the addiction to verbalization and intellectualization or theoretization is the last knot to be undone.

This attachment to words, to verbalization, to descriptions, definitions, to ideations, is so subtle that we are not even aware of it. It is only when you live together in silence, or live at home in silence for a few days that you begin to feel suffocated because you have not opened your mouth and talked. You can be together in silence, it is marvellous because then you are together in your existential glory. There is so much to share without words, but our addiction to verbalization is so deep, so deep rooted, this slavery to the movement of verbalization!

Effortlessness or relaxation might help us to set ourselves free. We are in the clutches of the psychological, we are addicted to the movement of thought energy, we might not feel, not have the sensitivity, receptivity to feel the presence of the still subtler energy of intelligence, subtler energy of love or compassion. It may be there and we may not feel it because the sensitivity is not there, the receptivity is not there. So the vital necessity of introducing in our way of living this art of living in the inner space of silence is something to which I am trying to attract your notice and attention.

You live in that emptiness, you live in that silence, use the psychological dimension, the thought movement when necessary, if necessary, precisely, accurately and the moment its movement is unwarranted you are back in the abode of

silence so that the trans-psychological, the unconditioned energies can operate, percolate through the psychological right down to the biological, to the sensual level.

Thought cannot sensitize the body, please do see this! Knowledge has not got the dynamism to change the quality of your consciousness. It can give it a polish but it cannot make it sensitive from within, give it the holistic unconditional sensitivity as the substance of your consciousness. Holistic sensitivity, not compartmental sensitivity; being sensitive to music, to poetry and so on. Somehow it is very unpleasant for us to live in the inner emptiness, inner silence, to go to the frontiers of the psychological and make the emptiness of silence our abode.

We spend time in silence waiting for something to happen and the tension of waiting does not allow anything to happen, because it creates its own rigidity. I wonder if you have noticed how tense you become when you are waiting for something, you may be waiting for your friend. There is an inner tension which builds up every few moments: "Hasn't come yet, hasn't happened yet... Three months, twelve months...it hasn't happened, I was waiting all the time, I was counting days, hours for it to happen, it did not happen".

But the other, the unconditioned, the divine does not obey human dictate. The verbal, the cerebral, the intellectual enquiry has to terminate some time. Not go on reading books, listening to tapes, seeing videos all your life. This is really something very serious one is talking about. If we go on reading the books or listening to the tapes or seeing the videos, the words would lose their glamour, lose their dynamism. When you listen to them for the first time they convey a certain meaning. When you go back to them in order to escape boredom or loneliness, go back to the words once, twice, ten times, then there is diminishing utility. First you look at the

video because you want to understand, you want to study. You may see the video once, twice, thrice in order to study every word and get the feel of life behind those words. But if you go on seeing the same video for six months, for twelve months, what will happen? You want to use it as an intellectual stimulant, then it loses the sanctity, the seeing of it loses the vitality. Please do see this.

So it seems to me that the verbal enquiry has a beginning and there comes a time when you have exhaustively gone through the verbal enquiry, you have to let it terminate completely and be with the facts of life in an effortless condition. Be with the facts whether transformation has occurred or not occurred, whether the state of meditation is there or there is a feeling of emptiness. We have to stick it out! Be with the emptiness, be with the loneliness, not run away from the facts because you have exhausted the verbal dimension. Permutation and combination in knowledge is not going to help. That has to be renounced. It has a beginning and it has an ending. You use speech when necessary, if necessary, otherwise you do not indulge in throwing words, gossiping around. You relax, you withdraw from verbalization, so that the nerves are free of the chemical and neurological effect of words.

You meet people when you have to share in company, but you do not run after people because you feel lonely. Face the loneliness, see what happens! You know after the verbal investigation and the exploration through observation, what remains with us is the act of being with the facts, effortlessly; being with the fact in an austere way, not trying to change the fact, not feeling a martyr complex that there has been no change, no value judgement at all, just being with the fact. That effortless dimension, that dimension of silence, when silence becomes the natural abode, we call meditation.

As you live at the thought level, one lives at the level of inner emptiness without trying to catch the energies contained in silence, to use them or trade upon them, cash in upon them. The trans-psychological dimension is the dimension of effortlessness, is the dimension of solitude.

Move with the body, move in society, move in relationships, do your job, but along with that do not dismiss to live at the trans-psychological level of solitude, silence, relaxation. If that becomes an organic part in the way of living, if there is a balance between the sub-moral, moral and trans-moral dimension - response, exertion and effortless dimension - if you do justice to the multi-dimensional nature of your consciousness, then I think the clarity of perception, the vividness of understanding and the holistic qualitative change occur by themselves.

We have looked at the multi-dimensional nature of our consciousness, the privilege and responsibility of living with the awareness of that multi-dimensional nature, the nature of holistic life. The content of wholeness is composite and complex both.

Question: "If silence is love and release of cosmic intelligence, how can solitude be an experience?"

Boston, USA - October 1990.

