

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

MEDITATION

MEDITATION

BY HIS HOLINESS
MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI

with

*Questions
and
Answers*

TO

THE LOTUS FEET OF SHRI GURU DEVA,
HIS DIVINITY SWAMI BRAHMANANDA
SARASWATI, JAGADGURU BHAGWAN
SHANKARACHARYA OF JYOTIR MATH,
HIMALAYAS; AND AS HIS BLESSINGS
FROM HIM TO THE LOVERS OF LIFE
DESIROUS OF ENJOYING ALL GLORIES
WORLDLY AND DIVINE.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Foreword	
Part One	MEDITATION	1
	Life is Joyful	2
	How all Things have their Origin in Absolute Bliss	
	Consciousness	4
	The Absence of Enduring Happiness as a Common	
	Experience	7
	Why does Man Suffer?	10
	The Cure for Suffering	11
	What is Meditation?	14
	The Process of Meditation	15
	The Wandering Mind	16
	Concentration is not the Way	17
	The Way to Realisation through the Absolute-Attribute	
	of the Divine	18
	The Way to Realisation through the Consciousness-	
	Attribute of the Divine	19
	The Way to Realisation through the Bliss-Attribute	23
	The Development of Higher Consciousness	28
	Unfoldment of Latent Faculties	31
	Meditation and Health	33
	Meditation and Education	35
	The Ultimate Goal of Meditation	36
Part Two	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	
	Meditation	43
	Mantra	104
	Mind	113
	Free Will	116
	Master	118
	Suffering	136
	Healing	147
	Psychoanalysis	149
	Hypnosis	154

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FOREWORD

This book consists of two parts. Part one is a talk by Maharishi on Meditation and part two are questions from audiences and answers given by him. These cover the period from March 1960 to middle of 1961, when Maharishi held evening discourses at 27, Pont Street, London, England. The questions and answers have been grouped under particular headings.

We wish to thank Mr. Henry Nyburg for perusing the manuscripts and making invaluable suggestions which have all been incorporated. This book would not have been possible were it not for the philanthropy of Mrs. Marjorie Gill, who made it possible for the group to meet daily under the roof of 27 Pont Street.

May, 1967.

Rishikesh.

Publishers.

MEDITATION

What is needed today is a means of harmonising the qualities of the head with the powers of the heart. When the head alone is heeded and the heart unheeded, man cannot help falling into error. This is what is happening constantly in the world today. Where do all the advances in science and technology and the frantic pursuit of knowledge of all kinds lead man?

There is an ever-increasing state of chaos in the world; tension increases daily in the individual, in social life, in national affairs and international relations. The great and urgent need is for something to re-establish harmony in the individual human being and to give him peace; only from such an inner peace can wisdom and happiness be born. All that we call wisdom today, all knowledge, the whole process of endless fact-gathering must utterly fail to satisfy the real needs of man; for these real needs are called happiness, understanding and wisdom, and they are not vain and unworldly aspirations but man's birthright.

I came out of the Himalayas with a method designed to raise both the head and the heart of man to the point where knowledge and appreciation of the quality of his higher nature can be attained. I call my method meditation, but it is, in fact, a technique of self-exploration; it enables a man to dive into the innermost reaches of his being, in which dwell the

essence of life and the source of all wisdom, all creativity, all peace and all happiness. It is that place which has been called, in the Christian teaching, the 'Kingdom of Heaven within'.

The word 'meditation' is not new; nor are the benefits of meditation new. On the contrary, the message is centuries-old: it is the message of Buddha, of Christ and of Krishna. It says, as they said, only get to the inner kingdom, to the heavenly heart, and you will earn for yourself eternal freedom—not in the future, not after death, but now, and forever.

For centuries the technique of meditation of this kind has been forgotten. This is why man suffers, or seems to suffer. This is why suffering has become so universal, so much an inescapable part of life, that those responsible for leading people to the Kingdom of Heaven have come to preach the necessity for suffering; suffering has become a virtuous act, and the man who maintains that life is a bitter and sorrowful struggle, is commended for his level-headedness and good grasp of reality! Such is the unfortunate understanding of life today.

LIFE IS JOYFUL

I hold that life is bliss. In essence life is not a struggle. Man is not born to suffer, but to feel joyful; he is born of bliss, consciousness, wisdom and creativity. Once the flower of life has bloomed in a man, then consciousness, wisdom and creativity are ever-present in him. When the inner, or spiritual, and the outer, or material, glories of life are consciously brought into harmony, then life is integrated and becomes truly worth living.

What is meant by the statement that life is essentially joyful—that life is bliss? It is a startling thing to say, perhaps, when suffering is evident all around one.

The orange is sweet. This means the real substance of the orange is sweet. The covering of the orange, on the other hand, is bitter to the taste. But even though the skin is bitter, nevertheless the orange is thought of as sweet because sweet is the juice within it.

Like the orange, life has two parts or aspects—inner and outer. The outer is the temporary, ever-changing aspect; the inner is the permanent, never-changing aspect. That the inner, never-changing aspect is blissful is a fact that can be experienced. It is for this reason that I say that life is blissful, for it is the sweet and blissful aspect that is the ultimate reality of existence and not the bitter, ever-changing aspect.

Happiness, wisdom and creativity are characteristics of the absolute state of Being, which is pure consciousness. This absolute bliss consciousness is the veritable source of man, and there need be no dullness and no apathy in the life of any individual man, for he is born of wisdom. Only so long as he is unaware of, and separated from, this fountain of wisdom can he find himself in ignorance and confusion. Ignorance is due to an inability to reach the fountain head of wisdom, that is all. A man shivers in the cold of the verandah simply because he is not enjoying the warmth of the living-room. There is no reason for man to be dull and uncreative. He has tremendous potentialities for creation. He is born to enjoy, not to suffer.

Man as man—having evolved into the human specie—has a nervous system developed to the point where it is within his ability to experience the state of absolute bliss consciousness. The nervous systems of being in the lower strata of creation, like birds and animals, do not have this capacity for the enjoyment to great happiness for their nervous systems are not so highly developed. But the nervous system of man is sufficiently developed. He is able to experience joy and consciousness

in all their abundance. This is why we dare to say that life is bliss and man is born to enjoy.

HOW ALL THINGS HAVE THEIR ORIGIN IN ABSOLUTE BLISS CONSCIOUSNESS

In the world, misery and pain are the daily experience of many unfortunate people. There is also happiness, but the state that can be justly described as blissful is happiness of a greater order; it is permanent and enduring and does not have the transient quality of all ordinary happiness.

The transient nature of ordinary happiness is something that no intelligent person can have failed to observe; we perpetually hope that our latest happiness will endure but it never does. This sad fact is so familiar to us that we find it difficult to believe that such a thing as unchanging happiness could possibly exist.

It can and does exist. Recent scientific discoveries are very interesting in this context. Science has discovered that all matter is composed of electrons and protons, and that these electrons and protons, themselves consist simply of electrical charges. From this fundamental discovery stems the inescapable conclusion that the ultimate reality of a leaf or a flower is no more than formless electricity, formless energy. However different may be the forms, shapes, designs, and colours that we perceive it makes not the slightest difference; behind all manifestation, all diversity, lies the ultimate reality of matter—formless, undifferentiated, immaterial. Just as ice, although perceived as ice, is composed only of water, so all forms and all phenomena are composed of basic formless energy.

The impact of this discovery is only starting to be felt in

the scientific world, but already it is generally admitted that science can no longer confine to the study of material things but must if it is to advance at all, start examining the properties of pure energy.

By this very admission, science also recognises the fact that matter is not the totality of existence.

How does this apply to the question of personal, individual happiness? We have a body which is material, but we also have a mind, an intellect, an ego and a soul, and none of these can be described as material in the sense that the body is material. In fact, the existence of the individual can be divided into two aspects—the body, which is objective and the mind, ego and intellect, which are subjective. Unfortunately, there are no reliable experimental methods of investigating the subjective aspects of our existence—of finding out of what mind, intellect and ego are made. If there were we would find that they, too, derive from the ultimate formless energy. This energy is, in fact, the basic reality of subjective existence, just as much as it is of objective creation. The same thing, the same primordial energy is manifested as material flesh and bone and also as the properties of the intellect, the mind and the ego. From this single basic energy derive all the permutations and combinations of creation in the entire universe.

So it is that there is only one reality, never-changing. All that changes is part of the field of relativity and all changes take place in the field of relativity. That which is the ultimate reality of relativity is absolute. Its essential nature is absolute bliss consciousness—and *that alone is*, and *that I am* and *that thou art*. This is the one reality which underlies all subjective and objective aspects of life.

The division into subjective and objective aspects can also be applied to the personality. Subjective personality is that

which experiences—the experiencer in us. The experiencer is compounded of the breath principle, the senses, the mind, the intellect, the ego, and also the soul, but this comes into a special category since it lies beyond both subjective and objective aspects. All aspects are subject to change—objective personality continually changes because the state of the body is never stable; in the same way the mind, intellect and ego are in a continuous state of flux. But at the root of these ever-changing entities there is the never-changing principle of life, and that *I am*, which is the reality of life, and which we term the soul.

The nature of the soul was described in the words of Christ—'The Kingdom of Heaven' in which 'I and the Father are One', meaning a level which knows no duality. It transcends all fields of nature, both subjective and objective; it is the field of the absolute. It is the state of Being, the pure state of Being, and is the Transcendental Reality. The nature of it is bliss-happiness of the highest order. Because this bliss-happiness is the ultimate reality it is consequently omnipresent and the essential constituent of all things. If water is regarded as the ultimate reality of ice, then water is the essential constituent of ice—every crystal of ice is nothing but water. Absolute bliss consciousness is that which pervades the whole of existence, which presents itself in myriad different degrees and aspects; it is an abstract formlessness manifested in innumerable ways to become all names and all forms, to become all phases of the subjective and objective personalities of man. Here it is ego, there it is intellect, there mind, there the senses, the breath, the body, the feelings, the earth, the stones and the trees. Our whole cosmos is nothing but the different degrees of manifestation of a single unchanging principle.

If absolute bliss consciousness is universal and omnipresent, how can it be that we do not feel it? Here is a paradox.

Even if we manage to accept the fact of the omnipresence of bliss consciousness intellectually, a predominance of dullness, apathy and even misery—in others even if not in ourselves—is what strikes us in the course of our daily life. So what is the truth of the matter?

The truth is this: given that absolute bliss consciousness is the basic reality and constituent of all life then any experience of ours which is miserable, or in any degree akin to misery, is the experience of non-reality. We are not living in the knowledge and appreciation of the bliss-consciousness which is characteristic of our fundamental being. Something has gone wrong with the machinery which controls our ability to experience.

There are two states of ultimate reality. These are the un-manifested and the manifested states. The un-manifested state is *anoraniyan*, the atom of atoms or the minute of the minutiae; in this un-manifested states the essential characteristic of it is absolute bliss consciousness. But in its manifested state absolute bliss consciousness remains latent while other properties appear as part of the manifestation. In the same way, water's property of fluidity becomes latent when the water is transformed into ice. Water in its essential nature is fluid and transparent, but when it is changed to ice it is solid and cloudy. The solidity and opalescence of ice are, in fact, contrary and opposite to the fluidity and transparency of water.

Changed characteristics differ from the original according to the intensity of the change. Vapour, cloud, mist, snow and ice are the several states of water; water itself is liquid

but its metamorphosis can vary from the solid to the gaseous.

This helps to explain the existence of misery in the midst of the omnipresence of bliss. When the un-manifested becomes manifested its characteristics of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, of absolute bliss consciousness, remain latent and give way to characteristics which are the opposite of *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. In this way the never-changing absolute existence and absolute-bliss characteristic of the un-manifested Being becomes the ever-changing relative existence and relative joy of the manifested universe.

Our organ of experience, the mind, experiences through the senses. Our machinery of experience is able to experience only the gross aspect of the ultimate reality, and fails to experience the subtler aspects of its essential nature. We know that the senses have their strict limitations. When a plant is big our naked eyes can see it, but when the plant becomes very minute we cannot see it and we need a microscope. In the same way our ears can hear the loud but not the softest sounds and our noses can detect the gross odour but not the subtle one. Because our senses are limited to the registration of natural phenomena in their grosser aspects this does not mean that subtler aspects do not exist. Furthermore, not only are our senses limited to gross appreciation but they are constantly busy with that gross appreciation. The subtler aspects of nature are as if screened, because the machinery of perception has itself become gross through long-established gross usage. The scientist has now learned to extend the range of his senses by the use of instruments like the microscope and telescope; with these his range of perception is vastly increased and he is able to examine far subtler fields of creation—but however great the increase there are still subtleties which lie beyond the range of his perception, beyond the range even of the electron microscope and the radio-telescope.

The subtle fields of nature are beyond our present capacity for experience. Our lives are spent in the cognition of the gross aspects of creation and the glory of the subtle aspects eludes us because we have not the habit or ability to perceive them. Since greater power and greater beauty are to be found in the subtler fields of creation we should derive great enjoyment and benefit from the perception of these fields if only we could achieve it. The power of a stone hurled at a man is limited, but the power of the atoms of the stone, if it were to be liberated, is almost limitlessly vast. This is an example of how greater power and, therefore, greater glory lies in the subtle fields of nature. The subtle aspects of nature, of all creation, are also infinitely more beautiful, more fascinating, more charming than the gross aspects can ever be. But while we confine ourselves to experiencing only the gross aspects through the senses we are limiting our joys of life.

The whole field of life is a material field, but its materiality is graded, ranging from the most gross to the most subtle. In perceiving only objective creation through the action of the senses the direction of our experience is always turned outwards. What we fail to understand is that the mind lies somewhere about mid-point between the gross and the subtle, between the two extremes of the fully manifested and the completely un-manifest, and in facing outwards the mind necessarily turns its back upon the inner, subtler fields of nature. If there were a way of turning the mind inwards it would unfailingly respond because it would find itself experiencing greater charm and greater happiness. It is the natural tendency of the mind to be constantly seeking peace and happiness. While it is turned outwards it can only move restlessly from one aspect of the relative field of creation to another, but, once turned inwards, its own natural, inborn tendency to go to the field of greater happiness can carry

it without effort through the subtle to the subtlest and most glorious aspects of manifest creation and, ultimately, beyond even that point to the un-manifest—to Transcendental bliss consciousness.

WHY DOES MAN SUFFER?

Every man's mind wants to enjoy, wants to know, wants to create more. If there were a field profuse with creativity, happiness, peace and wisdom, that is the field the mind would search for. Nothing in the field of relativity can enduringly satisfy the mind, for the field of relativity lacks the element of the absolute, of the unchanging, and it is this unchanging element, the seat of lasting happiness, to which the mind is constantly seeking to return.

There will always be aspirations in man for greater happiness, greater wisdom and greater creativity. These are legitimate and natural aspirations without which man would cease to be man. Man suffers and is miserable—not because of his legitimate aspirations and desires, but because of his inability to achieve them, to fulfil his desires. There are theories which assert that desires are the cause of man's suffering, and that if he seeks happiness he should root out and destroy his desires. But I hold that it is inability to fulfil desires, and not the desires in themselves, that is the cause of man's misery and frustration. Obviously, if the inability to be happy, wise and creative could only be overcome in a man then he would become and would remain contented. But his happiness, wisdom and creativity must not be sought in the field of relativity, for whatever is found there, no matter how great a relative happiness or how great a relative degree of wisdom is it will not satisfy the restless

mind. Even the greatest happiness, rooted in the relative field and bounded by time and space, cannot be lasting. Because of the very nature of the manifested world, all things in it have to be ephemeral and ever-changing. Only in the field of the un-manifest, of the absolute, can the mind reach lasting satisfaction which will give it peace.

THE CURE FOR SUFFERING

In reality there is no reason for man to suffer. There is no reason why a fish need be thirsty in a pound full of water. It is ridiculous that a fish should be thirsty in a pond full of water, and if a fish is found to be so then the logical inference is that it chooses to be thirsty. It must be a matter of choice, since all the fish has to do is open its mouth and drink. When absolute bliss consciousness is omnipresent there is no reason for man to suffer in life. Man, the son of the almighty merciful Father, swims in bliss-consciousness as the fish swims in water and yet thirsts for happiness! This is as ridiculous as finding the son of a millionaire poor and in torn clothing. If we did find a millionaire's son in such a state we would presume that he had chosen, perhaps for the sake of a change, to walk in rags. If man suffers, it is only due to his rejecting the reality of life; to his not enjoying the glory, happiness and wisdom that is eternally accessible to him.

Man cannot escape from pain and suffering except by reaching the field of the absolute, by finding the Kingdom of Heaven within, by realising his essential nature. This is called Self-realisation.

To attain the realisation of the Self the path is simple, and the way is easy, for the realisation of the Self is only the reali-

sation of one's own being which is at no distance from oneself and is always available. The path to 'I' has no distance, it is a pathless path. One cannot conceive of any distance in the attempt to find oneself. One must just 'be' and the Self is found. And when there is no distance there cannot be any difficulty on the path. Without a way, without a path, and without any obstacles and difficulties, the Self is found in itself.

That which is the essential constituent of everything lies everywhere, in the experiencer and in the object of experience. The essential nature of the experiencer is that which is called the Self of the experiencer. Realisation of his own Self, which is not separate or apart or distant from him, is man's birthright and the state in which he should, naturally and without effort, spend his life.

Everybody can say '*I am*'. No body can say '*I am not*'. Whatever may be said or felt to the contrary, the time required to realise one's Self is not long, nor the distance far. Who has not seen a man with spectacles think that he has lost his spectacles and begin to search for them when they are before his eyes all the time? The search for realisation is made through the ever-present spectacles of the Self. All that the man with lost spectacles has to do is to become aware of them before his eyes and his search is ended. The divine in us is not lost; it does not have to be sought for or brought back from anywhere; it is not in the seventh heaven or any other heaven, and to become aware of it we do not need to die! From time immemorial it has been repeated by teachers of all ages and all religions, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within', and this means what it says—it does not mean that the Kingdom of Heaven is without, or inaccessible, or beyond death. The path to the Kingdom of Heaven, that which is the Self, the subtlest aspect of man's own nature, is called the pathless path only because there is no distance be-

tween the experiencer and the Self.

In spite of this there is endless talk and writing about the different ways and methods of realisation! The truth is that any mode of experience in man can be used as a path to realisation. The capacity for experience varies infinitely from man to man but it can be divided into five categories derived from the five senses—hearing, sight, taste, touch and smell. In some the senses of taste is better developed, in others the sense of hearing, touch or smell is more acute. Through any one of these organs of experience the essential nature of the experiencer could be realised. Consequently there could be as many ways of experiencing the divine nature as there are of perceiving the phenomena of the created universe.

The phrase ‘pathless path’ may seem paradoxical, but it has in fact a precise meaning which is difficult to express in any other way.

Taking the act of seeing a flower as an example. In fact, of course, the path of experience of either the inner or the outer world always begins inside and ends inside. When the mind directs attention upon a flower, the flower is perceived, the perceiving of the flower starts from inside and ends inside—the journey ends where it began. In making the journey we will have followed the pathless path to the realisation of the Self.

This is the one, high truth about all paths of realisation, that there is no path, that all such paths start and end at the same point.

Although the path to realisation is a pathless path, although unity naturally prevails, diversity has obscured and hidden unity so that the pathless path is covered by long paths. With unity obscured by diversity the pathless path becomes an endless path. When we say that unity is obscured by diversity we mean that the point has expanded itself, and when the point

of unity expands to points of diversity, then the pathless path expands to a long path. There are many institutions which speak of this long path but to eternally tread the path and not arrive at the goal deflects the purpose of a path. Following the endless path the experiencer in man becomes more and more removed from reality. This is the single reason for all misery.

WHAT IS MEDITATION?

Meditation is process of leading the mind towards the realisation of the Self, a process by which the pathless path can become reality for the individual. Meditation takes the mind first to the subtler aspects of creation, then to the subtlest and, finally, beyond the subtlest to the undivided glory of the Transcendental Source of mind. It is a practical method of appreciating, not the outer form of an object, but its most deeply buried finer aspects, including its ultimate essential Being. It is quite unlike concentration. Whereas concentration fixes the mind on the outer form of an object, meditation is a dynamic process, using whatever medium is being employed to carry the mind inwards to its source. Neither is meditation to be compared with contemplation. Contemplation is a process whereby, for example, certain scriptural passages are taken and their meaning is dwelt upon. Contemplation is like swimming on the surface of a pond until the entire surface area has been surveyed and knowledge of the whole extent of it has been acquired. Meditation, on the other hand, is like diving into the depths of the pond. In this way meditation takes the mind to the depths of the ocean of mind. It is a way from man to God, a link between humanity and divinity. It is a path between imperfection and perfection, between failure and success, between worry and

peace of mind, between disease and health, between ignorance and wisdom.

THE PROCESS OF MEDITATION

The manner in which meditation takes the mind from the gross to the subtle is very simple and is based upon the innate tendency of all human minds to seek happiness. The very nature of the mind is to go to a field of grater happiness. The happiness referred to is not pleasure, nor sensual gratification, nor excitement, but tranquil and confident state of knowing—of knowing *that I am*, of knowing that ‘I’ exists and that it is permanent and unchanging.

Let us once again take for an example a flower. We look at it when it is close to the eyes and it appears large. If it is slowly moved away from us it grows smaller and smaller until it becomes no more than a point, no longer recognisable as a flower. Ultimately, it disappears from view altogether. At this moment if we were to close our eyes we would still be able to perceive the flower as a mental image; we would be able to think the flower. If we could then reduce the thought of the flower to subtler and subtler levels we would be experiencing thought in its subtler states. In the end the thought of the flower would reduce itself to a mere point of thought. When the thought of the flower is thus reduced to the subtlest state—a mere point-thought, the thinker in us, the experiencer, would still remain so long as there is that point-thought; when the object of experience is reduced to its subtlest point and when that point-state of thought is transcended, then the object ceases to be and the subject-object relationship vanishes. In such a state only the subject—the experiencer is left in its own being. This is

the state of pure, unmanifest consciousness, the nature of which is absolute bliss and which is the reservoir of all creative energy and wisdom.

The state is absolute because the mind has passed beyond the finest aspect of creation, which implies entry into a state of pure Being—that which is described as the Kingdom of Heaven, or *sat-chit-anandam*, the Absolute Bliss consciousness.