Nobody says that solitude or silence can be an experience. After all what is solitude? The discontinuity of the movement of the known within me. Solitude is not absence of companions on the physical level. The essence of solitude, the essence of silence is the ending, the spontaneous subsiding of the movement of knowledge, of the movement of the known, the past. So where is the experiencer to convert that dimension of silence or solitude into an experience? The me, the ego, which converts every event into an experience by referring it back to memory and naming it and identifying it, is in a state of non-action. So there is no centre for an experience to take place there. Isn't love being in a realm of non-duality, is it not the state of egolessness, may be for a moment or for eternity?

Please do see that experience requires an experiencer and a movement of experiencing, which in its turn implies referring an event to memory in order to name it, to identify it and to find out if there are any conditioned reflexes in order to react to it, for you manoeuvre your new way of reacting.

So experience, experiencer, experiencing is a game that goes on on the mental level, on the level in which we ordinarily live. The 'I' is either acquiring pieces of knowledge or acquiring experiences, owning them, protecting them, comparing them, and so on. It's an acquisitive, comparative, evaluatory movement. That's the way the 'I' survives.

But when we talk about silence, or the total relaxation of the thought movement, we are talking about a trans-psycho-

logical dimension where there is no centre and no circumference, no periphery. There the activity of knowing or experiencing is not possible. There events take place in the totality of your being, in the wholeness of your being. The supreme intelligence takes charge of your being, it sees through the eyes, it listens through the ears, it responds through the senses, it may use the thought movement if and when necessary, but the very foundation of perception and the source of response goes through a radical change in that dimension. Living becomes a movement of the wholeness of your life, wholeness of your being, it is no more a fragmentary movement, no more a partial movement as biological, psychological.

Living in wholeness is a holistic way of living, it is a holistic movement. In that movement there is three in one: the biological, the psychological and the trans-psychological; the conditioned and the unconditioned in one, blended into one: the perfume of awareness of the wholeness of life, of the divinity of life, by which we are surrounded, and the divinity of life within us.

One has to use the word within and outer you know, but there is nothing like inner and outer....

Question: "Can we help each other's enquiry? Can there be mutually shared enquiry?"

Boston USA - October 1990.

If the enquiry is based upon the authority of a book or a person, it cannot be shared. Then your enquiry can be based upon one book or the authority of one person, and my enquiry can be based upon the authority of another person. If you accept some authority, as a guru, as a master, then the enquiry would imply following what the master, the teacher says, what he or she expects of you. Such enquiry implies conforming to what the scriptures prescribe. Please do see that. In fact it is no enquiry at all. It's a process of accepting, conforming, repeating, projecting. So enquiry based on authority cannot be shared.

If it is to be enquiry worth the name, a romance with the unknown, a non-acquisitive movement of learning, such a non-authoritative enquiry can be shared by persons. You come together two or more, and conduct a participatory enquiry. In countries like the USA or perhaps Australia, New Zealand, South America, etc., where non-authoritarian, non-conventional, non-traditional spiritual enquiries do not find a supportive atmosphere or surroundings, do not have the sanction of social acceptance, such non-authoritarian participatory enquiries have a tremendous importance, because the individual does not feel lonely, he has companions on the voyage towards the unknown. Then shared group enquiries by itself becomes a strength in a civilization or society which has not got a supportive atmosphere for such movement or activity.

Secondly, in such participatory enquiry it is vitally necessary that perception of truth or discovery of truth is not owned

as a personal experience but as an occurrence, a happening, in the movement of learning. If in the enquiry together, the investigation together, the exploration together, perception of an aspect of truth takes place, then it is shared verbally, but without asserting that it is my perception. If enquiry is shared, perception also can be shared. The moment I feel this is my perception, it is my experience, then I close the door on a cooperative or participatory exploration. It cannot be a team anymore, because I isolate myself, owning the happening as my experience. I forget that the others have, by their company, by their discussions, dialogue, caused the occurrence as much as my inner enquiry has caused it. You know, non-authoritarian enquiry is a new dimension in the field of religion or spirituality.

To have the humility not to own the occurrences of discovery or the occurrences of perception as personal property, psychological property, is a vital requirement of such group enquiries or of two persons enquiring together. So along with non-authoritarian approach: non-assertive sharing, without feeling tempted to convert the happening into a value judgement, or deduce a conclusion with a sense of finality about it. Just to share: "This is what has happened, this is how I see it". Then your perceiving the truth becomes your way of seeing it, and my perception becomes my way of seeing it. So truth is enriched by the perceptions that have taken place in the lives of two persons from two different angles. Truth is infinite, life is infinite; so enquiry can be conducted from infinite angles, innumerable approaches and might have innumerable versions taking place in the lives of human beings.