The mind, offered a choice between lesser and greater satisfaction, will choose the greater. The joyous peace of absolute bliss consciousness is such that no manifested joys or sensations can possibly compare with it, and the mind, even without experience or training, recognises this.

It is for this reason that the process of meditation is effortless—it follows the natural tendency of the mind; and once turned inwards, towards Transcendental Consciousness, happiness of absolute nature, the mind rushes towards IT. This is why this system of meditation is simple.

THE WANDERING MIND

Few people would deny that their minds are restless and forever wandering from one impression to another. This is so despite the fact that it is not in the true nature of the mind to wander. It is an error to think of the mind as a sort of monkey that has to be controlled or trained for a long time in order to persuade it to sit still. The mind is a king of kings, but it is a king in search of a throne, and it constantly wanders, even to the point of being tired and miserable, always hoping to find a worthy seat for it to occupy in peace and dignity. If once such a throne were found the mind would cease to wander because it would be satisfied, and the desire to wander would no

longer exist.

Restlessness, although characteristic of our minds as they are, is wearisome. It is not the function for which they are naturally intended any more than flying is the function for which the bee is intended; the bee flies in order to find a flower with honey in it and only continues to fly so long as its search is unrewarded. So it is with the mind; failing to find that which will satisfy it in the relative field of creation, it continues to wander aimlessly to its own detriment and exhaustion, always in search of something more enduring.

CONCENTRATION IS NOT THE WAY

There are many systems of what is called meditation which attempt to refine the mind by controlling it in one way or another. All such attempts are difficult and tedious, and, far from achieving anything tend to take away life. Because of the difficulty and inefficiency of these methods of mind control the idea has become accepted that the path to God is difficult. This is a fallacy, and stems from ignorance of the nature of the mind. There is a great difference between directing the mind in a particular direction through concentration and directing it by permitting its natural affinities to operate. We know that it is the natural tendency of every mind to flow towards a field of greater happiness. By turning the mind inwards we point the mind towards the field of absolute bliss, creativity and wisdom. It is upon this principle that our system of meditation is based and consequently its practice is not difficult.

The whole process is one of direct experience; the journey is a scientifically precise undertaking in which, at each step, the validity of the process is put to the test of direct experience.

Meditation is an intellectually satisfying exploration, in which the wisdom behind it is illumined by the result at each succeeding level, including the ultimate level of direct experience of the state of absolute Being. It could be said, in fact, by analogy, that this is an exploration of inner space where the real jewel of life is to be found, and that its scientific value and promise far exceeds that of the exploration of outer space.

The characteristic of ultimate reality are threefold. There is the characteristic of bliss-happiness; and this true meditation is the means of reaching God through this characteristic. As well, there are the characteristics of consciousness and absolute-ness, both of which offer ways of realisation, but the ways are different from the way of meditation.

THE WAY TO REALISATION THROUGH THE ABSOLUTE-ATTRIBUTE OF THE DIVINE

The absolute is beyond relativity and is eternal. The field of relativity is fleeting, always changing, but the absolute never changes. The path of realisation through this attribute is the path of discrimination.

A *sannyasi* is one who is a recluse and has renounced the world. The *sannyasi* contemplates the transient, fleeting, evanescent nature of the world and concludes that except the ultimate reality, which alone is absolute, all else is relative. The establishment of this conviction, not only in the intellect but in the life and feelings, is achieved by three steps. The first step is to 'listen to the Master'; and in this case the Master's teachings consist of explaining the futility, evanescence and unreality of created things. The second step is to contemplate the permanence of the ultimate reality; the third is to ask the

question, 'When everything is impermanent, what is the essential nature of that which is permanent?'

The conclusion to which the path of discrimination leads can be expressed in the sentence, '*That thou art and all this is nothing but that*'.

The approach to the Divine through discrimination and analysis of the world leads to making the *sannyasi's* nature part and parcel of Divine nature. Having established fully enough the conviction of the futility and impermanence of manifested creation, the *sannyasi's* mind becomes free to rest on the '*I am*', in which the '*am*' is his own Being and is eternal and permanent.

THE WAY TO REALISATION THROUGH THE CONSCIOUSNESS-ATTRIBUTE OF THE DIVINE

Consciousness, or awareness, provides the next way of approaching the Divine Nature. Consciousness is wisdom and creativity taken together; it is absolute wisdom and absolute creativity. Wisdom can be defined as that which gives us awareness of the whole, and leaves no aspect unknown. By the whole is meant the real nature of the unmanifest and this is consciousness itself. Consciousness is an attribute that must be lived; if it is lived completely, nothing of the manifested word will be left unknown. On the path to God through consciousness, consciousness is used to maintain Self Consciousness, or Self-awareness.

How is Self-awareness maintained? We see a flower and it occupies the mind completely; the flower absorbs all there is of the mind. Thus in the seeing of the flower, the flower alone remains and the experiencer is lost. This is a total *loss* of the Self. The way of consciousness demands that while experiencing

the flower, the experience should simultaneously remain conscious of himself, so that the identity of the experiencer is not drowned in the experience.

The essential technique of this process is that awareness should be *lived*. It should not be that the mind is divided into two, with one part seeing a flower and the other separately concerned with maintaining awareness. That will be wrong. With such a division of the mind it is not possible to achieve the real state of Self-awareness.

The attainment of the true state of Self-awareness is, in fact, dependant upon the experience of pure consciousness having been reached; until this has happened, even if only very briefly, the individual simply cannot know what it is that he is seeking to attain. Before some experience of pure consciousness, or *samadhi*, has been gained only the useless technique of mind-division will be practised, and this is so in spite of whatever the individual may think or imagine to the contrary. Without the experience of *samadhi*, Self-awareness can only be self-delusion.

Once a man has begun to live true Self-awareness, even if only to a small extent, he is embarked upon the way to God through consciousness. This path is properly called the path of *Raja Yoga*.

The soul is pure consciousness. It is the silent witness of all things, all activity of the ego and intellect, all experience of the senses. Devoid of activity it is silence in its nature. The path of *Raja Yoga*, therefore, amounts to a process of living, of being centred in, the divine and eternal silence.

It is very important to understand that the process of living in Self-awareness must be natural and spontaneous and must have grown from an initial glimpse of pure consciousness. Illusory Self-awareness, which is based upon the act of dividing the attention, benefits nobody; in fact it makes the mind dull. If the

practice of intellectually dividing the mind is carried on for any length of time, the man practising it tends to become a dullard, pointed neither inwards nor outwards. With the pointed nature of his mind blunted in this way, he will not succeed in the world, nor will the Divine Nature become a reality for him but will remain as a figment of imagination, a mere mental melody.

There was a certain professor in South India who had read many books and had taught himself from them to practise Self-awareness by mind-division through imperfect understanding. After about six months he found that while lecturing in class he would suddenly stop, because the natural flow of ideas had stopped. I asked him, “What is this awareness which you call perfection but which makes your mind dull? The mind should be sharp and pointed, much sharper than the point of a sword, because the experience of the Transcendental state is the experience of Divine Nature”.

It is certain that if dullness and absent-mindedness result from any practice of this nature, then the practice is illusory and false. The true practice of Self-awareness cannot dull the mind. In order to have attained the ability to be Self-aware a man must have first experienced the subtlest fields of creation, and for this his ability to experience must have been developed in the highest degree; he will not have blunted his existing faculties, but he will have sharpened them and will have developed latent faculties as well.

In the case of the professor from South India, he was deceiving himself that a haziness of mind and forgetfulness was a sign of the drawing approach of Reality, when it was in fact a sign that Reality was receding.

The question of forgetfulness is an interesting one. What happens when we seem to forget? We do not really forget because nothing is ever irretrievably forgotten; it is only that with

the dulling effect of some practice or wrong action the ability of the mind to remember is affected. When the inner state of Being is lived in all fullness, nothing need be forgotten.

Once realisation of the Self has been attained incoming impressions do not go deep and displace the experiencer; they are kept to the surface of the mind where they belong. It is as if they are lines drawn upon the surface of water, at one moment fully apparent and at the next completely invisible. Alternatively, the arrival of impressions in the realised mind can be compared with reflections of a coloured object in a crystal mirror. While they are there they are reflected, but as soon as they are withdrawn the crystal returns to its serene state of pure colourlessness. The purity and colourlessness of the mind-crystal is no longer captured and perturbed by the experience as it was before realization.

With the complete and permanent attainment of Self-awareness, the state becomes part of the nature of the mind and is lived continuously throughout the twenty-four hours of the day. This does not stop the mind from appreciating the experiences of the objective world, but it prevents those experiences from having an unnecessarily deep and enduring grasp of the mind.

Trying to maintain awareness through intellectual discipline is great folly. Awareness is not a thing that can be maintained from outside. The teachers of the path of *Raja Yoga* are very careful to warn their pupils that they should upon no account engage the mind in the maintenance of Self-awareness. They teach that Self-awareness is a thing that must be lived spontaneously as something that is there without effort. Imagination of Self-awareness is no more than the creation of a mind-melody of the Divine. Uninstructed seekers can easily fall into illusion; they can begin to see the extension of the universe to infinity, they can think that they begin to *feel* eternity. This is self-hypnosis. It

is playing with the *idea* of the Divine, but it is not the attainment of the reality of the divine, which is the state of Transcendental Being and pure consciousness.

THE WAY TO REALISATION THROUGH THE BLISS-ATTRIBUTE

It is now the time to consider the way to God through the bliss-attribute of *sat-chit-anandam*. This way is of far greater interest to us than the others because it is the way suited to the needs of the householder—he who is in life, who accepts life, and who, perfectly naturally, seeks success and fulfilment in life as well as the attainment of consciousness. The path of discrimination, through the absolute-attribute, is most unsuited to the householder because it involves a refusal to value worldly activities and a rejection of worldly experience. The path of consciousness-attribute is hardly more suitable for the householder than the way of the *sannyasi* because in order to live awareness as much as possible it is necessary that the mind should not be engaged in the experience of diversity.

The recluse, whether he follows the path through the absolute-attribute or the path through consciousness-attribute, needs to live in a restricted field of experience. He will live, for example, in a cave as a hermit, with nothing to worry about or to demand his attention. In the morning and evening, perhaps, he will go into *samadhi* and, when he comes out, will try to live the consciousness that it has given him, using perhaps a little bit of ego, a little bit of intellect, but always as little as possible. In the world of diverse experience, with the major part of his mind involved in the business of daily life, the recluse would have no chance to live Self-awareness; in fact, because of life's demands upon his attention, he could easily become

vulnerable to the error of intellectual Self-awareness. As soon as there is the need to immerse himself completely in some activity or occupation then the possibility of living Self-awareness is lost for the unrealised man.

The two ways of the recluse, therefore are entirely unsuited to the worldly man or householder and will only lead to distress and failure in life if they are attempted.

One of the three attributes of the Divine is the bliss-attribute and it is through this attribute that we shall seek our path.

We do not contemplate the Absolute; we do not intellectually seek consciousness or even think about it. Instead we let the bliss-attribute lead us to the experience of consciousness. We rely upon the fact that Transcendental happiness is a sure attraction and lure for the mind. There exists no mind that does not feel this attraction. As water flows down a slope, so will the mind flow to a field of greater happiness. The mind does not need to practise, only to respond to something that is already part of, and inseparable from, its nature.

The *Upanishads* says: 'Reality, absolute bliss consciousness, is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest'. It is both the atom of the atoms and greater than the greatest. Here then is a definition of Reality. That which is greater than the immensity of cosmic creation is the Transcendant, and that only. And that which is finer and subtler than the most refined particle of cosmic creation is again the Transcendant. How can this—the Transcendant—be experienced? The description of the path is implicit in the definition. Reality is the atom of the atoms. Reach beyond the field of subtlest creation and you will find that you have reached, at the same time, beyond the greatest.

As a description of Reality these words are meagre, but the

path to reality is implicit in them. 'Leave behind all gross experience, travel to the field of the subtlest experience and then transcend that subtlety.' And to travel it is only necessary to turn the mind inwards, towards the light of bliss-happiness, and the mind will flow towards it as water flows downhill.

When the mind has made its journey beyond the subtlest aspect of the manifest, when the experience of a sight, a sound, or a taste has been refined to the point of transcendancy, and the experiencer is left quite alone, this is called *Yoga*.

The definition of *Yoga* in the aphorisms of Patanjali is: 'When the mind ceases from wandering, this is *Yoga*, and this is the union of the lower nature with the higher nature—the union of man with God.'

Very well, but questions arise. For example, in sleep the mind is settled and ceases to wander; is this *Yoga*? To clarify his definition Patanjali adds: 'In the state of *Yoga* the experiencer is left to himself.' When the experiencer is left to himself, there is nothing left for it to experience and the individual mind is merged with and becomes the cosmic mind. But as long as there is something to be experienced, so long does the experiencer retain his individuality. It is by and through his individuality that the experiencer experiences the things of the objective world.

So long as there exists a threefold relationship—of experience, experiencer, and the mechanism of experiencing—then the individuality remains and the mind lingers in the field of objective creation. But when the experience and the experiencer become one, when the object merges into and is absorbed in the subject, the threefold relationship gives way to the unity of pure Being. Matter, which has dominated spirit, is now itself dominated by spirit; this attainment is the triumph of mind, or spirit, over matter.

Matter can be glamorous but the spirit is glorious. There is a story in India about demons who seized the earth and drowned it in water; and about the gods who came to rescue the earth from the water. This is an allegory showing how spirit, having been dazzled and betrayed by the glamour of the material world, has to regain its proper ascendancy. It does not mean that the material world is contemptible or worthless, but that only by the light of the re-awakened spirit can material glories be further glorified. The truly powerful, having defeated their enemy and having no fear of him, set him free—more, they are solicitous of him and put themselves out to increase his welfare. This is what the way of meditation could do for the material world, in which for too long matter has been defeating spirit.

Once the individual mind has reached absolute bliss consciousness and has become one with the cosmic mind then, coming out of the state of unity, such a mind will find itself permeated by and endowed with the qualities of the cosmic mind.

At first the state will not be perfect and will not endure, but with the regular practice of mediation it will come to be lived more and more and for longer and longer periods. Ultimately the state of the absolute bliss consciousness comes to be lived, fully and completely, in the midst of life, and when this has happened the life of a man is brought to fruition. The state is then called cosmic consciousness, and he who lives it lives a divine life in both the manifested and un-manifested realms of creation simultaneously.

There now remains an important aspect of this theory which need clarification. We have been speaking of realising the divine element in man and subsequently bringing it out into the world of the manifest. Although, for the sake of simplicity, this is a valid description it does not tell the whole truth. We have seemed to be speaking of a journey, but in reality there is

no journey. How could there be a journey to absolute bliss consciousness, which is omnipresent and an essential constituent of all creation? The illusion of a journey is simply produced by the fact that in unrealised man absolute bliss consciousness is hidden and smothered by the constant impressions upon the mind, the experience of gross objectivity. The only journey that is made is through the veil of objectivity, which has no thickness, and the purpose of the journey is to familiarise the mind with its own essential nature. Once the mind knows '*I am that*', then the grossness of material things will no longer capture it entirely; the mind will appreciate the subtle quality which underlies and is part of the most gross and the most material.

Having experienced water in its pure, colourless state, we shall know that water is fluid and transparent. Our eyes will continue to register the solidity and cloudiness of ice but we shall know that its appearance is only relative and that the essential fluidity and limpidity of water underlies it. With whatever we may see, or feel, or experience we shall be able to say, 'Though I am seeing or feeling this, I am not limited by this sight or this feeling.' And this will be true, not only intellectually, not only with the imaginative function, but for our entire Being; for there is a vast difference between Being, in the sense of living the whole Self, and exercising the imaginative part of the intellect in an endeavour to expand consciousness.

When talking and thinking of absolute bliss consciousness in its three aspects it is important to realise that the three paths are mutually exclusive; if we choose to approach the Divine through the absolute aspect then the doors of the bliss aspect and the consciousness aspect will be closed to us; in the same way the path of consciousness will debar a man from experience of the absolute and bliss aspects. In fact, in the practice of meditation as a way of life, we do not think about or examine or

explore any of the three attributes—not even the bliss attribute. We *use* the bliss attribute by letting the quality of bliss-happiness attract us and lead us innocently to our goal without effort or intellectualising.

Unfortunately, few seekers who start upon the paths of the absolute and consciousness attributes realise that they are turning their backs upon the third attribute—or that the paths they are attempting are long, serious, and very difficult, quite apart from being almost completely impracticable for any but the recluse. The way of meditation, on the other hand, is practical and effortless for all, including the recluse.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS

By attaining a state of union with the universal cosmic mind the individual mind passes into the realm of cosmic experience and existence, knowing no bondage, not even that of time and space. This state of union is known to all true religions; it is the Kingdom of Heaven to the Christian, *Nirvana* to the Buddhist, and *Atmananda* in the language of the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Upanishads*.

It may seem an impossibly high aim for the ordinary man, the householder; high it may be, but it can be attained by the practice of deep meditation. All that is necessary is to practise mediation innocently, without hurry or strain, and in the manner prescribed here.

From the attainment of the state of union all other things follow. Self Consciousness is the source of creativity, and that creative energy of which it is composed can be directed upon all aspects of learning, all activities of life, all wisdom, peace, power and happiness. This is the energy which can be used in the

evolution of the human personality to its ultimate potential, and it is this great evolution of the personality that is meant when we refer to the development of higher consciousness.

In the state of union with the universal cosmic mind the individual mind ceases to be individual. It ceases to be conscious in the sense of individual consciousness, only to become absolute consciousness, divorced entirely from the relative order of things.

The attainment of union is often described as the expansion of consciousness, but consciousness, as consciousness, never expands. The individual mind expands and in expanding *becomes* pure consciousness. So 'expansion of consciousness' is really a contradiction in terms. Consciousness is already universal and absolute and cannot expand, but the abilities of mind can expand—to the point where personal individuality is transformed into the greatest of all individualities, the oneness of cosmic reality.

In all religious writings great attention is paid to purity—to the purification of the life of the individual. By purification what is really meant is the expansion of the mind. When the mind is confined by its own limitations to the perception of the gross aspects of creation alone, that mind will itself be gross or impure. As its limitations are transcended and its ability to experience extended into finer and finer realms so the mind itself will become less gross, and purified.

When we perceive a flower we are using the gross aspect of our sense of perception. When we close our eyes and make a mental image of the same flower we are bringing into play a finer function of the sense of sight and we are beginning to see less grossly. When, in meditation, we carry this process of refinement or purification to its conclusion, we are stirring and bringing into action the deeper aspects of the faculty of experi-

ence. Consequently meditation is a process of unfolding the deeper layers of the mind.

A characteristic of that mind which has acquired access to the field of absolute Being is that it becomes increasingly bold, decisive and pointed. This is the direct result of meditation which brings into activity the deeper and hitherto silent reaches of the mind. In the sea, or in water, when there is surface activity such as that caused by breezes or the throwing of a pebble into the water, then the waves produced have little power; they are no more than transient ripples upon the surface. But when the deeper levels of the sea are affected, windblown ripples can grow and grow into mighty waves which have the power to sink ships and wash away the land. So it is with the mind; meditation is a technique which can reinforce ripples of surface activity until they become great waves of thought or action.

The outer life and the inner life are not separate; they are two aspects of the totality of our existence. Let us take the analogy of a house with a verandah and a living-room. We should, at will, be able to move out on to the verandah to enjoy the coolness of objective existence, or into the living-room to bask in the warmth of spiritual experience. It is no wonder that if we are forced, or if we choose, to spend all our time out on the verandah we begin to shiver. We all possess a house in which every amenity is provided and yet many of us ignore the better half of it. Obviously the ideal life would consist in the enjoyment of both the coolness of the verandah and the warmth of the living-room simultaneously. This, however, is possible only by carrying the warmth of the living-room with us when we step out into the verandah. If we try to stand halfway between the verandah and the living-room we shall find it draughty, and we shall be cold in front and hot behind. No, this is not the way. The way is to go inwards, fully, without restraint, to the very

centre of the sitting-room and there to warm ourselves so thoroughly that the warmth lingers in our being. After that, with the warmth still in us, we go right out onto the verandah and concern ourselves fully and without restraint in the sights and activities, which the verandah has to offer.

The retaining of spiritual warmth when we are engaged in the diversity of life and experience is something which is achieved naturally by meditation. If we want to dye a white cloth yellow we dip it into yellow colour. When we take it out we find that the colour is not fast and tends to fade in the sunlight—so, we dip it again in the yellow colour, and again, and again. Once we have begun to dip the cloth in the colour the yellow never entirely fades and, with regular dyeing, it eventually takes on the yellow colour permanently. This is the state of cosmic consciousness.

UNFOLDING OF LATENT FACULTIES

The process of meditation, which can be compared with a dive into the depths of personality, reaches those levels of mind which modern psychology calls by many names like the subconscious and supraconscious. As it reaches them it illuminates them, activates them and brings the levels which have been silent or beyond conscious control into consciousness and under control.

When we have a thought—'I see a flower'—we recognise the thought as it reaches the conscious level of the mind, but what we do not know is where and how the thought originated, and through what stages it has come to the level of mental cognition. However, supposing a thought is compared with a bubble originating at the bottom of the sea and travelling up

through the depths until at last it reaches the surface, this would give us a picture of the thought-process. Since we habitually live upon the surface of mind, our bubbles of thought do not become available to our consciousness until they break the surface, but they are there nevertheless, and have been there ever since they were born in the depths of the ocean of mind, born of the essential constituent of thought which underlies mind as the bottom of the sea underlies the ocean.

The development of latent faculties in man is dependent upon the bringing into consciousness all the levels of thought from the deepest and finest to the grossest and most superficial. We are all familiar with the process of imagination and we all use it to a greater or less extent, but the idea that the mental cognition of a sense experience is an expansion of the faculty of perception is not familiar to us. Mental perception is, therefore, in itself a latent faculty, or at least the development of a faculty, out of us in man because he does not recognise its value or know how to use it. There are many such latent faculties which are ordinarily ignored or suppressed—or whose existence is not even suspected. In the process of meditation not only are the latent faculties in man revealed, but they are brought out to enrich life. The revealing of these faculties and the growth of understanding of their function and purpose are things which cannot be achieved intellectually. Experience is essential; with regular and full experience of the characteristics of the deeper levels of mind understanding must come, but it is unalterably so that the subtle can only be appreciated by the subtle. Any attempt to understand the subtle with a gross instrument—in this case the superficial layers of thought—is doomed to failure.

It is this fact which causes modern psychology to be incomplete and theoretical; in its proper meaning the word 'psychology' should cover all levels of mind. The intellect,

however sharp and brilliant, is quite powerless to explore the subtler fields of the mind. Yet there are modern systems of psychology claiming to be comprehensive, which are founded entirely upon surface thinking and surface investigation.

If a man wants to become a complete swimmer, in other words somebody who is quite at home in the water, it is not enough that he should teach himself to be expert in swimming with his head erect upon the surface; he must also learn to dive and swim under water. So it is with the man who seeks fulfilment in life; only by learning to dive to the glories of inner life can he possibly develop the powers and faculties which will enable him to swim on the surface of life with all skill and all confidence.

MEDITATION AND HEALTH

It is accepted by a large proportion of the physicians of the world that something like eighty per cent of all physical diseases are due to muscular and nervous tensions, and that, in turn, these tensions are rooted in mental tension produced by the cares, worries, sorrows and failures of life.

Mental tension arises in a man when his desires are not satisfied or, as often happens, when he has two conflicting desires at one and the same time. This is true of the desire for material possessions, and it is also true of aspirations to success, happiness, wisdom and fulfilment. It can be said then that if a man could even begin to see the fulfilment to his desires, especially those lying deeply and essentially in his personality such as for creativity and peace of mind, then his state of tension would begin to be resolved and his tendency to psychosomatic diseases correspondingly decreased.

The first effect of meditation—one which is experienced upon the very first occasion that a man or woman meditates—is the relief of tension. It is simply undeniable that during meditation a man is physically and mentally relaxed and at peace. The effect of meditation is to strike directly at the root causes of psychosomatic illness and, regarded simply as a treatment, it is immensely valuable.

A second aspect of meditation which could play a great part in the restoration of health has to do with the breathing. As the mind goes deep in meditation the breathing is naturally refined—it tends to flow more and more lightly and gently. This is not the result of any effort or control or conscious attention to the breathing, but is simply the natural response of the body to the relaxing process of meditation. The refinement of the breathing has the effect of resting the lungs and heart and, indirectly, all the other bodily processes. In this way the body is revitalised throughout. After meditation the feeling of physical energy and well-being is just as striking as the sense of mental alertness that it brings.

With the continued practice of meditation these effects even touch the symptoms of age, such as wrinkles and flabbiness of the skin. A man who is meditating regularly not only feels younger and more alive but comes to look younger as well.

A third consequence of the meditation is that *prana*, the breath principle, becomes refined and in harmony with the refinement and purification of the mind. The refinement of *prana* affects the body chemistry by reducing the production of carbon dioxide, which in turn alters the acid-alkali balance and causes the whole organism to become less acid and more alkaline. It is physiologically so that an acid body deteriorates more rapidly than an alkaline body, so that the process of meditation causes the rate of physical decay to be retarded.

The true purpose of education is, surely, to develop mental faculties and unfold the inherent and latent qualities in man.

At present education, all over the world, is concentrated upon the purveying of information. A mass of knowledge is communicated to all students and those whose minds are able to grasp and understand the bulk of it pass their examinations and proceed to higher classes. Those whose capacity to understand is smaller are, generally speaking, simply obliged to remain in the same class where they will have the same lessons repeated. Even after many repetitions they still fail to absorb the teaching and it is then felt that all that is possible has been done to help them. It has not, because no amount of repetition of information will turn a dullard into a brilliant scholar.

A process of mind development, such as this system of meditation, will do for the dull student what repetitious teaching can never do; it will develop the latent powers of the mind naturally to the point where information can be assimilated through understanding.

There is, of course, no question of replacing the dissemination of information, in which is contained all the glories of learning. What is offered is simply an addition, to support and make meaningful the giving of facts. Meditation could be of the utmost value to all grown-up students because it would increase a thousandfold the depth to which their grasp of any teaching would reach.

By unfolding the latent powers of discrimination and understanding, meditation makes it at last possible for a man to satisfy his thirst for knowledge. Education as it is at present provided does not satisfy but increases the thirst for knowledge by giving facts and arousing the curiosity of the mind but not

satisfying it. The more a man reads about a subject the greater the field of the unknown seems to become. By the acquisition of information he is made painfully aware of the vast extent of his own ignorance and, paradoxically, the effect of wide reading is only too often to give a man a sense of helpless insufficiency. From this the only escape seems to be self-confinement in a rigid speciality—which may be learning but is not education.

This situation has been brought about by centuries of man's swimming upon the surface of mind, where the scenery is immensely varied but confined entirely to manifest creation. The way in which all knowledge can be related and brought to the essential state of wisdom is through access to cosmic consciousness. There is no other way.

If the world is to grow wiser and better, and if the family of nations is to live in peace, prosperity and harmony, then not only the leaders, teachers and scholars but each and every citizen must learn to explore and discover for himself the wonders of the inner life. If meditation were to be introduced into the educational systems of the world then it would be possible, without exaggeration, for a new humanity to be born. For the fulfilment reached through meditation is the fulfilment of all learning, of all science, of all philosophy, of all religion and all truth.

THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF MEDITATION

The Kingdom of Heaven, Knowledge of Christ, *Nirvana*, *Atmananda*—here are the many names of Consciousness.

The ultimate goal of this system of meditation is cosmic consciousness. Once the mind has been led to the Transcendental Being, it becomes devoid of objective consciousness and

that which remains is purely subjective. This state of pure subjective consciousness is called Self Consciousness or Self-awareness. As the mind emerges from purely subjective Self Consciousness and resumes objective consciousness, then it brings with it the state of Being, which it infuses into the experience of the relative world. This condition, in which Transcendental Being is lived in the midst of the diversity and experience of the relative world, is cosmic consciousness.

The nature of it is beyond description, for it is out of the realm of words. Its very nature is a union of the two extreme polarities—negative and positive, harmony and disharmony, silence and activity. When the eternal silence of the un-manifest is joined in living experience with the eternal activity of the manifest, not at distinct times but concurrently, then is experienced that which is beyond words. If we try to render the state into words we find ourselves descending into absurdity. If we were to say that cosmic consciousness includes seeing and not seeing a flower at one and the same time we would seem to be talking nonsense. This is a state which transcends thought—and speech and action.

The silent of Consciousness defies description. The active aspect of it permits description, but when both aspects are brought together—silence in activity, and activity in silence the tongue stands mute.

As the same time, although definition is impossible and the possibility of description limited to the point of absurdity, some attempt must be made to give a glimpse of it, to hint at its nature, to communicate some small idea of it. In the way that the taste of sugar cannot be defined and yet we can render some idea of its sweetness by words and associations, so it is with the state of Transcendental Being—even if in trying we run the risk of seeming absurd. Because cosmic consciousness is a state

wholly inclusive of both the Transcendental and the relative fields of existence it can only be described in terms of two opposites, of two seemingly contradictory statements, So we start by saying that it is that which lies between the opposites—between eternal silence and perpetual activity—and that it is both activity in silence and silence in activity. Even though this state may be beyond the ability of the human intellect to conceive, it is real—with a far greater reality than the intellect which fails to conceive it.

Self Consciousness, let alone cosmic consciousness, cannot be truly described. How then can the difference be described? It can be attempted. Cosmic consciousness is universal awareness and Self Consciousness is Self-awareness. Self-awareness is the state of the Transcendental nature. The state of Being is again, indescribable and, again, can only be hinted at by two contrary statements; one that it is a state of positive experience and, two that it is a state of no experience.

When the mind experiences the subtle states of the medium of mediation, the mind is the experiencer and that which is experienced is the object of experience. The subject-object relationship is established when experience begins. The process of meditation ultimately leads to the Transcendental Being, when the subtlest point of the object is transcended and the experiencer alone is left, devoid of the object. When the object of experience is no more, and the subject alone is, this is a state of no experience. The subject and object have become one—duality has ceased to be and unity alone is found. When the subject, the experiencer, and the object of experience merge together, it is fullness of experience. Experience then is so full that the two are united. In one sense it is a state of no experience because the object of experience has ceased to be. In another sense it is the fullness of experience because the experiencer and

the experienced are united together. This is why we are able to say that it is a state of positive experience, which as such is true, and in the same breath, assert that there is no subject-object relationship, which is also true and the higher truth is that both the statement, taken together, are true.

The inward march of the mind, in meditation, leads to Self Consciousness, and when Self Consciousness is brought out into the field of the relative world and lived, it pervades the whole field of activity. Then the eternal silence of the Transcendent goes hand-in-hand with activity in the world; the inner eternal silence and the outer perpetual activity are harmonised and lived together in the state of silence in activity and activity in silence.

To reach cosmic consciousness from Self-Consciousness no direction or practising of the mind is needed. The mind, having gone inwards to the Transcendent has to come out again; it cannot remain forever in Transcendental Being.

It is this very coming out of the mind from the Transcendental which constitutes the process by which cosmic consciousness is attained. The coming out is an automatic event, and an inherent part of going in; the diver dives and, having dived, emerges. In the course of diving he leaves the world, but the world must call him back, since he is a created human being. Once back he engages in manifest activity and this is already part of cosmic consciousness, this very engagement in activity is the active part—one half—and all that remains to be added is the other, silent, un-manifest half.

So, through this special system of deep meditation, cosmic consciousness, the highest peak of human evolution, the state in which man the human is transformed into Man the Divine can be attained. The process of attainment is not difficult, nor laborious, nor demanding of suffering, it is simple sure and, above all, natural.

PART II

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MEDITATION

Question: What is Meditation?

Maharishi: Meditation is a process of leading the mind towards the subtler glories of creation, till the subtlest field is transcended to get on to the transcendental divine bliss.

Question: What is the difference between concentration, contemplation and mediation?

Maharishi: Concentration is the fixity of the mind on one point. Meditation is experiencing the finer states of that one point till the subtlest state of that point is transcended and the state of Being is gained. Contemplation is the process of thinking all around that point. Concentration is like remaining afloat on one part of the surface of water; contemplation is like swimming all around the surface and meditation is like diving into the depths of water. Meditation explores the glories of inner life. Concentration explores the glories of the surface of life and concentration holds the mind in a static position on one point.

Question: You say that one must believe in, have 'faith' in the meditation and not have doubts about it. There seems to be a very thin line between believing and doubting.

Maharishi: No. Doubts may be there so long as there is also some faith! Then doubts will be carried along on the strength of that faith. No faith and all doubts, then it will be very difficult. Doubts will be eliminated with practical experience in meditation; once, twice, thrice, and doubts are not felt any more.

There may be queries pertaining to the meditation itself, but these will be answered through experience gained in the meditation. If the queries are intellectual, these can be satisfied only by intellectual analysis; and these you may not be able to solve completely.

No one is devoid of faith; no one is devoid of doubt. Therefore we take a person as he is. No one is devoid of faith because the desire to enjoy more in life, to know more, to have more power, more peace, to be happier, is natural in man, and this gives him a basis for faith—wanting something more. This is faith sufficient to begin meditation. So we do not reject anyone because he does not seem to have faith. How can he not have faith when he is built of faith? The fact that he has a body has enabled him to enjoy life, and then if he wants to enjoy more, that is sufficient indication of faith.

Question: Is belief in God necessary to be able to meditate?

Maharishi: Whether a man believes in God or not he'll be able to meditate and enjoy the bliss of meditation. When he meditates and becomes happy he will begin to believe in God. So meditation helps belief in God, but belief in God is not a re-requisite for meditation.

Question: Maharishi, does it matter if one isn't specially rooted in any particular religion?

Maharishi: Whether a man is religious or not there is the desire to enjoy; the desire to enjoy more is sufficient to draw the mind inwards. Religion or no religion does not matter. When he begins to be satisfied then he begins to be religious very naturally; if he has been a religious man then he'll be more profound in a right religious manner; if he is not a religious man, then he'll begin to behave according to the dictates of religion, even if he doesn't wear the label of any religion. It means that he will just have a very good moral philosophy.

Question: If one had absolute faith, would one have absolute results in meditation?

Maharishi: Absolute faith will come only in the state of the absolute! Absolute faith or absolute no faith are both one and the same state, the state of absolute Being. In the field of the absolute, that which is the absolute of this is also the absolute of that—the absolute of all relativity.

Question: It seems to me that faith does not come into this at all. It either works or it does not work. If it works you know it; this is faith.

Maharishi: And if it does not work then you know there is less faith!

Question: Faith can be misleading; it is unnecessary.

Maharishi: The whole basis of this Spiritual Regeneration Movement rests on whether or not the meditation works. If it works on the practical plane of existence but is unable to cope with the philosophical level of understanding, then it will not survive, it will die out.

Question: And what happens if one is continually impeded by agnosticism?

Maharishi: It does not matter, he will come to a point where he will turn towards the field of greater happiness. A man is agnostic, why? Because he sees that in that way he will enjoy more. So he turns an agnostic, for him agnosticism is a path towards greater happiness.

Question: One can be unhappy and be agnostic?

Maharishi: Then the present unhappiness of an agnostic, if it keeps him agnostic, it keeps him in the hope that it will ultimately lead to greater happiness. It will end this present unhappiness and will lead him towards greater happiness. Therefore, for him, agnosticism is just a path towards greater happiness.

Question: I can't see why anyone can be happy to be agnostic.

Maharishi: A godly man holds the road to church to be the road whereby he could be happier, fine! An agnostic turns his back on the church and holds that going from the church is the road towards greater happiness.

Question: How can an agnostic achieve God realisation?

Maharishi: By listening to some people who have attained it and who are prepared to show the path to him. By listening to them, and when he listens a little more and analyses, he begins to believe. It might be that way. "Let us try, what is the harm in it". Once he says this: "Let us try, what is the harm", he is caught in the trap; and if he gets a proper guide who could lead him that way, instantaneously that faith will increase on the basis of experience.

Question: Who do you suggest needs this experience?

Maharishi: Everyone, everyone who has not yet got this experience, needs it.

Question: And where do they get it from?

Maharishi: They get it from those people who come out to tell others.

Question: By going to church for example?

Maharishi: By going to church, if the ministers of the church are able to show the path.

Question: Very often the ministers aren't successful.

Maharishi: It does not matter, some may be successful. If one is not able to succeed, others may.

Question: And if one reaches the stage of agnosticism where one doesn't realise the success of ministers, and decides to take a stand-off position, what then should the route to achieving happiness be?

Maharishi: Once he takes a stand-off position to the so-called ministers of God, then the world is unlimited. Ministers of God of this field, he has seen and has not found anyone who is able to guide him; he turns away, and once he knows that greatest happiness has to be found, either from here or there or anywhere, from where it comes it does not matter, but it should come. Once he continues to search, he'll come across something, someone, who'll just hint something. He might get along that way.

Question: I find it difficult to accept this, but you suggest that you can find happiness here, there or anywhere. Whereas when you come to think about it, one doubts the possibility of believing in different sort of gods.

Maharishi: It is not necessary to believe in all the different sorts of gods. It is only necessary to believe in one, somehow, and get to that.

Question: But even then if you almost get there, you, even then might doubt the correctness in believing in that particular god.

Maharishi: No. The experience will not leave any doubt.

Someone says: "Here is the power-house," and what are the signs of a power-house? The brilliancy of light, fine! The name is known and the signs are known, you proceed that way. Proceeding that way, when you find that, fine! It tallies with the description given us.

Question: And do you remain there?

Maharishi: At will. Either remain there all the time, or come out and go in, or do anything you like. It is only a matter of gaining familiarity with that realm.

Question: There are so many philosophical explanations of facts that are misleading, so many different schools of thought that they fight among themselves. How can we know what is true?

Maharishi: Facts are truths; philosophy is true. Students of philosophy may fight but philosophers never fight!

Question: Could one say that philosophy does not matter, that it is the result which matters?

Maharishi: The results have to be on a sound basis, otherwise they will be judged as the fancy of someone's mind—an illusion.

Question: I do not believe in God, but I accept results. How can I be convinced that results come from God?

Maharishi: Convincing is not necessary, the result of God is already there!

Question: The results may be there, but I question their origin.

Maharishi: But you cannot refute that the results come

from someone, from somewhere.

Question: Somewhere yes, but not necessarily someone.

Maharishi: Very good. If from somewhere, then 'somewhere' implies some one time, some one place which as the source of everything must be an almighty, all-powerful place.

Question: One may worship the power but not the place.

Maharishi: The place could be anything, a pin-point or a room. But it has to be almighty, all-powerful. Let us go further and investigate. If it were a pin-point, a room, a box, it would be hollow, and all these concrete objects, so systematically designed, can they come out of a hollow? There must be very skilled planning and successful execution of the plan. Therefore it seems that the source, the place of everything, has a good planning mind and good executive resources. So that place, we may say, seems to be a mind. And if it is a mind then it must be an all-powerful, an all-knowing mind. For this mind to function on the human plane, it needs to work through the nervous system and the senses of man. Take the sense of vision: there is no harm in thinking of this source, this all-knowing place, as the absolute eye, perfect eye, able to see everything at once. Further, if we attribute to that almighty source the power of hearing, then the ears are perfect ears; perfect arms and perfect limbs. This is looking at it from the human plane. To be able to see, to hear, to do things, man has been provided with all that is necessary for this. So the source of all this must have a perfect mind, perfect vision, a perfect body, not a hollow or a pin-point, but it may be something like a man, a perfect man! Where is the harm in thinking like that?

Question: It is harmful for me, because judging by the results I do not think he is perfect. I am sure

I could make a universe on more humane lines, less suffering less pain.

Maharishi: Then there will not be any consistency in your universe.

Question: We do not need consistency.

Maharishi: Oh! Then you cannot run anything whatsoever in a systematic way; it will only be chaos.

For example, in your universe, you touch fire and your fire will not burn you. Likewise, you put rice on the fire to cook and the fire will not cook it!

Question: But there are those who walk on fire and the fire does not burn them.

Maharishi: That is also the work of the almighty nature; that which is hot under certain circumstances is also cool under certain circumstances. So if you are going to create the same situation, you will find the same situation is already there! A small mind will only create half a world; unable to see the whole, it sees only parts of the whole.

Question: Maharishi, during this meditation what exactly is the mind doing?

Maharishi: The mind is experiencing. The mind is experiencing different stages of thought, subtler stages of thought, and ultimately goes to bliss.

In this method of meditation we do not say: 'I'm going to bliss, I'm going to bliss.' All this is superficial. This would be self-hypnosis. To say I'm going to bliss, I'm going to bliss, and if you begin to feel bliss, that is an induced thought of the bliss. It is self-hypnosis. Self-hypnosis is that which excites emotional feeling and completely blocks off the intel-

lectual aspect of man. When you say: 'I am a king, I am a king,' the truth is that the intellect knows that you are not a king, but the intellect is blocked, and is unable to function. The emotion is excited so much that you begin to feel kingship. It is the idea—an induced idea of kingship, not the real state of kingship. The practice of self-hypnosis is detrimental to the efficiency of man because it suppresses the intellect. This practice of meditation develops the intellect along with all the other faculties and the whole personality of man is integrated.

Question: Deep mediation, how is it distinguished from self-hypnosis?

Maharishi: Self-hypnosis is a process of enveloping the personality in a particular meaning. A particular meaning is taken and dwelt upon until the mind is enveloped in that meaning. For example: "I am a king." The meaning of this is taken and the phrase is repeated over and over again until the mind becomes so full with the meaning that it feels that it is living kingship. Here kingship is not a reality but an induced state; only the mind begins to feel it, because the mind is wholly enveloped in the meaning; so full is the mind with that meaning that that alone is predominant in the mind and nothing else remains. All contrary things vanish away, and that one idea predominates. This is self-hypnosis.

In meditation we have no idea of any meaning whatsoever; people even do not know what the mantra means; it is just a word. Now a word is just repeated without knowing its meaning, there is nothing in which the personality could be enveloped; only that the mind is experiencing its different vibrations—subtle, subtler, subtlest vibrations and then even

that goes out of experience. So meditation is started on a medium which has nothing to do with any meaning, and the end of meditation is that the mind may become free from everything—gains eternal liberation. This is meditation. Hypnosis begins with an idea, and that idea becomes so full till it captures the mind fully. That idea becomes predominant and the real nature of the mind is not found. As if the experiencer, whatever he is, is nothing but that idea; and this is a state of complete bondage—the mind is bound in that idea. Meditation in its result brings the mind to freedom, hypnosis in its result binds the mind completely in that idea.

Meditation from the beginning and throughout the process, is an experience of something positive. It is a positive experience of the vibrations of the mantra—of sound. From the very beginning starts the experience of different states of the medium. In hypnosis, the experience of different states of “I am a King”, is that this state becomes more and more profound, and in the process the hypnotic bondage increases at every step. More and more, more and more one feels “I am a King”, until the process is complete. Thus only bondage increases, the falsehood of life increases.

In meditation the state of liberation increases, the reality of life increases because the mantra comes finer and finer, finer and finer, and then it is not found at all, leaving the experiencer alone. This is the difference between hypnosis and meditation; one binds, the other liberates. Hypnosis is successful in those who can shut out their intellect. They are the emotional types, one idea, and that idea and more and more of it—the intellect is shut off. If the intellect were awake, it would every time hamper the experience of “I am a King.” The intellect will declare, “Where is the King?” Now if the intellect is not functioning, a man who is more emotionally

developed, can throw himself in that emotion of “I am a King”, and when the intellect is already less developed, when it is not alert, it is not awake; it goes in the background completely, and the emotions are found to be full. This is hypnosis. There is no likeness between the two. They are completely different and the results are different, different beginnings, different ends. One is a process of complete obsession, an obsession through fiction leading a man to no reality; only an imaginary world is created. Meditation leads the mind to the source of creation.

Question: What are the results of thinking of the Kingdom of Heaven within?

Maharishi: Thinking “I am in Heaven, I am in Heaven”, and “I am enjoying”, the man would begin to feel some joy, but he will be enveloped in the idea of joy! If the state of self-hypnosis is: “I am bliss,” “I am that”, “I am pure consciousness”, “I am absolute pure consciousness”, and if it goes on for a long time, the chances are that this idea may become the very nature of the mind.

If this process of hypnosis goes on for a very long time and this idea becomes the very nature of the mind, then the mind begins to live that. Then there will be no difference between this state of absolute bliss consciousness, and the absolute bliss consciousness gained through meditation. In that state they are the same. When it becomes the very nature of the mind, then they are the same.

Question: But I understand it can become an obsession with hypnosis.