Thirdly, help can flow from one to another, among two or three or more, when there is no desire to condition each other or one another by happenings in one's life. You narrate them, you communicate them, you share them, but there is no

motivation, expressed or clandestine, to convince the other person that my experiences are much more worthwhile than yours. If there is a motivation to influence, to convince, to condition the other, then shared enquiry gets blocked, it cannot progress. When there is a motivation and the other person gets an indication through my indirect suggestions, there comes up a resistance in the consciousness of the other person. The other person may not express it, out of shyness, out of fear of displeasing me, but every motivation to influence, to convince, to convert, to condition is resisted by human beings, sometimes consciously, sometimes vaguely at the sub-conscious level. It cannot be otherwise because no human consciousness likes to be dominated, to be influenced. So the third requirement is total absence of motivation at conditioning, convincing, converting.

It happens so very often in the field of religious or spiritual enquiry, we are so eager to convert others. So when you ask me: "Can we help each other in enquiry?", I say it is possible provided you are equipped for such help to flow between you from one to the other. One who receives the help should not feel humiliated, should not get into an inferiority complex, should not feel that he is being humiliated. To be very diligent that the freedom of the other person is not encroached upon by me in any way whatsoever, not to cast a shadow on the face of your companion, on the psyche of your companion, that's the beauty of human relationships. Because help at the psychical level is not like your charity or generosity in giving relief to people - food, clothing, medicine - it cannot be given at that level. When there is no giver and no receiver and the help gets transmitted through non-assertive sharing, then there is a beauty, then the help flowing between the two enriches the lives of both the persons, or the ten persons, if there is a group. It is a new science and a new art of enquiry in religion.

If you feel concerned about eliminating all the sources of exploitation through the master and disciple relationship or commercialization of spiritual enquiry, etc., etc., if you would like to eliminate all that ugly business which has been going on in the realm of human consciousness in the name of spirituality, in the name of something sacred, if you are really interested in eliminating that, bringing freedom, bringing a sense of equality, a sense of friendship in the psychic field, then I think groups will have to launch upon such adventures of shared enquiry, shared exploration, shared experiences, which are factually happenings. It's so beautiful when you can look at the happenings, the experiences of your life, as necessary occurrences in the process of human growth, the consummation of human growth, when you can look at them non-personally. I wonder if some of you had ever the opportunity of attending a Krishnamurti gathering in America, Europe, England or India or wherever. Sometimes, in the midst of discussing, Krishnamurti would say: "Am I helping you?" and after a moment he would say: "I hope not!" and people would feel confounded, baffled, puzzled. But what he used to imply, it seems to me, was: "I am not the giver of help, you are not the receiver sitting there, but it is something that has happened between you and me, it has taken two to happen, not the relationship of giver and receiver, but of two friends having a dialogue: flash of a truth, perception of some angle of reality, a sense of freedom suddenly sweeping the consciousness, and so on". So when we use the term help in relation to enquiry, we have to be very very careful. Words are very dangerous things, when you touch them, when you use them. You have to be extremely cautious, they are loaded with so many associations of ideas and emotions.

A last thought from Vimala's final talk.

Boston, USA - October 1990.

In modern societies in practically all the countries of the world, developed and underdeveloped, the sense of absolute values of life, the sense of sanctity, of sacredness of life, has been fading away, has been evaporating, in spite of religious fundamentalism that is growing by the day the world over. We have come from different countries of the world, as lonely enquirers in our country, or community. When in such camps, on the international level, we come together, we are joining hands across oceans, across national boundaries, and a new fellowship, a sense of companionship can grow, if it is allowed to grow. We belong to one another in this marvellous sacred enquiry of what is life, what is living, what is the mystery of relationship, what is dying, what is death, what is sorrow, what is suffering. We belong to one another in the movement of enquiry. Then I may be living in India and you in USA, East Coast, West Coast, in England, in Holland, in Norway, in Denmark and so on and yet there is an awareness that you are not a lonely person, you have your companions, you have your fellow enquirers in different parts of the world.

Such friendships that take place in the camps, they have a beginning but no end: once you meet you do not depart, though you may depart physically. It's a kind of companionship and fellowship at a very deep level of your being.

International Gathering with Vimala Thakar on "Life As Teacher"

in Bovendonk, Hoeven, Holland
from 1st to 14th september 1991

WEEK 1: Sunday 1st to Thursday 5th September
The first week is mainly for those who are fairly new to Vimala's seminars.

Sunday	13.00	arrival and registration
	15.30	tea
	18.00	dinner
	20.00	talk by Vimala

Monday to Thursday - daily programme

7.00	yoga (optional)
8.00	breakfast
9.30	silence session
10.00	talk or enquiry into questions
11.15	coffee break
12.30	lunch
13.30	opportunity to formulate questions in groups
15.30	tea
16.30	silence session
18.00	dinner
20.30	music/video (optional)

Thursday morning: programme as above
departure after lunch

WEEK 2: Sunday 8th to Saturday 14th September

The second week is for those who have tried to put the teachings into practice for some years.

NB: From Wednesday morning till Friday evening there will be a three days' silence camp. Participants are asked to remain in silence throughout the day.

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