Maharishi: As long as it is not so full. As long as it doesn't become a hundred per cent full, so long as it is just false life it suppresses the intellect. The intellect is awake in the ordinary suffering mind and where is

the bliss consciousness? But the emotions keep on feeling “I am bliss consciousness”, beginning to imitate that state. If that state becomes full, the chances are that one may realise. But this method of realisation does not suit a man of the world. A man of the world has, of necessity, to undergo diverse experiences. Every moment of his life he experiences a variety of objects. Such a mind, experiencing different objects all the time, has not the chance to let that idea flow for along time. “I am bliss consciousness”, if this idea has a chance to remain for a long time in the mind, then that state will result. But a man of the world, who is subjected to diverse experiences, has not that long drawn chance of remaining in that idea. Those who leave the world—the recluse, the monks—they may go about it in that manner. There are systems of meditation, which keep the mind engrossed in idea. “I am Divine”, “this I am, that I am”, “I am bliss consciousness”—in this idea the mind flows day and night, unobstructed. A little time they allow for bath, meals and sleep, otherwise the mind is engaged all the time in one idea. In this way, there is a chance for that idea to become the very nature of the mind and they realise through this path. But a man of the world who has opportunity for divers experiences cannot take to such a path. So self-hypnosis, drawn out to that extent, will give the same result as meditation, inasmuch as any process long drawn out will have the same result as meditation. Any path, any experience, any thought, anything would eventually lead to the same goal as would meditation; because the goal is the source of creation; that is the end and beginning of creation; so anything taken to its furthest limit has to meet at the extremity; both ways—this way and that way. So inasmuch as any process and experience could

result absolute bliss consciousness, hypnosis could also result in Self-realisation. This is Unity in the midst of all diversities.

Question: How do we improve ourselves through meditation when our mind is not conscious and is not aware of what is happening?

Maharishi: No, conscious it is. Because we consciously experience each subtle state in meditation. It happens that when we are in a jet the whole scene passes quickly. But when we go slowly, then we see all the details. When we meditate we travel quickly, but the whole march is a conscious march. An unconscious mind simply cannot go ahead.

Question: It may be a sort of consciousness, which is rather like feeling, but not articulated in our mind in terms words or thoughts.

Maharishi: Feeling is also a conscious experience. Now when the senses are awake gross objects are experienced. Experiences during meditation are much finer, very much finer. The concreteness of experiences is very subtle and as meditation proceeds abstractness increase. That is why the experiences seem not to be very clear. But the whole of the experience is a conscious experience, until in the end there is consciousness of consciousness alone. It is just awareness of awareness.

Question: After a lot of practice of meditation wouldn't that state of experience be recognisable?

Maharishi: In the beginning of the practice, it is only fleeting, momentary and as long as it is momentary it is not cognised to any substantial degree. But when it lasts for a few minutes the mind begins to stay in that

field a little longer. Then it becomes a living reality. It doesn't involve guessing—it becomes an experience.

Question: It is not until you come back to the gross field that you realise it is there, because of that lack of experience of the outer field. One would have to come back to the gross to realise it. It seems to be a state of no experience. Is it not?

Maharishi: It is not no experience. It seems to be no experience in the beginning. Why? Because of its being abstract. The mind is used to the experience of concrete objects. It has been a long-standing habit of the mind to remain in the concrete field. Where there is no concreteness, the mind feels that nothing is there. But with a few more sittings the mind begins to appreciate that state. Having come out it wants to go in; as the practice grows, the ability to be in that abstract field increases; the habit of the mind to remain in the abstract increases. Its nature is cognised to a greater degree—so much so that with much practice it is cognised even when the mind is out. Then that is the state of cosmic consciousness.

Question: It seems that the mind does not register this field with exactness. If it did we could describe it afterwards. But when we are out of meditation the mind cannot describe the experience.

Maharishi: The mind can describe it in its own terms of expression. Some people call it one thing and others call it another. The actual state could not be described to bring home to another man; but words can portray some idea of it. When someone says: “Oh, this is very sweet”, the expression of sweetness cannot bring home the taste of that sweetness to another person, but nevertheless it can be expressed.

Question: In meditation, is the mind identified with the senses?

Maharishi: When we are experiencing outside objects, the mind is completely identified with the senses and the senses are a means of throwing the impression of the object on to the mind. Any experience of outside objects involves identification of the mind with the senses. Now the degree of identification is lessened by meditation. Supposing that the mind has experienced a flower for some time, and that now a mental picture of the flower exists. Now suppose that you begin to meditate on the form, so that when the eyes are closed the flower is seen; when the ears are shut then the sound is heard mentally. It is a very subtle state of sensory experience. Thus, when somebody mentally says 'flower' even that mental repetition of the flower is the function of the sense of speech, but the sense of speech is functioning in its very subtle state. When the sound is loud then the sense of speech is functioning in its gross state; when it is repeated mentally, a very subtle state of the sense of speech is functioning. When the flower is experienced in the grosser fields, the mind is more fully identified with it. When the thought is reduced to much subtler levels then the mind identifies itself with those subtler levels of the faculty of experience. This is what we mean when we say that the mind is less and less identified with sensory perceptions. So when it is identified with the subtlest aspect of the faculty of experience, it gains the ability to have a state of no identification with sensory perceptions, with the faculty of experience.

Question: Is that only in meditation?

Maharishi: Only in meditation, which allows the direct experience of the subtlest state of thought. Experiencing a subtler state of thought means that the mind identifies itself with the subtle realms of the faculty of experience.

The identification is thus much less, and eventually, in the transcendent, the identification of the mind with the field of the faculty of experience is nil. Then the mind, with no shadow of outside objects, stands by itself. This is called purity of the mind. The mind has been as if removed from all impurities. When all have gone into the transcendent, when the mind gains its own status then the mind is pure. A pure mind means the ability to be conscious. This faculty of being conscious, and consciousness are two separate things. The mind, as mind, is a conscious mind but conscious of its own consciousness.

Question: Maharishi, when one's mind is in its right state without identification does the world of experience go on quite easily and freely?

Maharishi: Not at the same time.

Question: Would it not be possible?

Maharishi: Impossible, because that state of Being is transcendental. It is the source of all relativity.

Question: Would you also say that sometimes when unpleasant thoughts of an unwelcome nature come during the day, you shouldn't try to control them? You should just put your mind on the mantra and automatically that will take care of the situation.

Maharishi: That would take care of it automatically. This is a positive way. Otherwise, if we begin to control the thoughts we will begin to push back and fight against the thoughts; then the thoughts become more powerful. If we are told not to think this thing, often and often you will say, "I am not going to think that, I am not to think that," and in order to keep forgetting it, you will be remembering it. So, what do we do? Be indifferent to it and utilise the mind for

something worthwhile, and as the practice of meditation grows, so the inner happiness increases, peace increases and contentment increases. Naturally nothing bad will be in the field of thought, speech or action, because life becomes more natural. Natural life is virtuous and moral. Meditation eradicates all ways of unnatural living.

Question: The things are responsible for the disposition of one's thoughts?

Maharishi: Agreed but more indispensable is the experience of the Self within. For the advancement of the soul, clothes could be dispensed with, food could be dispensed with, quite a good many things could be dispensed with. If meditation is there, with all these things surrounding us, nothing will be an obstacle. If there is everything and we are full with all material glory, even this material glory will not be a hindrance for the inward march, which has nothing to do with the outside because meditation starts from the mental thinking level and goes to the level of the soul, the transcendent Being. The technique of getting anything in the world is to come out of everything so much so that when you come out of the thought of everything, not only will that be realised but everything that could be thought of will be realised.

Positive thinking is on a lower scale. If you want bread you think of bread and keep thinking of bread and bread will be acquired. I agree that thinking of a thing over and over again you stand in that thought force; you stand in much greater thought force if you come out to the field of the Creator, out of the whole field of creation. So what is necessary is not to think of bread, but to get to the state of the Being, the field of the Creator—"Come out to the field of the transcendent". "First seek ye the Kingdom of God," just that formula is sufficient to glorify all aspects of life—and "all else will be added unto thee."

Question: Is it alright to make one mental pronunciation, the mind not repeating but remaining just at that one point? The mind is holding the one pronunciation but moving to finer, subtler stages.

Maharishi: It may be. But purposely, deliberately, it should not be held to one mental pronunciation. Transcending will be easier through many repetitions.

Question: Although not repeating, the quality of the pronunciation changes itself; it just happens.

Maharishi: We do not allow that. This may happen, but this happening may not be correct. It may also be due to an emotional inflow of the mind. That emotional feeling of opening to God, going to God, then feeling as if you are repeating the mantra, this interplay may be due to an emotional inflow and it will create a state of self-hypnosis. The whole mind will be enveloped, as if imprisoned, in the idea of Godhood and not in the state of pure Being.

Question: Then it could become an illusion?

Maharishi: It could become an illusion although at the same time you are experiencing it. In fact, it will be an illusion but the illusion will not be detected because you are enjoying it!

Question: Could it be dangerous that way?

Maharishi: Dangerous in the sense that the real state of transcending is not being experienced. But the feeling itself is not dangerous; it will be very pleasant! The heart will be throbbing with great happiness, but the real dive into the Self will not be experienced. It will be a temporary emotional outburst of communion with God but not the actual state of communion. Therefore, we do not hold the mind to one pronunciation.

This same condition could well happen through experi-

encing the different degrees of one pronunciation until the mind transcends. Even that is possible; but we cannot say whether this is genuine transcending or whether the mind remains enveloped in that emotion. It will not be verifiable and, therefore, we do not deliberately hold the mind to one pronunciation. If this happens naturally, then we cannot help it.

Question: But surely one would know this oneself by the quality of the experience.

Maharishi: No, by oneself this would be difficult to verify, because the emotional envelopment in that idea will produce some bliss and relaxation. But when the mind actually transcends, apart from that relaxation and happy feeling, energy will be felt, much more energy, and lasting throughout the day. The criterion will be the amount of energy gained. In the first case, with the mind enveloped in the emotional idea, in a kind of hypnotic state, happiness will be felt, and as a result of that happiness relaxation will be felt; but there will not be much added energy. Whatever was gained through relaxation, that much will be there, but not as much as when actually transcending.

Question: I can understand that. But when the mind becomes sharp and very fine and experiences the subtler stages, surely this is an indication that it is not emotional self-hypnosis.

Maharishi: No, because both ways the subtler stages could be experienced. It may well be a state of emotion, hundred percent emotion, but the instant you begin to know, to think, "I am experiencing bliss, how nice," just this thought is sufficient to bring about emotional envelopment. It is a very subtle point.

Question: Then is the result of the meditation one's best criterion?

Maharishi: The result of the meditation throughout the day, marked by the amount or energy and not the feeling of happiness. It may be like this also in the case of experiencing emotion, but whether it is real transcending or not will be known from the added energy during the day.

Question: Can this meditation be carried on in ordinary life?

Maharishi: Just as easily as dipping a white cloth into yellow colour. A white cloth, dipped in yellow colour comes out yellow. So the mind, having gone to the state of Being where it completely merges into that state, comes out with the status of that Being. Only, in the beginning of the practice it may not be 'fast' or very durable throughout daily activity. But with repeated dives within, more and more of the Divine quality is retained until the very nature of the mind is transformed. This can be practised easily in ordinary life; one dip in the morning and evening is sufficient to take care of the demands of the whole day.

Question: Will this practice always be necessary?

Maharishi: I is no longer needed when cosmic consciousness comes. Once the white cloth has been dipped often enough into yellow colour, then it need not be dipped any more; the colour remains fast. It will not fade. It is no longer necessary for a cosmically conscious person to transcend because the transcendent has come to his conscious mind on the surface. He merely closes his eyes and transcends. If he does not wish to use the senses, he shuts out the senses and is in the state of Being. There is no

chance for travelling, for going through the different levels as in the beginning from gross to subtle to transcendent because there is nothing to transcend! He is living the transcendent all the time consciously. For him practice has no meaning.

Question: This simple system of meditation, has it only just been discovered?

Maharishi: No, there is nothing which has not been in existence before and which may not exist in the present or future. Christ, Buddha, Krishna, all the scriptures, reveal the same method. Christ said: 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven within and all else will be added unto thee,' the word 'first' is important: first thing in life, first thing during the day. 'Do this first and everything will be added unto you' was spoken on the strength of some method of getting to the transcendent state of Being. Christ brought to light the forgotten system of reaching the Kingdom of Heaven within; and then, 'all else will be added' life will be joyful, happy, all desires fulfilled.

Krishna taught it to the confused Arjuna 5,000 years ago when he said: 'Arjuna, come out of the field of the three gunas,' where there is no confusion, fear, indecision such as you are feeling in life. Come out from the field of relativity, and your actions will be more profound and successful; you will win the battle and freedom from the binding effects of action—karma.

Lord Buddha brought out the same message: 'Nirvana—the state of freedom, which is eternal bliss, is directly reached. History records that thousands were liberated in his time, by just a simple system of meditation which could be universally accepted and practised.

There is nothing new in this; only it is apt to be forgotten, and then someone brings it to light again. A highway is constructed and after some time it is worn out. Then it is repaired, and after some time it wears out again, and again it is repaired. It is just the natural cycle of events. I do not see anything new in the world, the same old and ancient earth, the same old air, the same old water, the same type of men, the same difficulties, the same eternal omnipresent bliss, the same God and the same old suffering and the same old happiness. But when it is restated, the whole thing is revealed again and it appears to be new.

Question: Maharishi, is this meditation very old.

Maharishi: Very old. Most ancient tradition. Truth is ancient knowledge, and the way to realisation of the Truth is also very ancient. Nothing is new in this world.

Question: Maharishi, do you think that when a person starts meditation love will automatically flow to him, he will see love elsewhere, will it change a man completely?

Maharishi: Meditation gradually transforms a man completely.

Question: Is it always effective, excuse me Maharishi, I have seen many people here doing this meditation but they don't seem changed?

Maharishi: It cannot be.

Question: Why?

Maharishi: It cannot be that the sun comes up and

darkness remains. A man meditates under this system and he cannot remain the same. If he is found remaining the same then he is not meditating.

Question: Why is this system of deep meditation so much easier than other systems?

Maharishi: Because other systems struggle with the mind, whereas this system lures the mind, invites it to go in a certain direction towards bliss and happiness. Other systems force it in a direction not natural for it to go, mislead it. This system leads it directly to the Kingdom of Heaven within, without pushing or forcing or thrusting.

Question: Why does it sound so easy when from where we start it is not so easy?

Maharishi: If you start from misery, the start will naturally seem difficult! But if you take into consideration the goal, then the start is easy. Starting becomes difficult when we only consider the start!

Question: Why does the method seem to be both difficult and so easy?

Maharishi: That is the nature of the world. Light and the shadow of darkness, both contradictions, are there. The North Pole is there and the South Pole is there. Contrary forces, opposed to each other, tend to neutralise each other. One is challenging the validity of the other all the time. But the fact is the affinity is so great that one cannot exist without the other.

Question: But that duality is just an illusion, is it not?

Maharishi: If duality is an illusion then unity will not be established. Both have their values; without duality, unity has no substance.

As I said, it is natural and both are true. Both opposed in characteristics yet both are so full of affinity that they cannot exist without each other. So much so that one is just the other and there is no difference, but yet the difference is so great that one is not like the other at all. A hundred per cent diversity and a hundred per cent unity, both performing their work at the same time. That is the nature of the work of creation. This is true reality. One seems unreal, the other seems real. The reality is that both are real, and the greater reality is that both are real at the same time. As water is true, so ice is true. But both are quite opposed to each other and the affinity is so great that the ice cannot exist without water. So great is the affinity that the ice not only cannot exist without the water but it is water and nothing but water. Unity and diversity at the same time, and both together.

Question: If a person shown how to meditate and practises it for a certain time and then stops, would the gain he has made remain?

Maharishi: You open a shop and if you keep on opening it every day you will reap the profit, but if you stop opening the shop. The profit you have gained will gradually be spent, and nothing will be found. It is very practical. When we open a shop then the profit will be there. When we do not open, the profit will still be there. If we are able to maintain the amount and not spend it, well, that amount will be ours all the time, but when we spend it, it will all go.

Question: How could this experience that we have gained be spend?

Maharishi: To answer this we look at the process of how it was gained. If it was gained when retiring from gross experience and going into subtle experience, and then ultimately retiring completely from the outside world and coming to our own Self, then the experience of our own Self was gained when we were completely withdrawn from the outside. When the mind completely retires, gets to the state of the transcendental, then the mind becomes it. One hundred per cent the individual mind becomes the cosmic mind. Coming out, that one hundred per cent is not brought out, because in the world of sense experience, the mind is engrossed in the relative. The mind has to experience the material objects, say a flower. The impression of the flower is again carried on the mind. Now two alternate impressions are there. When the mind has completely retired, then the impression of the eternal divine absolute bliss consciousness was one hundred per cent. When the mind comes out, it is impressed by the image of the flower, so the pure consciousness is affected. In the indrawn state, the consciousness was pure, like the pure serene colourless state of a crystal; when you bring it near an object, the colour of the object is reflected on the crystal, and the crystal is not found in its pure colourless, serene state; it is affected by the object. This same analogy applies to our mind. When we are withdrawn from the world, the mind is found in its colourless state. Coming out again, the mind is found to be tainted—yellow, white or black, whatever be the reflection. That absolute pure consciousness does not remain pure; the impact of outside experiences makes it a mixed consciousness.

So when the practise is just beginning the mind retires, becomes full, then comes out again, but it does not retain much,

because it has been for a long time, for many many years, influenced by the outside world and has become accustomed to this and that. We withdrawn, but the mind is not familiar with that pure consciousness, so it comes out more or less in its original state when the flower used to completely overtake the mind. Although in the retired state, the consciousness was one hundred per cent consciousness, yet when it comes out, the mind as a whole, retains may be one, two, three, four or five per cent of pure consciousness. Supposing that it is five per cent, then ninety-five per cent of the impact of the outside objects is real, and the reality of absolute bliss consciousness is only five per cent. With practice it grows, but if we do not practice then growth will be marred, and not only will growth be marred but the mind will begin to lose that five per cent as it comes more and more under the impact of outside objects, because the inner impact was momentary and the outer impact is constant, unintermittent; therefore, it is necessary that the mind should not all the time be engaged in the outside experience. For a time, one should retire within, and get to the absolute bliss consciousness so that the mind may be familiar with that consciousness. When it becomes used to that, then it will retain more and more of it. There will come a time when one hundred per cent of that pure consciousness will be brought out, in other words, the mind will not be influenced by the impact of the object. The reflection of the object will become five per cent, and the status of the absolute bliss consciousness will be ninety-five per cent. Eventually with practice, one hundred per cent of pure consciousness will emerge, and the reflection of the object will only be a superficial reflection of it, like a line on water. When this happens then no inward withdrawal is necessary, then nothing will be lost, one hundred per cent full gain. The capacity of the mind is then full.

When the reservoir is full, then let it overflow, but until it begins to overflow, there will be the risk of scarcity of water in it. This is how it is dissipated and this is how we begin to lose it all the time. The gain was when the mind withdrew itself from outside, and coming out it did not retain one hundred per cent, because it was influenced by the impact of the outside object. So the outside impact reduces the purity of consciousness. Pure consciousness is reduced in status, and when we are all the time outside then the purity is affected more and more. When we go in, one hundred per cent purity is gained. Coming out, five per cent is retained. If we do not go in we are apt to lose that five per cent, which was gained by withdrawal. This is how the experience we have gained could be spent.

Question: Is it of any value to review the events of the day before going into meditation?

Maharishi: No, one should not. I count it to be a very bad practice. The world is relative—some good and bad has been done. If we begin to review the bad things we have done, and then at night if we think over them, we retain the impressions and they sink into the mind, and during sleep the impressions will go deeper. This practice has been recommended by many people but I am very much against it. Whatever has been done we do not recall it. Let the past bury its dead. What is best is that we should go to sleep while meditating. When we communicate with the divine and go to rest, there is no chance of our recalling our own misdeeds or our own human actions of the past day. It does not pay to review the events of the day.

Now, the purpose of reviewing the past is to better ourselves. The purpose is good, but the practice is bad. The purpose of

reviewing the past is that if we have done any bad action, we should repent of them and be prepared so that the same follies may not be repeated the next day. But by reviewing the past we make the impressions deeper in the mind. Suppose that we slap a man on the street, and in the night we repent of it and as a result of that our nature, is transformed so that we do not do it again. What happened? We have got rid of one evil tendency. Like that, one by one, how many evil tendencies could be got rid of? Instead of this slow and painstaking process, we meditate and get to the divine. Experiencing inner happiness we get inner contentment. Once we are contented, all the wicked tendencies are removed. The bad habits that cling to us are only due to inner discontent. If there could be a way to achieve contentment, that will eradicate the root cause of all misdeeds and faulty behaviour. So the best way is to get into communion with the divine and achieve contentment so that not only the bad deeds of today may be eradicated, but the possibility of doing anything bad tomorrow may be prevented. So, even if we accept the values of introspection into our actions of today, even if we accept it to be some practical value, greater values will be gained by applying our minds to the process of inner divine communion. Therefore, this is the better process of applying our minds before going to sleep. In the gross field of logic, reviewing the past events seems to be a sound method. But when the occasion come tomorrow, and if the heart is discontented, the thought of the night will not be remembered! Therefore, get rid of the discontent by direct communion. Meditating go to sleep, that is the best way. A business man always thinks how to utilise his wealth, how best to spend the money, how to invest so that a greater amount of profit is reaped in a lesser time. Like that we too think, when we have to pray to God, we pray in a manner so that the effect of the prayer will

be its maximum. No doubt there are some values in reviewing one's past actions and many people recommend it as a worthwhile practice. The values of it we accept, and we also accept that there will be greater value if that practice is not adhered to, but instead of that we meditate and go to bed. Accepting all the values of it, we go for the most valuable thing.

Question: How long will it take before absolute bliss comes?

Maharishi: There is no question of time. You begin to feel it momentarily right from the beginning. Some people experience it sooner than others. This depends upon how correctly the instructions are carried out. It is only necessary to know how to put the mind to it correctly. There is no reason why you should not get to the Truth quickly, immediately.

Question: Does the more intellectual person achieve it more quickly?

Maharishi: Not necessarily. Intellectuals usually go along very well, although I would not say it is due to intellect. Dullness of the mind is the obstacle. Whether literate, or illiterate, everyone has an equal chance so long as the instructions are followed correctly.

Question: The happiness that you speak about is not what we ordinarily call happiness. Are you referring to the absolute degree?

Maharishi: Absolute happiness is the result of long practice of meditation, but increasing degrees of happiness will be felt from the very start in one's daily life. In

the first stages we are concerned with the increase of the intensity of light, with the increasing degree of happiness. This ensures that we are marching in the right direction towards perfect happiness, the absolute state.

Question: I dive into it, experiences are pleasant, sometimes I see lovely colours, but still this is not it.

Maharishi: If the process is such that the attention is involved in beautiful experiences then the process needs to be more defined. The process should lead to the transcendent in every sitting, and it should not take months or years of practice. In each half-hour you should dive within three or four times. That will be culturing the mind, going through the subtle levels. As when we have been outdoors in bright sunlight and we enter a pitch dark cave, we enter very slowly. Going into lesser light the capacity of the eyes to see can increase only gradually, and after a time the eyes begin to see in the dark. Likewise with the mind. It needs training. For many years it has been experiencing the gross, concrete levels in the world; so gradually we lead the mind through the subtle levels, thereby increasing its ability to experience the subtle more and more until at last it is able to experience the abstract.

Question: Must one give up anything in order to gain this?

Maharishi: What is to be given up? Only we turn in and then we come out. Nothing to be given up. You know, a man living in a small hut and he is transferred to a palace, we don't count it to be the loss of the hut, because it's a palace gained, it's no loss. If a man is contented with his

business, earning ten thousand dollars a year, and then he is put on to earn a million dollars a year, what has he lost? It's not the loss of ten thousand, it's an addition of a million dollars. So we don't count it a loss. What is meant is just sit for some time and enjoy it, and then come out, it does not need leaving anything. The theory of renunciation and the theory of detachment is not for the people in the world. You know if the bliss is omnipresent, if the Kingdom of Heaven is just within me, then that which is within me should be lived naturally even when the eyes are enjoying the outer glories of the world. That which is within me should be lived naturally; even when the eyes are busily engaged enjoying the outer glories of nature. There are those who advocate, leave this and then you will get that, leave the joys of the world in order to gain the joy of the soul and all that; and they say you put out this light, and unless you do so, how can you have the bright sunlight in the room. It is bad logic. I say remaining in this light and by the aid of this very light, open the door and the bright sunlight will be let in. To allow in brighter light, it's only necessary to open the door and not put off the light. Those who say that you should renounce the world think that the glory of the world is great, and unless this greater glory is put out, how could the mind go towards the field of lesser glory? So they suppose that the world is more glorified and that the glory of God is much less than the glory of the world. Therefore, the greater glory of the world must be shunned for the mind to accept the lesser glory of God. The theory of detachment is based on this only—that the world is glorious and fascinating and it is enchanting to the mind and unless you shut the doors of the world, how can you enjoy the Divine? It is obviously bad logic. The field of the Divine is like the right sunlight outside. The field of the world is like the electric light inside the room. Remaining in the

field of the world, enjoying all the glories of material life, just let the inner door be opened; just let the phase of experience be turned inward for some time—just for a brief moment, for a few minutes, for that to enter and, that is it. The things of the world need a long time for achievement because they are objects of the external field and that which is further from you needs greater attention. But that which is within only needs going there and enjoying—just a few minutes in and then coming out.

You know there are two things: one is that nothing need be given up in the world; no sense of detachment is necessary. The other thing, which is of a greater value, is that the brightness of the world will be increased by the light of the inner Self. Not that the material and spiritual values go hand in hand, but that with the experience of inner life the outer glories will be further brightened.

Question: Is it necessary to have special conditions to achieve such a state?

Maharishi: One of them is silence, a silent place.

Question: What are the others, special postures?

Maharishi: Posture does not matter much. The body should not be tired. Just as noise distracts the mind, so tiredness of the body makes the mind blunt. The most important thing is the technique of applying the mind—where to put the mind and how to put it so that it can transcend the limits of experience. The mind should go on experiencing the subtle, subtler and subtlest and then transcend the subtlest, to get to the Being. The technique of experiencing the subtlest phase of the medium of meditation is the most important thing. If the body is tired, the mind becomes dull and cannot appreciate the finer fields of the medium. That is why a tired body will not be good for mediation. As for a noisy place, the mind would

enter into deeper phases of experience but the outside noise would draw the mind out.

Question: Does that mean that we should not try and meditate if we are tired or if there were a lot of traffic about?

Maharishi: Traffic will be ignored by the mind. Although hearing the noise of the traffic will obstruct transcending, the mind will transcend, and transcend means transcending all relative experiences. This technique of meditation will take the mind inwards while outside noise will draw the mind out. But if you have to remain in the noise all the time, you can just ignore it, just take it easy. Sometimes you will be going deeper, sometimes you will not, so just take a chance. Even if noise is persistent, it can be handled during meditation. On the other hand, a tired body makes the mind dull, so that the quality of experience becomes dull. If the body is very tired, then the mind begins to lag and even the gross things cannot be seen. At such a time it is much better to sleep than to meditate and if a tired man meditates, he goes to sleep within ten minutes. In that state it is good to go to sleep during meditation because the rest will be deeper and more full. A shorter sleep will give the same amount of rest as would a longer sleep normally. Some advantage is there but not to the extent that transcending would give. In the busy world today, if we can relax even for that half-hour it is worth so much.

Question: If a man has worked very hard mentally and has a tired mind what happens to his meditation?

Maharishi: A tired mind means that the mind is unable to experience the finer phases of the object. It does not have the ability of sharp experience, a tired mind goes to sleep.

Question: Is it important, just before meditation, to have had good thoughts, to be in a good state?

Maharishi: We do not take any notice of what has been the condition of the mind before meditation.

As we are, we just begin, whatever is the condition.

Question: If you have taken meals Maharishi, after how much time should you start meditation?

Maharishi: Say after about one and a half hours, or something like that.

Question: It shouldn't be started immediately after.

Maharishi: No, not immediately, because the process of meditation softens the breath and after meals more breath is needed, more oxygen is needed to digest. Meals tend to make the breath heavy: meditation tends to make the breath softer. Two contradictory processes we avoid.

Question: What is the latest time in the evening that one should meditate, when one has missed the usual time?

Maharishi: Before meals is the best time for meditation.

Question: Not very near about eleven o'clock or ten o'clock?

Maharishi: This meditation leads the mind to the source of energy. If you meditate near about the time of going sleep, then you will feel fresh, and you cannot have sleep. May be for two or three hours you will lie down and will not sleep. That will not leave the body very fresh in the morning. Inside you will feel fresh, but the body will need rest. So it is not good to meditate immediately before sleep. There are other systems of meditation which go well before sleep, but not this one which leads directly to the transcendental Being.

Question: Does one meditate only at intervals, say two hours each time or once a day, and only under certain conditions?

Maharishi: For this meditation, one thing of the inner field and one thing of the outer field is important. In the outer field, silence; in the inner field, freshness. The mind should be fresh when you meditate; there should be no noise as far as possible because the outer noises distract the mind. But if you do not live in an ideal area, then the best thing will be to adopt an attitude of indifference to these noises. Do not be sorry for them. Just repeat the mantra and do not worry about noise. To sit in meditation in an area free from noise will be ideal. Regarding inner freshness, when the body is tired and feels dull, now what good are you doing in meditation, not experiencing the subtle fields of the mantra? To experience the subtle fields, the mind has to be acute. If the mind is not acute, vigilant and alive, then the finer fields will not be experienced. When the body is tired and the mind begins to feel dull, that dull mind fails to experience the subtle fields of the mantra and then it does not experience any charm, and failing to experience any charm it remains hovering on the mental thinking level and thoughts intrude. All the time thoughts will be there and the mantra superficially goes on but the finer stages of the mantra will not appear. Therefore, it is advisable not to meditate immediately either when the body is tired or after a heavy meal.

After a meal, the body becomes dull. Immediately after meals the system needs a little more oxygen to digest; so naturally the breath becomes heavier. The process of meditation makes the breath lighter. So if we begin to meditate immediately after meals, there will be a conflict in the system because the breath flows more heavily after meals and the process of medi-

tation makes it lighter. This will not be good for health. Therefore we do not meditate for about three to four hours after a heavy meal. Now, after breakfast is alright as breakfast is not a heavy meal; breakfast or lunch or dinner is not of consideration. The principle is, no meditation after a heavy meal.

Similarly, it is not good to meditate when you are feeling very hungry. Then also the mind becomes a little dull. The best condition of the body needed for this meditation is a normal, comfortable, regulated life. In many cases, these evening discourses make the life irregular and when question and answers go beyond 9.30 p.m. then it becomes more irregular! It should be normal duty hours; and returning from the office, just take some rest and then meditate, and then after dinner again take some rest and go to bed early to get up not very late. This then is regulated life and when life is regulated, even when you are tired you have some period to rest before meditation.

After the day's work, if you feel tired it is best to come home and stretch yourself out for ten to fifteen minutes, just take a good rest, and after about half an hour, get up, have a little wash, and sit in meditation, sit for some time as suits your practice, and then it is best to take dinner.

At the time of getting up in the morning, just feel how the body responds. If the eyes are open and deep sleep is broken and yet the body feels it better to remain lying down for 15 minutes, do not force yourself to get up but take a good rest; lie down for half an hour more. It does not matter. Now, if there is only half an hour for either meditation or sleep then it is better to forego meditation and sleep instead. Those who go to the office early should not meditate in the morning; it is no good getting up early to meditate. If you want to go up early, go to bed early. Only one thing, get up when the body feels like getting up. Otherwise, if you get up early to meditate,

that meditation will not be very successful. It might relax a little and remove the dullness, make you fresh, but due to the lack of rest you will not be feeling very fresh throughout the day and the mind will not be very clear. So, if there is a choice between meditation and sleep for half an hour, it is better to sleep and not meditate so that at least you get rest. Only meditation will be lost. Otherwise meditation will not be very successful and sleep will also be lost. Both ways you lose! It is always better to fix the routine so that you do get time to meditate with a rested body and a fresh mind.

But if the mind is worried, worries will not be able to obstruct meditation. Only if the body is tired then the mind will be dull and will not appreciate the subtle states of the mantra. However worried the mind may be, if the mind has been very worried and if you think, “How much worried I am and how can I meditate?” this will not be of any use. Simply sit in meditation. But if the body is tired, go to sleep and take rest and after that meditate. If you find that you are very worried at any time and cannot meditate, just innocently begin to repeat the mantra as you were told, and may be the worried condition will continue for fifteen or twenty minutes, but simply sit down for half an hour and towards the end you will find much greater relief and all the worries will be gone. Simply sit and even when the thoughts are intruding the mind, do not worry, just sit and within fifteen to twenty minutes the worries will dissolve; but if you worry and do not meditate, then the worries will multiply and overthrow you.

Question: Do you feel that the influence of food has a bearing on the mind, and how does it affect meditation?

Maharishi: It has a bearing; food does influence the mind, environment does influence the mind; everything influences the mind. Food has a great bearing on the mind, great influence on the mind but this system of meditation is such that it does not need the influence of any special food or special environment. This mediation is based on the natural faculty of the mind to go to a field of greater happiness. Everyone's mind goes to a field of greater happiness very naturally; this is the basis of this meditation. We just turn the phase of experience. The technique of meditation is just the technique to begin to look within and having done that, the mind goes by itself because within lies greater happiness which alone is sufficient to draw the mind. When such is the case, then, whatever the man be we do not much care. When he begins to go within and comes out, he comes out more sensible and when he comes out more sensible then he eats more sensibly, lives more sensibly and, as the inward attraction grows, so the outward sensibility grows and the man becomes a better man in every way.

Question: You mean he will know what to do about things?

Maharishi: He knows.

Question: You mean he will know what is good and what is bad?

Maharishi: Every man knows what is good and what is bad, only they are not able to cling to good and abstain from bad because out of inner discontentment they are not able to ward off temptation; they fall prey to temptations but when the inner happiness is there no amount of temptation can lead a man astray; all the good in life begins to flow very naturally and therefore, external influences do not affect the man. Just a few minutes' meditation morning and

evening and then do as you please, eat whatever you cherish.

Question: What about the subject of meditation, should we have some real idea or real thing to think about?

Maharishi: Any idea is in itself a material thing. An idea seems to be abstract but it is not; it is the subtle state of matter. The sound heard by the ears is gross matter; it is something very positive. The subtle field of that positive matter is the thought of that sound and thought again has its subtler stages. The process of meditation is to experience the subtle state of the thought so that subtler states of thought can be experienced, until the subtlest state of thought is experienced and then transcended. When the subtlest state of thought is transcended, the thinker is left to himself in Self-illumination.

The technique of this mediation is to explore the subtler phases of thought. The thought you take is that of a mantra, because its vibrations are much more useful than the vibrations of just thinking.

Question: When one is in a very bad state, one cannot even concentrate to repeat the mantra. What can one do then?

Maharishi: The meditation will not begin with this trying to concentrate. It will begin by a different process, although the principle is the same: bringing the attention from the gross to the subtle and then to the transcendent. In the case of a person who is not aware of his present surroundings his eyes may be open but he is unable to see the flower, his thinking being on an imaginary gross level—we begin

by talking to him, bringing him down to awareness of his surroundings, awareness of his body. This means he has come down to the level of sensory perception, able to see things and experience them. From this level, then we bring his attention to the mantra from where meditation begins. Perception mentally, without the aid of the outer sense, then going to the transcendent state, this is the principle of meditation. Meditation is really advanced psychology; modern psychology would be complete if it went by means of attention to the source of the psyche, of the individual mind.

Question: In such a case it would take a long time to bring him to the mantra on the mental level.

Maharishi: Longer than for the normal condition, but just as quick and easy to reach the transcendent.

Question: Would it not depend on the type of mental condition?

Maharishi: And the state of the person dealing with him. One needs great patience, repeating one thing a thousand times if necessary. But if just one thing catches on, then you have succeeded in reaching him.

Question: What about the case of a person whose mind cannot be reached at all? The person is as if dead, and the mind elsewhere.

Maharishi: The dead can be revived! They are living in an imaginary world of their own and nothing else matters. It depends on how much interest you take and the time you spend. Doctors in mental hospitals could do quite a lot of good if they had a limited number of patients and more time.

Question: Would exercises be of any help?

Maharishi: Some Yoga exercises help to keep the body flexible. It is good for the health and in this way it makes meditation easier. But this meditation takes care of that naturally. It does not need exercises. If the body is stiff this meditation will naturally loosen it.

Question: Some of the greatest thinkers have had poor health and poor bodies.

Maharishi: They did not use their minds to improve the body! Had they put their attention on to the body, they might have developed good bodies. Otherwise, naturally a good mind should have a good body.

Question: A recent initiate, who was subject to headaches got up with the usual headache, and decided to meditate, and after half an hour the headache was completely gone. Is that what is to be expected?

Maharishi: Yes, if the meditation is deep, all the headache and tensions will disappear. There is no doubt about it. Meditation immediately relaxes and the headache disappears. Migraine headaches—for seven to twenty years a man had not known freedom from headaches, and now after three to four days he has found complete relief; if not in days then in one, two, three weeks. Meditation simply weeds it out.

Question: What effect does this meditation have on one's worries? Does it involve making more or less efforts?

Maharishi: This meditation is effortless, although the effort to begin to do it is required. The

process goes by itself and does not need any forcing or exertion. It is a pleasant march of the mind through attention to increasing happiness within, quite naturally because the Kingdom of Heaven is within. Outside in the world is misery, so going within to greater happiness is natural for the mind. Right from the start one feels better; worries begin to have less hold on the mind; one is able to rise above them. But it must become a part of one's daily routine, morning and evening, in order to make the rest of the day harmonious and successful.

Question: Is there a danger in meditation for too long a time?

Maharishi: Too much of anything is not wise. If we eat the required amount of food we become strong, but if this strength encourages us to go on eating to excess, then the same process will turn against itself and create weakness! Everything should be in the right proportion. Likewise, to protect the body from cold we wear warm clothing, but to keep on piling clothing upon clothing becomes a burden and a nuisance. That which was a comfort and joy becomes a misery!

Question: Before beginning this meditation I used to dash about and run, but now I walk. Am I taking life too easily?

Maharishi: If life ceases to be a struggle, then it should be so. Dashing about only created tension. Meditation brings about a natural release from tension within ourselves and in our surroundings.

Question: I also find that this meditation takes me away from my small ego into a state of happiness.

Maharishi: This is right. Anything that brings happiness

will take you away from the small ego. But meditation brings even greater happiness and greater tensions are relieved, and you find happiness in everything, not only in music and art.

Question: We tend to think that a man who drowns his sorrow in alcohol is a happy man because he looks happy.

Maharishi: That is only the opinion of another. He may look happy and it may be thought that he is happy, but only he himself knows that he is unhappy and is trying to forget his misery by covering it up. Discontentment is the cause of all unhappiness. Meditation roots out the cause of discontentment by the mind experiencing great happiness; only a contented mind can be happy.

Question: Would the meditation have a normalizing effect on obesity?

Maharishi: Meditation does normalize the body, but in an extremely fat person it is not possible to say how long it will take or how much weight he can lose. The system is not functioning normally, but meditation tends to make the machinery normal. This has been seen in many cases.

Question: What effect does meditation have on smoking?

Maharishi: Many smokers have said that after two or three days of meditating the urge to smoke was not so strong as before, and that they smoked fewer cigarettes throughout the day. Smokers say that it is very difficult to stop this habit by force. If there is a real feeling to smoke, then one smokes, but if there is no real

feeling, then one does not smoke for lack of something better to do!

Question: Does meditation make a painter a better painter?

Maharishi: Oh yes, his perception is better. The painter is better, the engineer, the poet, the writer, all will be better. Even a mother is better, because the mind becomes more profound.

Question: Will meditation overcome jealousy or evils of that type?

Maharishi: It is not a matter of overcoming; overcoming denotes some effort on one's part to subdue them; they will simply not be found. Now this jealousy, unkindness and such negative emotions are only due to inner discontentment of man, which in turn is only due to not finding the means of greater happiness. One wants to acquire a certain object but not being able to acquire it, discontentment arises. But one who is able to acquire it becomes contented. When one becomes more contented one will be less cruel; cruelty and vices arise out of inner discontentment. The greater the discontentment the greater the vices. Meditation leads the mind to the field of contentment—eternal bliss.

Question: Suppose there were six in a family and they were really at loggerheads, would meditation put it right?

Maharishi: Let them begin to meditate, even three of them, even one of them. Let one of them meditate and he begins to emit vibrations of happiness and peace. Others are affected by that, if a second begins to meditate it will produce fifty per cent effect immediately. Immediately the effect is there because it is not that the other man is wrong, it is that this man is not able to understand in what sense the other is speaking. He is speaking in one sense and this man is understanding it in the opposite sense.

Question: Will meditation help one to overcome personal envy and other negative feelings?

Maharishi: All ambitions and desires will be quickly fulfilled.

Question: Will meditation help one to become less moody?

Maharishi: Through meditation we acquire the habit of remaining unmoved by things, by moods. There is no chance of mood-making. You rise above it; an appetite is developed, you begin to grow in experience of reality, and as this experience grows, unity plays a grater part in one's life. So long as diversity is fully established, there will be an opportunity for moods, very positive and fixed moods for each separate part of diversity.

Question: Do we have a choice for happiness or unhappiness?

Maharishi: It is a matter of choice. Through meditation, naturally there will be no misery. In the state of cosmic consciousness one rises above the influence of sin and virtue. Even if you want to be miserable, it

goes beyond your control. Just as a seed, when it is roasted it cannot germinate.

Question: How does meditation cure unhappiness?

Maharishi: Because it leads to happiness! Just as a switch is a cure for darkness because it leads to light. Put on the switch and the darkness is no longer there. So it is not necessary to put forth an effort to remove unhappiness. This is where the modern psychologists err, in trying to bring out one's unhappiness because there will be no end to bringing out, or uncovering one's unhappiness! It would be the same as trying to pull out, to drive out the darkness from a room in order that you may enjoy the light. It is sound logic, but it is not the way to do it. Instead of trying to remove the darkness, we simply turn our attention onto the light; we work on bringing out the happiness. Bring out the happiness and automatically the unhappiness is gone. In one stroke we achieve a double purpose: we want to be happy and we want not to be unhappy! So both aspects are balanced. Otherwise, even if we succeeded in uncovering and removing the unhappiness, there would yet remain the other aspect, the bringing out of the happiness. Then in both instances it would be hard labour. But with this meditation, only one labour is necessary and sufficient; it brings out happiness in one stroke; it is not concerned with putting any emphasis on unhappiness.

Question: Why does it sound so simple?

Maharishi: Because it is simple. A room may have been in darkness for fifty years, but switch on the light and the darkness is gone! Human suffering is not necessary. We shiver in the cold of the verandah only because we are not enjoying the warmth of the living-room. There is no reason to shiver; get in and enjoy the warmth.

The verandah is useful for variety, but if we remain in the verandah all the time, then the purpose of variety is lost; we begin to shiver and joy turns to misery. All the diversity and varied experiences in the world are intended for the sake of variety when you want to enjoy it. Come out and enjoy all its aspects, but for some time only. Sometime inside and sometime outside—unity of life and variety of life, both hand in hand are necessary to enjoy the full values of life. So sometimes we are in the light and sometimes in the darkness, according to our needs. We accept the value of darkness—it enables us to sleep; but when we want to work, then light is necessary. When we want to enjoy the variety, then we go out to the verandah; when we want to enjoy unity, then we go within.

Question: But do we not learn by contrast? Unhappiness is necessary to understand happiness.

Maharishi: I do not think that we need darkness in order to understand light. That is not a worthy aspect of knowledge. We enjoy light, and darkness is not necessary.

Question: Do you agree with the view that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God?

Maharishi: The rich man who is self-sufficient in himself, who has so much wealth that he does not feel the need to earn more, is not motivated to take another step towards greater joy. If a person is not motivated to enjoy more in life, a camel may pass through the eye of a needle but he may not! One has to be motivated by

wanting more. One has to seek and keep on seeking, but seeking will be barred if there is any feeling of self-sufficiency.

Question: Would it be correct to say that this is how one should live? Not to feel, not to think, but just to experience?

Maharishi: On no! This is only during meditation.

At all other times we use the emotion, the intellect and everything else. When we see a flower we do not hold ourselves back and see. We do not go outwards halfway and inwards halfway being neither fully out nor fully in, neither enjoying the glory of the variety nor the bliss of unity. We do not remain hanging in between, that is a very dangerous process. It only amounts to blunting our ability of perception; the inner as well as the outer faculties of perception become blunt. There are schools of philosophy, even here in London, which teach people to withdraw themselves and at the same time to maintain awareness of the outer environment. This has resulted in suppressing their ability of action and perception. They feel indrawn but they are only superficially indrawn on the mental level. Theirs' is not true indrawn state of the Transcendental Being. Such a practice is very bad. Those who teach it do so from ignorance of the harmful consequences of what they teach.

The technique should be when we are out we should be fully out, and when we are indrawn we should be fully indrawn. Only then will we reach the Transcendental Being and enjoy its glory. This is meditation. Go in and be It; comes out and enjoy the world. This making of moods in the world is a false way of life.

Question: What stops one from meditating regularly?

Maharishi: It may be due to lack of understanding what effects, what benefits it can produce. For example, suppose you have a shop yielding 100 dollars a day and someone proposes opening a new shop which yields even greater profit, then with understanding the benefits to be derived, you value the possibilities in the new shop. Or, suppose a man who is burdened with work which usually takes six hours to complete does it more quickly and better in four hours after meditating, he will want to be regular in his practice if he remembers the benefit and keeps it deep in his mind. One need not make a plan for meditation; in the midst of work, with pen in hand, just begin where you are. If you try to make a plan and consider the amount of work to be done, you may find the work so fascinating and so absorbing that you will not wish to stop or leave it. Then just close the eyes and begin. This meditation brings greater energy, greater clarity of mind, greater efficiency, work becomes more enjoyable and not just a habit. Meditation is very necessary especially for those who are very busy in the world.

Question: In cases where people do not do any meditation at all, has anything been gained by outside experience? Is it not a quick or short method of development.

Maharishi: Outside, they gain the wisdom of the outside.

As a man grows from childhood to youth, and then to old age, the older he becomes, the more experience he gains and he becomes wiser on the conscious level; but regarding the unfoldment of the higher levels of consciousness, that is, getting to purity or to the Kingdom of Heaven within, all his worldly experiences have no meaning then.

Question: Maharishi, may I ask something on perhaps a rather simple sort of level compared with what you have

been asked so far? In this very relative world, if we meet evil or cruelty or any such thing what is the best way to confront them, being as we are?

Maharishi: Meditation brings the ability to confront evil in the most effective way with the least effect on us. It should be confronted most easily and should not be allowed to leave any effect afterwards on us; if not no effect then the least effect. That is the way to confront evil. It is only a matter of culturing the mind. When we want a man to swim well on the surface, after giving him a few lessons on swimming, we give him lessons in diving too. And when he is able to maintain himself in deep waters then surface swimming becomes easy for him. So in order to be able to successfully confront things of a material nature we educate or culture the mind. But greater ability of confronting things of the surface consciousness comes when we bring the attention to the deeper levels of the ocean of mind. And if the mind is able to confront the abstract Absolute—the Transcendent Absolute; then confronting anything in the grosser field becomes just child's play. That is why this meditation brings very great ability of confronting anything in the field of diversity. If it becomes difficult to confront things of a subtler nature in the gross conscious level, because the mind has all the time been accustomed to the gross field of nature, then getting to the Absolute enables the mind to successfully confront anything in the relative field however subtle it may be. Confronting is just natural; without effort things will be confronted, and with the least effect on the mind because the mind is established in the Being. Meditation brings the greatest ability of confronting. With the mere practice of confronting only in gross creation, the ability of confronting does not very great.

Question: Maharishi, you say that you have to be close to somebody to understand how their mind works, but sometimes I find that you have to live with people and you think you know how their mind works, and then suddenly you realise that that is not so. How can you get affinity with such persons?

Maharishi: Through meditation, which develops tolerance.

You do not mind the mistakes that he is committing. For closeness it is necessary that you begin to tolerate the mistakes. Just as you begin to appreciate the wrong pronunciation of children when they are beginning to speak. Even if they pronounce wrongly, you enjoy their pronunciation. So if you want to love someone closely, then begin to appreciate his wrong doings more than his right doings. When you begin to enjoy and give expression to your joy at their wrongdoings, love increases and closeness increase. Love knows no reason; it knows no discrimination. Accept him as he is. And this type of sensibility and ability to accommodate increases with meditation because meditation brings the mind to contentment. When the mind is contented you simply do not bother about anything. Nothing irritates you; nothing affect you.

Question: But how can you make them contented?

Maharishi: By reflecting your contentment to them.

And you can make them contented by putting them on meditation.

Question: Yes, but that's easier said than done.

Maharishi: No, if a man wants contentment then he should meditate. And if I want to make him contented out of my doing then the best thing would be that I begin to reflect contentment in my behaviour and in my relationship with him. That I can easily do from my side.

Question: But sometimes that just makes the other person irritated. He doesn't see why you are so contented and he is not.

Maharishi: Oh! don't hold contentment to yourself.

Let it reflect in your behaviour towards him.

If you keep to yourself, and you feel that I am contented myself and that I have nothing to do with him, that will irritate him. But let your contentment be shared, let it flow towards him. Contentment gives rise to love towards him. That is all that I can do to make him contented. Reflect my contentment. In order that I may reflect my contentment unto him, I have to make some effort so that he sees that I am contented and that contentment is being extended to him also. Otherwise if I am contented in myself and I have nothing to do with him because I am contented, that will make him jealous and miserable. If a man wants to give contentment to the other man, he should expressly reflect his contentment. Let that contentment be a means of uniting the two and not a means of separating.

Question: Maharishi, where does memory come it?

Why is it that some people have a very retentive memory and can remember many experiences in their lives whereas other people cannot remember.

Maharishi: Both things have their values in life. Memory connects the present with the past. Some connection of the past with the present seems to be essential. If you don't remember the things of yesterday, go ahead today, that is alright. But if all the time you remember the past and open the chapters of the past—thousand years and a thousand lives, it kills the present. So memory

which is a connecting link between the present and the past may both be useful and harmful.

Question: Some people can remember the death of Julius Caesar, they have it in their minds, they have learnt it in school, and some people have forgotten it. Is that a bad thing?

Maharishi: Fortunate are those who have forgotten. What is the use of remembering it? Too much memory of the past kills the present.

Question: I wish I could remember all your lectures.

Maharishi: All that would become a burden; from all the lectures if you will only remember that life is bliss, and through meditation realise it, nothing else need be remembered.

Question: But if an actor cannot remember his part then he will not be successful.

Maharishi: That kind of memory develops with meditation.

Question: You said that there's a possibility that this meditation could reach everyone in the world within nine years. But how is it possible to reach people in Communist China, and many other places with a similar situation, where they have some kind of dictatorial government?

Maharishi: The governments are never the same in their policies. Politics are always changing. This type of meditation has not reached them yet, otherwise they'll be the first in the world to adopt it because they want their people to be more energetic and more productive and meditation readily does just that. It makes a man

more energetic, more creative, more peaceful, more happy, and a sensible leader would like his followers to have it.

Question: The trouble is they don't want them to be peaceful, they don't want them to take to God.

Maharishi: No, the world is becoming wiser.

Question: Maharishi, before we go to a Communist country, in this county* or even in India a lot of people are just not interested in it.

Maharishi: Not interested because they do not know. As long as they do not know, so long they can afford to be disinterested.

Question: But what if they say they don't want to know?

Maharishi: Fine, the atmosphere will compel them to know; when other people begin to have the energetic, peaceful, creative ability, then they can no longer shut their eyes to it.

Question: Yes, but I'm not so sure in Communist countries.

Maharishi: Everywhere it will be the same. Man wants to be better in every place, in every country. Gradually the governments will understand the significance of this meditation and will adopt it in their policies and spread it in the schools and medical colleges and there will not be any mental maladies found in the nation. The happiest people in the world are those who have started this meditation and by now I think many people everywhere have started this meditation.

Question: Even the Russians?

Maharishi: Oh! It's not a question of race or any such thing; it's a question of individuals. Sit in the morning and in the evening in meditation and be happy. Any

* The question was asked in London.

day it's easy to introduce this mediation in Russia. It's easy everywhere. Every moment is just as good as every other moment.

Question: Such ideas would never be permitted in Russia.

Maharishi: Any day I can start in any country if I like to get in. This meditation satisfies the need of every man. Only I have to speak in terms of his need. If I am reluctant then it's a different matter. I can break through any atmosphere, push through any circumstance. If I do not feel inclined to carry the message there, then it is a different matter.

Question: The secret police in Russia would not give you a visa. They would not allow you. How can you be so sure?

Maharishi: Meditation is irrespective of personalities. It is effective for its own result. It stands on its own footing. It does not need backing or recommendation I do not believe in recommendation. It is not needed. It is a self-evident truth, open to experience by anyone.

Question: When an experience occurs the mind identifies itself with the object and is in bondage. How is this identification broken in meditation?

Maharishi: Fine! It is a very beautiful question! This identification, how is it lessened by meditation? Now, as long as life has to be, the body and the mind have to be under different circumstances, and innumerable are the impressions on the mind. Innumerable are the circumstances through which the body has to go. Then how is it possible during a lifetime to be in such a state that the outer circumstances and vibrations and the

inner impressions do not meet and cause an action again. This is the question, how this meditation brings about this state.

Now, it is the outside vibrations which stimulate the inner desire, the mind has been in the field of gross experience; all the gross experiences immediately bring out the impression and cause an action. The mind retires from the gross field of experience. The mind is awake and yet not awake in that field of experience, which is capable of bringing out the impression, awake in the subtle field of experience. This is the process of enabling the mind to be awake in a field where it would not allow the outside circumstances to bring forth any impressions from inside. Eventually the mind becomes fully awake, in a state which is devoid of outer experiences, and when in the Transcendental state there are no chances of outside circumstances making an impression, then the mind is in the state of freedom; not bound. Earlier it was bound by the collaboration of the inner impression and outer circumstances. Now from outside experience it has completely freed itself, so it is in a state of complete freedom. This is the training of the mind to relieve itself from the bondage of circumstances and from the bondage of inner experiences; the mind is trained to be in freedom. It is then allowed to return to its original state and in this state it again creates some action because during the process of training, the mind has to be in that field with which it is familiar. Then it arrives at the other field with which it is unfamiliar—the field of complete freedom, and again it returns to the field of bondage. This state of complete freedom is the state of Being of the mind, thereby the mind gains the ability to maintain its awareness. The mind gains the ability to be alive more and more even while circumstances are

such that they draw out the impressions from inside—that is freedom. The state of freedom is growing more and more in the mind. Although the mind is experiencing outside objects the vibrations from the outside are not so strong as to invite the impressions from the inside. This is how, with practice, the mind becomes more and more full in a state of freedom, and progressively grows in strength not to be affected by outside circumstances inviting the inner impressions. Even when the outside circumstances are there, the harmony between the two is not permitted, because the mind is established more and more in a state of freedom. This is how this meditation creates a situation whereby the outside circumstances fail to draw out the hidden impressions. There is no room for the outside circumstances to create any impression inside, although the experience will be there, but the impressions will be like a line on water. The mind is established in its eternal state of freedom, and nothing of the outside is allowed to collide with the inner deep impressions. The identification is broken.

Question: What will happen to the people that live and die and don't find peace on earth?

Maharishi: You go to a house, to find peace and if you do not feel good in that house, you change the house, and go to another house where you will feel good. In this life if you do not find peace, we abandon this field and select another field where we feel peaceful; this search for peace will continue till one is established in eternal peace. Everyone will always be changing their environment till they get to some place which they will never like to change; and that can only be the environment of eternal bliss of the

greatest order and sublime nature. In such a place one would like to live all the time. Meditation is a direct way to it. That state of eternal peace and bliss is just here. The Kingdom of Heaven is within me; and “me” means the “me” of everything, not only the “me” of man but the “me” of everything. The Kingdom of Heaven is within every object of creation and in the innermost recesses of everyone’s heart. It is the essential substratum of life. The “me” is the innermost life principle. This is the state of Being. To establish ourselves in That nothing is needed; already everyone is established in himself. The “I” is there, so every man is already established in himself; only his attention is outside and what is needed is to bring the attention within himself. Once the attention is brought within then one becomes established in that eternal peace and bliss. The table is there and the glass is there, both are there, it is a matter of choice which of the two we experience; when we want to experience the table we focus our attention on the table and when we want to experience the glass we switch our attention to the glass. So both the inner and the outer aspects of life are there. In one’s own life nothing is far away and nothing is lost; one appears to be lost when one is in the field of the other. The warmth of the living room is here and the cold of the verandah is there; both constitute the house, both are part and parcel of the same one house. When we are outside then we are not enjoying the warmth of the living room—only because we are enjoying the cold of the verandah; when we want to enjoy the warmth of the living room all we have to do is to just step in and immediately we begin to enjoy the warmth of the living room. Similarly if we want to live the joys of the diversity we remain in the world of sensory perception and if we want to enjoy the eternal peace and bliss we take a dive within. The inward peace and happiness are of a more stable and permanent nature. In

the field of sensory perception the joys of the senses are trifling and transient. They are only drops compared to the ocean of bliss within. Tasting only the drops of happiness it does not satisfy the thirst of happiness of man. Every man wants to enjoy as much as possible. In the field of variety there will always be the desire for greater and greater happiness and there will be no end to that till we come to the greatest happiness in the field of relativity. Even then that being in the field of relativity it will not be lasting. Only when we transcend the level of greatest happiness in the field of relativity and get to the absolute state of happiness would it really satisfy the thirst for happiness because beyond absolute happiness no higher state can be conceived. Absolute happiness knows no change in its nature; it is ever the same blissful state and when that is experienced, then the thirst for happiness is eternally satisfied. When the thirst for happiness is eternally satisfied, the experiences in the field of relativity become more profound and full.

It is only necessary to get to that inner experience which will bring fullness in life, and all aspects of life will be glorified. The technique for that is simple and easy because it amounts to leading the mind to the field of greatest happiness. Just as water naturally flows down the slope and you are not required to force the water to make it flow down the slope, we are not required to force the mind to get to a field of greater happiness. Presently we are listening to a melody, but if a better melody comes from a different source, instantaneously the mind gets on to that, so the flow of the mind towards the field of greater happiness is natural. That is why the flow of the mind from the outside to the inside, wherein lies the ocean of happiness, is natural and simple. Not much of high metaphysics is needed to understand that inside is the Kingdom of Heaven, outside seems to be the kingdom of misery; from the kingdom of misery

to the Kingdom of Heaven the mind would go naturally, because it is continually searching for greater happiness. Though we say that outside is the kingdom of misery only in comparison to eternal bliss within that the joys of the outside world of diversity are termed a misery. For example when a business man has a chance of earning ten thousands dollars a day but if he actually earned, say two thousand dollars, then he would count it to be a loss of eight thousand dollars. A good businessman would not regard it as a gain of two thousand dollars but as a loss of eight thousand dollars. So when we have a chance of enjoying great eternal happiness—never ending, ever the same greatest happiness, but instead indulge in trivial joys which do not satisfy the mind even of five minutes, these joys are then said to be misery. Otherwise the world is not a miserable place, there is no misery in the world; everything is there to be enjoyed and whatever we want to enjoy, they are all there in the whole of creation. There is the fullness of joy in the world, but the joys of the world are just drops of joy. That is why the mind wanders from point to point.

I do not see any reason for man to suffer in any way. What is the reason for man to suffer when everything is there to be enjoyed by all the five senses as if there are five types of different machineries of experience in man to enjoy the variety of the world. If all the senses are fully developed in man he could enjoy better through them. But when the connection with the bank is lost—if the cheque book is lost then a millionaire is declared a bankrupt even for a penny. It's only necessary to maintain the connection. The cheque book should always be in the pocket and the whole bank is then in the pocket. If the connection with the ocean is maintained when we are enjoying the outside drops of happiness then each drop will have the strength of the ocean, otherwise each isolated drop has no

significance. It will simply evaporate under just a slight heat; it will just annihilate itself, but if the drop is connected with the ocean it gains mighty status. When we experience these different objects of the external world it is as if we are tasting the isolated drops of happiness which evaporate very quickly. Meditation is a process of maintaining the connection of the drops of happiness of the outside world with the ocean of happiness within. Connect the drop to the ocean and let each drop gain the mighty status of the ocean.

MANTRA

Question: Maharishi, what is the special power of the mantra, why is it better than any other sound?

Maharishi: Each sound has specific vibrations, the effect is due to the nature of the vibration, how we emit vibrations. We are used to the meaning of the sound but what does the physical effect of the sound mean? The vibrations which are set forth have some physical effect on everything. When we utter a sound the vibrations strike against this stem, against this flower, they extend and strike against everything in creation. So when they strike against something they produce some effect which may be either detrimental or supplementary to it. What that effect would be the common human mind is not aware. Whether certain vibrations are detrimental to the life of the flower, or are supplementary, nobody knows. Mantras are just those special vibrations the effect of which we know from tradition. We know from tradition when this sound is produced in this manner, this will be the result. This is simply mechanical.

Question: And that is the case with thought, the sound is not produced. Just the thought of it.

Maharishi: Thoughts have vibrations. So once the vibrations are there, the effect will be there. Thought vibrations are all the more effective, more powerful.

Question: When you say a sound you mean when we hear ourselves saying a sound. It is possible to say a sound and not hear it. How can one listen if one is not able to hear the sound that one is uttering? It is a very difficult thing to do. Generally one utters a sound and one does not hear the sound one utters.

Maharishi: In the subtle stage hearing is imbibed with saying. But if we want to distinguish, we can as well say mind is saying but ears are not hearing. We repeat the word flower, we can mentally repeat the word flower, but the ears will not hear. But because vibrations are produced in the mind waves are created. This is how thought travels. Each thought has its specific wave, as each speech has. Speech is nothing but the gross expression of the subtle thought. Action is a much grosser expression of the thought and speech. But the vibrations are created even when a thing is thought of. Vibrations are set up, and those vibrations have some effect, either good or bad. The good and bad effect is determined by the intention behind the thought, the nature of the thought. With what intention it is being thought of and the nature of the thought, both account for the effect. A child may be slapped in love; a child may be slapped in anger. Now the action is the same. But in one case the effect will be life supporting, in the other the effect will be life damaging. The action remaining the same, the result is found to be different due to the intention. So the intention has something to do with the effect that those vibrations produce; the effect seems to be not only due to the physical nature of the vibrations, but also to the innate propelling force—the intention.

Question: Is the mediation affected when one knows the

meaning of the mantra?

Maharishi: If the process of meditation has not been rightly established, then the meaning might distract the mind and prove harmful. But if the mind has been fixed on the process, and the process is faultless, then knowing the meaning will not distract the mind from the process. That is why the meaning is not disclosed in the beginning.

Question: But if one learns the meaning by chance, should one try to forget it?

Maharishi: Do not try to forget anything in life. Just let it be there and do not think about it. Knowing more will not harm, but if that knowing becomes predominant during meditation, then simply do not try to forget or to remember, Just be on the word and that will take care of the whole thing.

Question: Does one use the same mantra always, forever?

Maharishi: Always. The mantra which we use has the potentiality to promote development to the maximum extent.

Question: Does one reach a point in development when the mantra is no longer needed?

Maharishi: When we get to cosmic consciousness, meditation is not needed then. Once you get to the top floor, stairs become unnecessary!

Question: Why does the mantra change its speed and gradually fade away.

Maharishi: It is natural for it to run away from misery and get to bliss; just natural.

Question: But what is it that is running away, is it the mantra that runs away?

Maharishi: It is not the mantra that is running away but the mind. Mind wants to leave the mantra and get to bliss. Mind wants naturally to enjoy more, greater happiness, absolute true bliss; so it runs towards bliss, to the transcendent state. It is natural for a thirsty man to leave the drops of dew in a pond if there were a greater amount of water nearby. Drops of happiness in the world do not satisfy the mind; that is why the mind is found wandering. An ocean of happiness is discovered inside, so it runs that way very naturally. To enjoy more in life is a natural instinct, a natural desire of everyone.

Question: Maharishi, can you explain why it is that the mind is drawn inwards by meditation on sound rather than on colour?

Maharishi: There are techniques which will glorify colour also; there are techniques which increase the grandeur of colour at every step, and the mind will be drawn as the grandeur is increased to eternal grandeur, just as there are techniques to reduce the sound to its subtler stages, and reduced to its subtler stages the charm increases and the mind goes there naturally. So anything could be taken as a medium of meditation.

Question: Maharishi, why is it that the subtle sense of sound is the one chosen by you and not the subtle sense of say vision or touch?

Maharishi: Generally the attention flows when there is

something vibrating. There are some people who do well using vision but generally transcending through vibrations is much easier because one follows the other more easily. Vibrations are more fluid and the medium which is a little more fluid is more readily appreciated in its subtler stages than the more static type of form.

Question: It is because the mantra has the element of time, is it not? The mantra has an element of time in it—a rhythm, whereas the visual things as you say are static in comparison.

Maharishi: It cannot remain static one meditation starts. It then becomes less dense and more transparent, until the relative aspect of it is completely gone.

Question: Maharishi, is the increasing awareness of these subtler states of experience part of the evolutionary process, I mean is it historical evolution or not?

Maharishi: You could say historical because it has an element of time in it. It is the experiencing of the gross and not the subtle state. According to present definition, history is that which maintains the chronological order of events. All positive experience could be recorded as history. But when one has gone out of the realm of time to the Absolute, then the chronology will be disturbed. So the whole process of evolution to cosmic consciousness cannot be said to be history because it loses its chronology in the Transcendental.

Question: Is the development of the ability of the human mind to touch other planes evolutionary growth?

Maharishi: Yes, yes, very naturally.

Question: Should the mantra be kept secret?

Maharishi: Regarding secrecy, yes. It must be kept secret, because according to circumstances and so many things in yourself, each man is a different man. The mantras of two men may differ or they may be the same. In the realm of spirituality, and not only in the realm of spirituality but in the realm of material existence also, wherever there is a principle of growth secrecy is the formula of success. We sow a precious seed in the soil, we water it, manure it and take all care from outside but we do not take out the seed and see if it is beginning to grow. If we do that it loses its power of germination and it will not grow. The mantra must be a life secret.

It is very important to keep the mantra secret because the mantra may be the same, the same word you take from a book, and you adopt it and begin to utter it, and you will find it difficult to be on it, because it is just a word. The mantra is not merely a word but it is a word with great potentiality. When the Master pronounces it, it is consciously brought from that level which is the original state of creation, from the Absolute directly. When it is brought consciously then it comes with great power.

Even material science tells us when we go to the subtler field of creation the power increases, the power becomes great. If we throw this microphone at someone it will hurt but if we excite the atoms of it, it bombards the whole atmosphere. This shows that the power is greater in the subtler fields of creation. So when the sound, the word, is brought from that field of creativity, from the source of creation, then it comes forth as a powerful word; and when it is imparted, it is just like a precious seed sown in a fertile soil. Many cases have happened when people ask, "What is your mantra?" And some reply, "Mine is two words and yours seems to be four words", "Yours is four words and mine is two words". Then both of them will be

confused! The four word man will say that his is different and the two-word-man will think his is half, and that half is less powerful. Both of them will be confused, and without reason they begin to lose their powers. That dynamic force is lost, and if it is openly talked about over and over again the energy is dissipated and it is reduced to a mere word.

Nobody brings out his treasure in the open, and anybody who gives the secret of his treasure in the open, is not highly regarded in society, because everyone knows his worth. “Oh, he is worth two millions only!” and if he keeps his millions inside then people say, “Oh, he is a man of twenty millions.” For personal growth it must always be a secret. Always the treasure is in the innermost chamber of the house, mostly underground, out of common sight and common reach. In most cases, even when we have to go the passage is dark and we have to put on the light. So much thought is taken to keep the treasury in the most secret place. This is the holy name of God which has to be cherished as the most precious gem of our life. Only the heart is the seat of God. Let Him be there. Let Him bless us and let all the blessings come out in the world and let life be prosperous, but let us not bring out the name of holy God. There are other names of God to be brought up, to be played about with, to be discussed with everyone, but let at least one name of God be treasured in the heart so that God knows, “Oh, at least one name of Mine is being treasured.”

Question: Is it dangerous when people repeat the name of God, or is it superficial?

Maharishi: It is not dangerous, but there are certain names which are dangerous for certain people under certain circumstances. Under certain circumstances there are

names of God which become dangerous. There are also such distinctions, for example, the life of a house-holder and the life of a recluse, those who are attached and those who are detached. Those who are detached from people, there are certain names which suit their way of life—away from all gains of life, from all material profit, from all friendship—all quiet and silent within themselves. Such names of God do not suit those who are in the world of all activity, all love, all attachment and all accumulation. Someone said: “Oh, can a name of God be destructive? God is not cruel! God is kind and merciful!” When I was distinguishing between the two lives, I said the name of God which is suitable to the life of a detached man is destructive in the material field, and because He is merciful, He has a name which is destructive and one which is constructive in the world. This is due to His merciful nature, His impartiality; God is perfectly merciful. He has created children in the world with two tendencies. Some children enjoy silence and seclusion, others want to accumulate, to enjoy all worldly joys, all worldly gains and all affection. Two types of children of God, and God, as merciful God, has to answer the needs of both types of children.

So some names He has which will satisfy one type of children and some names to satisfy the other type. This is due to the kindness of God that we find two different effects of names. One effect will be destructive and the other constructive in the material field. This is out of mercy, out of love—love for His children, and love He wants to show, not only to one type of His children, but to His other type as well.

There are certain mantras which are useful for all gain in life, all prosperity, for attachment, for all accumulation and for all abundance, and there are certain types of mantras which make people forego all these things and keep them on the path of seclusion, and keeping them away from all earthly gains it

makes them happy. This tendency is inherent in one type of man, and if, due to ignorance, a man of the world begins to take that name which is not suited to his type then he begins to suffer because the effect of that name will be to bring detachment and renunciation. Even the name of God is like that!

Question: Can a child receive the mantra?

Maharishi: There are certain mantras for children to improve their mental faculties, to improve their understanding capacity and all that. There are mantras even for young children when they begin to speak, and for children at the age of six or seven when they are playing about. We do not ask them to sit and meditate, but play about and be happy. They grow in intelligence more easily.

MIND

Question: What is the relation of the mind to the body?

Maharishi: Mind is the inner aspect of our personality and the body is the outer, just as in the case of a tree the root is its inner aspect and the tree is the outer aspect. It is always the condition of the roots that controls the tree. That is how the mind controls the whole body and there is a very close co-ordination between the mind and the body. The mind is the subtler manifestation of the pure Transcendental Un-manifested Consciousness while the grosser manifestation of it is the body

Question: Is relaxing the body produced from relaxing the mind?

Maharishi: The mind comes first. When we consider ice, it is water that comes first; it is water that makes the ice. It is the mind which makes the body. Both are developments of the same substance, but the body is a grosser manifestation than the mind. It is just a gross aspect of the mind—mind's gross expression. The two simply cannot be separated unless it be at the time of death.

Question: When the spirit leaves the body as happens at certain times, does the mind leave the body, then travel with the spirit or does it stay with the body?

Maharishi: In such a case the mind has left the body but not completely. Suppose that we are the occupants of this house and we lock the door and go out; we have gone out but we are not completely cut-off; the connection is there. It is in leaving the body at the time of death that the connection is cut. During transcending, the mind has gone completely into the Transcendental but not completely out of the body. The connection is there and by virtue of that connection, that affinity, the mind returns to the body.

Question: Can the subtle body manifest itself in the material world?

Maharishi: It is quite possible because it is said that during that time the spirit gains an aerial body—the body is of air then, not material. If it is a stronger spirit and there is great affinity and if the mind of man is conductive to some such experience then he may experience something in that line.

Question: Is the abstract experienced through the mind?

Maharishi: Through the mind because it is the mind which experiences.

Question: Does the mind belong to the body?

Maharishi: No, the body belongs to the mind, and the mind belongs to the soul. The soul is cosmic mind, cosmic being; its child is the individual mind, and the gross body is the child of the individual mind. It is the subtle field of the gross creation—subtle body, subtle mind—which the individual mind is learning to experience in order to acquire the ability to experience the Transcendent Soul, the state of Being. In that state the individual mind ceases to be individual. Refinement enables it to see, to feel, to live in life the source of all creation, that which is omnipresent, to live unity and diversity both together in oneness.

Question: Is the cultured mind in all men the universal mind? Do we gain inspiration from it?

Maharishi: The whole of life is then an inspiration. One needs to learn how. After gaining the status of the cosmic mind, everything becomes easy. When a sound foundation has been laid then a building may be erected to any height without danger.

Question: Maharishi, we all have what is called conscience. We feel remorse after committing a crime. Is the conscience a thing which we acquire through education or through upbringing by our parents and teachers?

Maharishi: It depends upon how much the mind is evolved. To an evolved mind, we may say it is given by God. And to an unevolved mind it is acquired through education of what is right and what is wrong. If every mind becomes an evolved one then all thoughts and actions will be right. If one's mind is undeveloped then one has to be educated. This process goes on until the mind is cultured enough to understand by itself.

FREE WILL

Question: I'd like to know how you know that you have free will.

Maharishi: Always free will, man always has a free will.

Question: I'd like to know how you know that you have free will.

Maharishi: Because of our own experience. We can remain lying in bed till twelve o'clock, or we can get up at six o'clock, as we please.

Question: How do you know that it is not some other power that controlled you and that you felt that you were doing what you wanted to do?

Maharishi: Even if we accept that power by the aid of which we do this or that, fine! Then that power is available to us. Then that power is part and parcel of our being, it is not separate, because every act we perform, we find that power is at our disposal. We want to enjoy the flower, and the power is enabling the eyes to see, so that even if we accept that there is this power it is at our beck and call.

Question: And if you don't believe in that power?

Maharishi: Yes, if I don't believe that there is that power, then I say, "Oh, yes, then I do this or that voluntarily". There's no harm in thinking in terms of

our own selves. Where then is the power? So then turning round everywhere I go this way, I am not satisfied with anything on this side, and then let us find out what is the nature of the “I” within; turn the attention inwards. The nature of the “I” will be found to be great and so glorious and that will be the attainment.

Question: Do you mean that free will is possible only through meditation?

Maharishi: That is the only way to freedom, through meditation and transcending.

Question: Is man determined or indeterminate in his action, I mean, is he free in his action, or is he driven somewhere? What decides where he is going?

Maharishi: He decides where he is going.

Question: Yes, but is he guided for that?

Maharishi: In his taking the decision he may be guided, may be influenced by so many things, but eventually he is responsible for his decision. He makes the decision. There may be so many influences working on him but he decides where to go. Against all the influences shaping his action in a particular direction he can very well decide to go in the opposite direction. So the direction which he takes finally is his own decision. Efficiency of a decision is more important than the influences of the past or future.

Question: It is always how to make the right decision that worries me. I mean I know the efficiency of the decision is important but how to make the right decision?

Maharishi: By meditation. The intellect becomes so sharp so as to be able to see various aspects of the thing; when the various aspects of a thing are seen it is easier to decide in a right way. Meditation brings the ability of correct decision.

MASTER

Question: Can one transfer allegiance from one Master to another? What will be the result?

Maharishi: The result will be realisation! And the result will be that for which allegiance was owed.

The allegiance to the Master was owed for realisation and if realisation is not forthcoming, the allegiance was owed to the wrong place. We give allegiance to a stone the allegiance due to a diamond, and if the allegiance does not bring forth a diamond then what is the use of it? When in search of a diamond, we have to turn up many stones giving the glare of the diamond outside, though inside it is not real. So to every stone we owe our allegiance and see if the effect is there or not.

All allegiance to the Master should be like allegiance to the doctor. We call a doctor and we do as he says, not for the sake of doing or for the doctor's sake but for the purpose of the cure. If there is improvement then we continue the allegiance; but if no improvement takes place, what is the use of the allegiance? If the doctor urges us to go on taking the treatment, we do that for one, two or three weeks, but there should be a limit to that. Then we ask him to show some results and if he cannot we go to another doctor.

The Master worth our allegiance is he who is able to show

the path, guide us on, lead us on to Reality. One thing we find is that Reality is omnipresent. A Master should be able to show it to the student directly. It should not be an eternal path! In these days, in the aircraft factory, they say a design comes and before it is actually executed in the factory another better design comes and the first one is discarded; better jets are coming out and the low speed planes are becoming obsolete. Every day that is happening.

There are some good souls, very tender souls with a good heart and a very pure mind. They become attached to the Master and to whatever the Master says they owe allegiance and believe he will lead them somewhere. This is the quality of a very good heart and mind, but in these days it is very difficult to find a good Master, and as the world is constituted today, the qualities of a good Master are very rare, very difficult to find. So we have to be cautions, and somehow, we have to select the vehicle as is thought to be the best, and get on to the goal.

As the world is today, we must be very vigilant. From whatever place we may have a good vehicle, we get on it and try to reach the goal. A Master is just a guide. Everything is left behind when we get on to the goal. Therefore, the most important thing is our status in that divinity. We must get on to that from wherever we get it, at whatever cost we should get on to it. If not from this shop, then from anywhere get the bread which is harmless and which satisfies the hunger. All respects to the Master, we agree but if a student says: "Oh! wonderfully have I been treated by this Master, so nice was he, how can I abandon him and go to another in the class?" That logic is bad logic and that will harm progress. We study with so many Masters. Get on to That. The goal should be all-important. This Master, that Master, this religion, that religion, this level or that level, this

bread or that bread, this god or that god, all these are immaterial. What matters is our realisation. Today we are born in America, tomorrow in India, the third day in Africa, the fourth day in Australia. All these are a matter of time and space, of country and of civilization, of language and of fate, of religion and of Master, all these are immaterial. What matters is realisation. By whatever means we could get realisation, we should realise ourselves. This particular dress or that particular language or country or faith or religion—all these are good only if they help us to realise our status. If not, they are all useless. Nothing will be of any use whatsoever.

And for realisation nothing is needed. Just the simple practice of meditation in the morning and evening and a regulated comfortable life. Regularity in meditation and not much wandering about here and there.

Question: In this system of meditation is it of actual importance that the student has, or has not, admiration to his teacher?

Maharishi: As long as the student practices, admiration is not of any importance. He may hate his teacher, but if he practises loyally, it makes no difference even if he greets him with abuses—if he does as he says and obeys him, he gets there. Obedience alone is needed, and every other thing, whether praise or abuse, is of no value so far as his improvement is concerned. What is needed is obedience—obedience to the teacher. Do what he says, willingly or unwillingly—but do it.

Now, if someone shows you a certain business and you do not like the man, but you go to him and spend some hours with him, and if he says that as this is the winter season one should open the shop at ten, instead of nine, and if you were to open the shop as he says, immediately you begin to prosper in that

business. You just do as he says and then you begin to gain, whether you like him or dislike him.

Question: Whether you make a god of him or a devil of him, it is immaterial for your progress?

Maharishi: No, obedience is affected if you begin to make a devil of him. Therefore, it is said. 'Make a got of him and not a devil, so that obedience may not be affected, because to obey, it is very necessary to understand him'. To understand, it is very necessary to take his words in the spirit in which they are imparted. If he utters some words, and if you take these words in the spirit in which they are uttered then, you will follow, and following, you will do what he has asked of you. And then you will get the experience which he intends for you. Therefore, it is necessary that you should have attuned your mind to the mind of the teacher so that you may not misunderstand his words, and his manner of expression. Otherwise, he says one thing and you understand it in a different way. Then the obedience will be affected; then the purpose of the relationship will be marred. That is why we try to attune our mind to the mind of the Master, and that is why a student finds it difficult to make a devil of him, because a Master is supposed to be a man of realisation and a godly man: if a student begins to make a devil of a godly man then the attunement of the mind will be obstructed. When you go with reverence to the Master, then you go with your mind elevated. Some virtuous qualities are there, and the mind is more inclined towards the divine. Such a mind is more in tune with the mind of the Master, and the advice will be taken in the spirit it is given. If you go with hatred, then you go with negative qualities, and the receptivity will not be there, because the mind is not attuned.

Question: Is there much difference between a personal

God and a Master or can there be a personal God a part from the Master.

Maharishi: Gods are always the goal. Gods are to be reached through the help of a Master.

Question: But a personal God

Maharishi: A personal God has to be reached, God has to be realised, and assistance comes from the Master. The Master is just a guide; a guide who can dispel the doubts of the disciple as well as put him onto the experience of the goal.

Question: Isn't the Master a personified form of cosmic consciousness?

Maharishi: He is cosmically conscious and that is why he is a Master. Cosmically conscious is he with all wisdom and experience. Such is a Master; such is the mind of a Master. The disciple's mind is an individual mind, bound by time and space. The disciple tries to attune his mind to the mind of the Master, and how? By coming in contact with the Master, doing something and trying to see whether it suits the mind of the Master or not. If that mind accepts, fine! The disciple begins to accept this version. If the Master rejects, fine. The disciple rejects that version as well. In this way, by working closely, by hanging around, by trying something, the disciple adjusts his likes and dislikes according to the likes and dislikes of the Master, thereby elevation his mind to the status of the Master's mind. Here nothing matters except obedience. The action is not important; what is important is the attunement of the mind. If the Master today says, 'Yes', the disciple says, 'Yes', and a willing 'Yes' from within, not a make up from outside—that has no meaning. Tomorrow he says, 'No', the disciple says, 'No'. The work is not important. I have lived that life for fifteen years, and I was so fortunate in that. It took me about

two years to adjust myself, just through trial and error, and the purpose was just to see which way the mind went. And when it was easy to see which way the mind went, then it was easy to attune the mind. After some time, the intentions of the Master become the intentions of the disciple; the desires of the Master become the desires of the disciple; the whims of the Master become the whims of the disciple. And what is important is the attunement of the disciple's mind in accordance with the flow of the Master's mind. And once it comes to that level, the level of the Master's mind being cosmic, Immediately the individual mind of the disciple is raised to that cosmic level. Instantaneously the treasures of the Master's mind become the treasures of the disciple's mind, and just automatically without any giving, the disciple takes. It is never that the Master gives; it is always that the disciple takes. The water in the tank is full, and it has no tendency either to remain there or to flow out. Anyone who wants water in his field just make a connection with the tank and once the pipeline is raised to the level of the water it flows. That is the technique; only a matter of connection the line at the level of the water and it flows, it cannot remain, it has to flow. Intentionally or unintentionally it flows. This is what is meant by surrender of the disciple at the feet of the Master. And if there is a Master who is so perfect and if the disciple is fortunate enough to surrender, the job is done; it does not take a long time. And on a mechanical basis it is done; and the mechanics are always just a willing 'yes', and attunement of the mind. This has been my experience. Live at the feet of the Master as a shadow lives with the body, twenty-four hours, all the time. As a shadow move along with the Master. Complete surrender is possible only then for anyone, who has a chance of moving along in this manner, like a shadow. From a distance it is not possible. But this meditation is a technique to attune the individual

mind with the cosmic mind when there is no chance of moving closely in this manner with the Master. With practice, morning and evening, getting to Self Consciousness within and coming out, infusing the quality of Self Consciousness into the field of activity, complete Self Consciousness will be infused into the field of activity, and it becomes cosmic consciousness.

Question: Maharishi, does the personal God belong to the manifested field?

Maharishi: Yes.

Question: No personal God can be unmanifested?

Maharishi: No, no. Unmanifested is impersonal.

Question: In the last analysis, what is the relation of the personal God to the inner Self?

Maharishi: Personal God is like a drop of perfume, and man is like a drop of water. The drop of water is also an identity, the drop of perfume is also an identity, except that it is a better identity, it's a much finer identity.

Question: But is it real from the point of view of the Absolute, or is it unreal?

Maharishi: Compared with the Absolute, the whole field of relativity has no significance.

Question: What about the state of the devotees of God?

Maharishi: The devotees of God, who enjoy the great immeasurable bliss of the personal God, do not like all this talk of the Absolute, the Transcendental and of cosmic consciousness. They want birth after birth in the bliss of God, in the love of God, in order to enjoy with God. They do not think of not coming, they desire to come more and more. The great devotees of God laugh at the bliss of the Transcendent and the rapture of the abstract.

Question: Maharishi, how can there be those real lovers of God, can they be alive now?

Maharishi: They realise the bliss of the relative heights of highest divinity. If we were blessed with the privilege of meeting God, this is the greatest happiness. Experiencing that, they have a right to laugh at the triteness of the bliss of the abstract Transcendental.

Question: Has it been your experience that when one obtains this greater happiness one automatically becomes more ascetic in one's daily life, or does it need training in consciousness?

Maharishi: Ascetic! On no! Asceticism is only due to not being able to allow proper values in life. A man becomes an ascetic because he feels that in the outside world are greater attractions, and if he remains in the outer attractions the inner glory will be lost; so turning to God he renounces the world. This is only due to a lack of proper sense of value about God and about the world. When the mind becomes more able, then proper values develop. No over-valuing a thing, or under-valuing it, just a proper sense of value.

Question: Don't they also need some religion, for instance, may I make a comparison? Your everyday way of life in all probability is entirely due to the monk's way of life, the values alone might not have been so successful.

Maharishi: There was a time when I did not have proper values of life; I thought the world had to be foregone and only then God will come. So having taken this attitude I became an ascetic, and later found that this attitude was wrong. This meditation could be made available to every man. Every man, whatever he may be, can begin to go in and come out, and that is all. So it is only necessary to go in and come out, and when one comes out, not that the world will be

lost or foregone, but only inability will disappear and ability will emerge and with greater and improved ability the world will be enjoyed much better.

They took me to a college somewhere in India, and I talked to the students. They had been hearing about the ways of saints quite often because the principal was a very religious man and so any saint visiting the college was taken to the students. I told them that I had come not to tell them to stop going to the cinema, but to show them how to enjoy the cinema better! For example, when one has failed in the class, and then one goes to the cinema with the misery in the mind, one fails to enjoy the cinema, but when one has passed, then one enjoys the cinema much better. The cinema may be the same, but if one's mind is already happy, then one enjoys the cinema better. If one's mind is already depressed then one fails to enjoy even the best cinema. Here is the technique to make the mind happy so that the happiness of different things in the world may be enjoyed much better, that's all.

Even the student who is going to play cricket, when he wants to go to the cricket field, he puts on a light suit, shirt and shoes to match. He prefers spending the first five or ten minutes in changing into a proper attire so that he may enjoy the cricket game better. If he is taught not only to change his dress, but to create a happy mood also, before going to the cricket field, he will devote ten minutes to make the mood happy and he will enjoy the cricket game better and he'll be all for it.

If he is asked not to go to the cricket field, but to go to church and meditate, he goes. He goes to the church and sits in meditation. You ask him to close his eyes, and remove his thoughts; it becomes difficult, all darkness is seen, and the mind is wavering everywhere, and you ask him to sit for two hours, or for one hour, or for a half an hour. He measures what he would

have gained in half an hour with what he could have enjoyed on the cricket field. An intelligent person fails to find any positive charm here. He would have enjoyed the cricket field for half an hour, or whatever it was; at least some positive joy would have been there. From the next day he will not sit in meditation, he will go to the field to enjoy cricket.

But if you set him up in meditation and show him how to meditate successfully, make him happy and laughing, he goes and cheers up all his friends on the cricket field, and enjoys the cricket more; next day he'll sit for hours and hours before going to cricket, because he wants to score more. It's a way to become able, to become more happy, to become more alive, and everybody will be for it.

Question: Maharishi, could I ask a question? Would you tell us about the relationship of the meditation you speak about to the idea of karma?

Maharishi: Karma is cause and effect. Every effects has a cause, and every cause gives rise to its effect. Effect becomes the cause of future effect, so effect and cause, and cause and effect, it goes on and this is karma. Karma then is the impressions gained. Impression comes up and makes you do the karma (action) again. This karma gives rise to an impression, which in turn gives rise to karma; so one karma which is action gives rise to that cycle of action and impression. Impression is the subtle state of desire, so action and desire, and desire and action, it all goes on in a cycle. Meditation is also an action, inasmuch as it is an act performed. The mind has to be applied and be doing something—it is a process to be gone through. This is also karma, but it is a karma which takes us out of the cycle of karma into the Transcendent, out of acti-

vity. Meditation is a karma which draw as us out of the realm of karma. Other karmas are such which keep us in the field of karma, in the field of action. Action and impression and action and impression, it goes on. This is the difference between the two karmas, the effect of meditation and the effect of other actions. Meditation is a means of liberation, it takes you out of the binding influence of karma. Effects of other actions keep you under the binding influence of karma, this is the difference between meditation and other karmas.

Question: Maharishi, does meditation finish the idea of cause and effect. I mean one alters this, finishes this, if you are a realised man. Cause and effect, does this disappear?

Maharishi: Cause and effect exist for the realised man, except that he rises above the binding influence of cause and effect. Now this body is the result of some cause which was some action of the past, some good and some bad actions which become the cause now. That cause is innate as long as the body is there: thus all that is done through the body is the effect of that which has been done in the past. So even a realised man has to go through the effect of the cause of the past. The only thing that happens is that going through the effect of this past cause, the realised man does not create a future cause. Present effect fails to give rise to any cause which might result in future action and here the cycle of cause and effect is brought to an end, but the last link has to be lived, and the last link of effect is everything pertaining to the body, so long as the body lasts.

Question: Suppose there is something in this life from which arises a bad karma, can we get rid of it by meditation.

Maharishi: Why not? Everything can be got rid of,

everything of the past could be neutralized by the present. What we did in the past, we undo in the present. Everything that has been done could be undone, because it is our own doing. And our past doing could be modified by our own present doing. Present action is important, and meditation is that process which strengthens all faculties of experience and action. When the faculties of experience and action are developed, then the karma done by the undeveloped faculties of the past will easily be overthrown by the more developed faculties of the present—and easily; so that is the importance of meditation.

Question: Maharishi, some people achieve the state of bliss without meditation; do they get this by the grace of God?

Maharishi: Without searching nobody finds it.

Question: Do they get this by good karma?

Maharishi: They do get it by good karma, by the present good karma. The good karma of the past is not enough to make a man realise because if the good karma of the past were enough to make him realise then he would have become realised in the past. He has to do something now and that results in direct realisation.

Question: Maharishi, is there ever any danger that the power of meditation could be abused?

Maharishi: What happens in this meditation is that a man feel more energetic, and along with energy he feel contentment, happiness and peace. Energy comes, and along with it is infused peace and contentment so that energy in peace and contentment cannot be abused.

Question: Upon what does it depend whether or not one realises?

Maharishi: It depends on one's karmic cycle, one's cycle of past actions. Meditation itself is a karma, an act, which may lead one to direct realisation. Whatever we have done, whatever causes we have created in the past, we reap the results, the effects in this life. We are born as men, and this is a status sufficient enough to enable us to persist in meditation so that we realise here and now. Whatever has been our karma in the past, it seems to have been favourable enough to result in our ability now, now to realise. In this present cycle of action, present karma of meditation, realisation is needed, and this is possible for everyone. Realisation is influenced by one's karmic cycle—it will keep within the range of this—but having realised, one passes out of the influence of the cycle of cause and effect.

Question: How can it be avoided if we are born with it?

Maharishi: It need not be avoided, it cannot be avoided because the actions are our own. Whatever we are born to suffer, we will suffer, but meditation takes us above the influence of suffering. As with the petty business man, he suffers loss of five dollars one day and enjoys the profit of five dollars next day; loss and profit will affect him. But should he become a millionaire, profit one day and loss the next day will not affect him. The point is that profit and loss are an inherent part of business—one day joy, one day suffering—but it becomes insignificant in the light of the permanent Self. When the standard of happiness is raised to eternal bliss, then temporary joys and sorrows are insignificant; neither produces much effect on us. This meditation, then, is not a way to eliminate suffering, it is a way to take us out of the net of suffering. Out of the bondage of life. With

added energy, added intellectual capacity, added patience and happiness, the intensity of suffering is not felt.

Question: Maharishi, if a person is ill and is not expected to live, but lives because forty people have gathered together and prayed and they say that their prayers saved his life, could it have been the prayer? Could the prayer of forty people influence karma in any way?

Maharishi: Karma is influenced by karma. Prayer is also karma. And the strength of prayer is much greater than any other karma. Anything could be influenced by prayer, if done rightly.

Question: What do you mean by done rightly?

Maharishi: Done rightly means that it is found to be effective, because we know the correctness of the process from its results. If the result is good, then the process has been right. If the result is not good, the process was not right. It does not need deep logic to understand this. If the first sitting of meditation does not show any result, then the start has not been right.

Question: Maharishi, why is it that somebody can pray for two different persons and one will get better immediately and the other won't? Prayers has been said for both people. Was it chance that one got better and the other didn't, or was it the result of prayer? How is one supposed to know?

Maharishi: There may be many reasons. One reason may be affinity on the part of the person who is praying for the person who is prayed for. The prayer connects. It makes a triangle—the one who is praying, the God to whom the prayer goes and the one for whom the prayer is said. Now,

there could be resistance at any point. This might arise because the person is not praying sincerely or there could be resistance between God and the person for whom the prayer is said. The resistance could be from that person, the tendency of that person, the karma of that person and the belief in God of that person. Again there could be resistance between the two persons—the one who prays and the one who is prayed for. This might be due to lack of faith on the part of the one who is being prayed for or there may be a lack of affinity between the two. Outwardly there may seem to be an affinity but their minds may not be attuned. It may also be that one is praying to God owing to outer pressure but inwardly one is not praying. This resistance at any point in the triangle will prevent results.

Question: Maharishi, would this meditation remove the obstruction at least form one part, from the person who prays?

Maharishi: And now this brings us to another question. The possibility of resistance is there in any of these three parts. But if the current from one part is flowing strong and fast, any resistance on the other side will be overcome more easily. So various conditions governs the situation. If the man is really in tune with God he will be cured.

Question: I suppose the healing would be effected from within the sick person, would it Maharishi?

Maharishi: Even that, yes. Meditation is a way which could be said to be self-healing. The man heals himself. He does not need another healers. He generates the healing forced within himself by meditation.

Question: Maharishi, you spoke of a triangle; could you say more about that? What is the triangle?

Maharishi: The triangle is between God, the devotee and the sick person. Somehow we have to under-

stand where lies the greater resistance, to account for the failure of prayer. We may find that two persons prayed in the same way, prayed at the same time and at the same place, and one prayer is found effective and the other not. This triangle clears up the position and brings out what went wrong with the unsuccessful prayer.

Question: Are the karmic laws changed when cosmic consciousness is attained?

Maharishi: There are three types of karma. One type of karma remains as it is; the other two types are changed. One type of karma relates to the past. You have performed some activity for a long time and, as a consequence, a great deal of karma is store—a mountain of karma. Out of this mountain of karma we take some of it and to work it out we acquire this physical body. As long as the body is to be, we have to bear that karma for which we acquired a body. Our present actions leave their impressions on our minds, and these become the seed of desire; desire leads to karma. So it is the acting in the present that becomes the seed for future karma. Thus there is the karma of the past, the karma of the present and the karma of the future. Through Self-realisation, which results in the experience of greatest happiness of absolute nature, all desires are satisfied. The mind attains a state of eternal contentment. In that state, when the mind is eternally satisfied, it does not register the impressions created by experience in a permanent way. The impressions do fall on the mind; and they are of three types: a very deep impression, like a groove cut in a stone, a shallow one, like a line drawn on ash, which is easily erased by a gust of wind, and a very shallow one like a line

on water, which is drawn and while being drawn is erased simultaneously. As the degree of cosmic consciousness grows, so the depth of the impressions produced by our experiences become shallower and shallower. In the state of cosmic consciousness the impressions are like a line on water. When the impressions are as shallow as a line on water, the seed for future karma is not sowed. In this way, though sense experience takes place nothing is stored for the future.

When the mind is established in the Absolute Being, the impression is automatically shallow because of the great contentment of the mind. Once it is fully contented, it does not want further contentment. It is like the contented mind of a millionaire. If wealth is enough the mind is contented as regards wealth, so loss of a few pounds does not affect him. The millionaire has not to make any conscious adjustment in his mind to console himself. His millionairship itself insures him against the effect of the loss of a few pounds. His contented state of mind fails to register any deep impression of the effect of the loss.

The karma of the past, that inexhaustible store of past karma, is said to be burnt when Self-realisation is attained. What does this mean? For example, when we take with us a suitcase of clothing, from the quantity we have at home on a journey, and thereafter if the house catches fire the clothes in the house are burned except those which are in our suitcase. Similarly, when we acquire this physical body of ours, we draw a certain amount of karma from the stored up karma of the past, but when we attain Self-realisation, the mountain of past karma is burnt, but the karma of the present will have to be lived out even by a realised soul.

Question: How can we prove such a thing?

Maharishi: It cannot be proved, but we understand it by

way of logical thinking. By virtue of his eternal contentment a realised person, when he leaves his body, has no desire to acquire another body. Birth is supposed to be the result of the last desire at the time of death. This decides where the person will be reborn and in what environment. But one who has realised, whose impressions are all erased as the line an water is, has no desire at the time of death which is forceful enough to take his spirit into some other body. When the possibility of re-birth is thus removed, then the inexhaustible store of past karma is as good as burnt. Thus, with realisation, the past and the future karma are burnt—only the present remains, and it is the present karma that is responsible for the growth of cosmic consciousness. When the state of Being permeates experience, then the karma ceases to be karma as such. Activity is infused with silence. So the action of a realised person is inaction. He who sees activity in inactivity he alone is wise; he alone sees. This is how living in the world he does not belong to the world. It is a natural state which goes beyond human thinking—like the lotus remaining in water yet untouched by it. This is Man the Divine.

SUFFERING

Question: Why do we suffer if life is bliss?

Maharishi: We suffer because we do not enjoy! Why is it always dark? Because no one has switched on the light. Why is a fish thirsty? Because it is not drinking. We suffer only because we do not know how to enjoy. Almost every religion teaches that the Kingdom of Heaven is within man. We do not choose to enter the chamber of peace and happiness within us and so remaining outside, being extroverted, we suffer. This meditation is a direct way to lead the mind to that chamber of bliss within and all suffering in life ceases.

Question: The people of the West, and especially Christians, find it very difficult to accept that life is bliss because they are taught that the whole of life is a struggle.

Maharishi: Because life in the West is more on the surface. Western philosophy has not given much importance to inner values of life but this does not mean that the original scriptures of religion in the West have nothing to do with inner life. It is only the tragedy of education that has resulted in such a misunderstanding. Even those whose minds are fixed in suffering and who regard suffering to be the nature of life, it is high time for them to amend their understanding and uphold that life is bliss.

Question: Christianity emphasises that life is a struggle.

Maharishi: Then we interpret it in this way: Life is a struggle. But Christianity is to reveal to you that you could come out of that struggle and if you don't follow Christianity, then you will have to be in the struggle! We want to mean good. Therefore this teaching of Christianity should be interpreted in a good sense because we mean good. When we accept that life is a struggle we accept it not as an absolute truth but as an approach to truth. When a man is suffering and you tell him that life is suffering then he finds a little relief. Then the message of Christ is: "Kingdom of Heaven is within Me." "First seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven and all else will be added unto thee". So begin to look inwards wherein lies the Kingdom of Heaven, and when the Self is realised all pain and suffering vanishes.

Question: Do you not think pain and suffering are necessary as a spur to rise above it? Otherwise, permanently happy, one might be contented to remain as one is.

Maharishi: If permanently happy, then man has attained that state of happiness for which he was born. Suffering is no credit in itself. Credit of life is happiness. Suffering is negative happiness; we want positive happiness, eternal bliss in life. Suffering is retardation, going downward in evolution, because suffering is the result of sin and hampers progress. When someone suffers and remembers God, he climbs upwards not because of suffering but because of remembering God. This is going towards evolution; suffering is going in the opposite direction. Meditation is the way to close the gate of suffering and open the gate of joy.

Question: Even for the development of character, one has to go through sacrifice and suffering in life, doing good work of some kind, does this not help spiritual development?

Maharishi: I do not think it has anything to do with the unfoldment of higher consciousness. It makes a man more sensible and better in the field of behaviour, and when a man is better in the field of behaviour, he feels a little more peace than others, but that is no unfoldment of higher consciousness. Spirituality cannot be purchased.

Question: Is this what is called original sin?

Maharishi: To enjoy things in the world is not a sin.

The good scenes which the Almighty Father has spread for us to enjoy are the sun, the moon and the whole of creation. Man is not born to suffer. Yet not enjoying life, he begins to suffer. We shiver in the verandah only because we are not in the warmth of the living room. If we wanted we could be there any time. It is a matter of choice. We are enjoying the variety of creation. The unity is there ready for us to be enjoyed any time. We can enjoy the unity at the same time as we enjoy the variety. They are the two ends of our life, and both ends taken together go to make life complete. One without the other is incomplete. The negative pole of a magnet and its positive pole, both taken together, go to make a magnet. The positivity of this is due to the negativity of that and the negativity of this is due to the positivity of that.

The positive pole represents the joys of life, while suffering is the negative aspect of life. But there is also a neutral point of life in between the two poles which stands unaffected

by either joy or sorrow. That is the Transcendental Divine Being, the Kingdom of Heaven within. It has no attribute. Beyond the joys and sorrows is the Absolute Being. You can do certain things and enjoy the result, and you can do certain things and suffer as a consequence. If you want neither to enjoy nor to suffer, be in the neutral point, be in your own Self. But mysteriously when we are in ourselves we are much higher on the place of joy than we can ever be when we are in the relative field of joy. So the ocean of happiness is open to us. It is a matter of choice. The choice of this meditation brings enjoyment of the absolute bliss within.

Question: Maharishi, the finding of this centre seems to have been a hidden secret, why is that?

Maharishi: Because it is beyond relativity. There are even subtle phases of relativity which we cannot see and if our senses cannot perceive even these subtle phases of concrete creation, what then of the field that lies beyond the subtlest field of creation? That is obviously why we seem to miss it. But it is our own nature, and that which is our own, simply cannot be missed. No man can say: "I have missed myself." Meditation brings the experience of the Self.

Question: The suffering of millions in concentration camps—was that due to their karma? Why do innocent children have to suffer?

Maharishi: Innocent is innocence; it does not suffer. How can it suffer? When one suffers, it is always the result of one's actions of the past.

Question: If man's urge is towards happiness, then why do you say: "He has no need to suffer on the

way to the Kingdom of Heaven?

Maharishi: Because on the way towards light we cannot think of increasing darkness. When we make headway towards Heaven then happiness and not suffering should increase. Therefore it becomes clear that suffering is not necessary for enjoying, for enlightenment.

Question: Is it due to ignorance that man chooses to suffer?

Maharishi: Only ignorance in not knowing that the way towards real happiness lies in another direction; he just doesn't know.

Question: There are millions of people who are ill or starving; they can't have happiness.

Maharishi: Why not?

Question: Unless something is done for them, starving or very ill or children, how does one deal with that?

Maharishi: The hungry man can be happy hungry man with meditation! If he takes to meditation he'll be a happy hungry man; if he doesn't take to meditate then he'll suffer hunger and misery. Hunger is there, hunger is one thing. Now hunger will go through bread and butter but without bread and butter too the man could be made happy by leading him to the field of bliss within, by taking the attention there. Satisfaction of hunger alone is not the whole purpose of life, it is one aspect of life, and it is accepted as an essential aspect of life but much more essential are the other aspects of life. If the attention is drawn to the Kingdom of Heaven he will not be a miserable man.

Question: Can he make other people happier too through his meditation?

Maharishi: Oh yes; because if we don't meditate then we shall be miserable and reflect misery and this will affect others. But if we meditate we become cheerful in ourselves and consequently we vibrate happiness and make others happy but if we could impart the technique of meditation to others, the whole world could be happy; that's why the Three Year Plan of the Spiritual Regeneration Movement was inaugurated to train meditation guides so that all the people will find in their neighbourhood specially trained meditation guides who could skillfully impart the technique. Then human misery will be removed.

Question: On the question of meditation, how should the hungry man meditate?

Maharishi: He should forget about bread, he need not meditate on bread. The technique is to come out to the field of the Transcendent. If you want to gain anything then come out of the idea of it complete. We need not think about the bread; "First seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven," and all else will be added unto thee.

Question: Is there no room in your philosophy for a very fine, deep and continuous balance between suffering and peace, both existing in the same field, at the same time, and one leading to the other?

Maharishi: Fine! there is that state of life where a man is suffering yet he does not resent suffering; he accepts suffering and receives peace in his resignation to suffering. Fine but that cannot be said to be fulfilment of life, because that peace is only due to the lack of ability to overcome the suffering, that peace is only due to a defeatist mentality; as if there does not seem to be any chance in life to overcome

suffering and it is accepted in the name of God, in the name of freedom. It is an intelligent approach to suffering when one does not know how to eradicate suffering. So they say that suffering is necessary for the attainment of the Kingdom of Heaven as a means to pacify those that are caught up in suffering but this is a wrong attitude.

Question: What of the man who has or hasn't tried to overcome suffering, yet by a free choice of will chooses rather to retain suffering and to retain the peace in that same fine balance?

Maharishi: Firstly, the choice to accept suffering is unnatural in man because he has to make an effort of resignation to suffering, and he is then able to suffer quietly. The mind naturally accepts joy but not suffering, it's just because one lacks the means to get out of it. It's a defeatist mentality.

Question: And what about the man who goes beyond accepting suffering and embraces it, is it more unnatural?

Maharishi: More unnatural, definitely more unnatural.

Question: Like Christ?

Maharishi: No, no, never! Christ had a very natural status of life; Christ never suffered, no, no Christ never suffered.

Question: Jesus the man suffered but not Christ?

Maharishi: No, no, there is no flaw in my statement. I mean what I say, Jesus never suffered and those who saw him suffering saw him from their own level of suffering, because they were established on the platform of suffering, so they could not see anything except suffering in him. He did not come on earth to suffer, he came on earth to eliminate suffering and to set a living example of all bliss in all phases of life. He never put an example of suffering before man. He led just an exemplary life, a very bold life, a life of all joy.

Those who saw him suffering, saw him suffering because they were themselves suffering, they could see only suffering. Just as when one sees through a green glass everything appears green.

Question: Then why did he cry out to God, “Why hast Thou forsaken me?”

Maharishi: He came to the world to eliminate suffering and now that he was departing he found that suffering in the world had not yet been eliminated: so he asked God “Why hast Thou forsaken me? You sent me to eliminate suffering and the task is not yet done, why are You taking me away before my task is completed.” A son talks to his Father, and there is openness between them; there is no formality, and when the Father says come back, he asks why? There is openness between the son and the Father, and in this manner they conversed.

Question: A few minutes earlier he rebuked one of the thieves on the cross, he said one was a fine fellow and could be with him in Heaven, and the other rejected him; yet within the space of a comparatively short time he was certain he was going to Heaven. Then he turns round and rebukes his own God which is a very peculiar sort of conduct which I can never understand.

Maharishi: You are right in not understanding it, nobody would understand it if he had rebuked God. He did not rebuke God.

Question: I think it is a rebuke to say why have you let me down?

Maharishi: No, no, you forget that a close affinity and openness existed between Father and son, and the innocent way in which he says “Oh! why are You forsaking me, this is the task that You gave me and it is not over; why are You taking me away?”

Question: He said “They Will be done” right on top of those words.

Maharishi: Thy Will be done” means that although my task is not yet done let “Thy Will be done” and I am coming to You. It is absolutely wrong to think in terms of the suffering of Christ. If the leader was suffering how can the followers enjoy?

Question: By suffering?

Maharishi: No, that goes beyond common sense.

Question: One must have the strength for suffering
Maharishi?

Maharishi: No, now just take what is in the Bible. If a man is suffering, let him think that God wants him to suffer and this suffering will result in great joy. If you accept that the light will come in the day and the darkness of the night will go, it doesn't mean that for the coming of the light the darkness of the night is essential. However, we accept the darkness intelligently in order to lighten the suffering. This view of suffering is only to reduce the pain of suffering at the time of suffering; let it be accepted as it comes because it will not remain and will give rise to joy. This is only an intelligent view of suffering and should not and cannot establish suffering as the goal of life. A man begins to suffer, let him not rebuke God, but accept it as His Will because it is to give rise to joy. So patiently bear it. This is the purpose of the emphasis that is being given to suffering. It is not that you go on cultivating misery and suffering and cling to it all your life believing that the path of suffering is the only path to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is wrong to say that unless one embraces darkness one cannot have light. Life is to be enjoyed, life is bliss. The purpose of following Christ is to attain the Kingdom of Heaven within, and to put an eternal end to all suffering so that no iota of suffering,

no shadow of darkness can ever possibly remain. This following of Christ is for the sake of eternal bliss here and now, from moment to moment. If we could get on to That, then the Christians will be the right followers of Christ, the Buddhists will be the right followers of Buddha, the Hindus will be the right followers of Krishna and all will realise that life is not to be wasted in suffering. If the purpose of religion is to keep us in suffering then we do not need such a religion. A religion is only to provide a short cut out of suffering and to establish us on the platform of bliss. And it should be a short cut, not a long and windy path because we want to enjoy the goal and not be stuck up in the path all the time.

Just a few minutes meditation in the morning and evening and Christ Consciousness will be gained. We get to Christ Consciousness not through suffering but through the formula that he gave: “The Kingdom of Heaven is within me,” and that is through direct communion in the morning and in the evening, and when the communion is established, then “all else will be added unto thee.” Where is the suffering? Christ never said “You suffer and get yourself hanged on the Cross.” This is not his teaching; his teaching is: “Enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven within,” and this is bliss.

Question: Is not the Cross the symbol for suffering?

Maharishi: No, the Cross does not represent suffering and it is not meant to. On the other hand it is the symbol for eternal life. It represents cosmic existence, fullness of life. A fully integrated life is one where the material values and the spiritual values are joined in harmonious living. The Christian Cross stands for such a life—a life of all bliss, wisdom and creativity.

The Cross has its vertical and horizontal bar. The horizontal bar stand for the material values of existence—life in its outer manifestation; the vertical bar signifies the spiritual values of life—the inner glorious aspects of human existence; and when the two are crossed it means cosmic consciousness. And the beauty of the Cross is that the vertical is longer than the horizontal, and it is on the vertical that the horizontal bar rests.

Question: In Christian concept we are egged on in life either by a reward or punishment. If your system of meditation becomes widespread what will become of this concept?

Maharishi: Everyone will be rewarded!

Question: If one attains complete happiness, what should one's attitude be towards the suffering of those who are not our family or friends, but whose suffering need relief in a practical way?

Maharishi: Those who have a practical ways of helping others will use practical means, and those who have the opportunity of helping through meditation will use that as a means.

Question: Should one offer the meditation or should one wait to be asked?

Maharishi: Oh, no! If a person is suffering he has not the mind to know that you can possibly help. You should offer in a convincing way that which you believe he needs. Let him know that you are available whenever he calls on you. A doctor puts up a sign on the door and then patients know where to come.

HEALING

Question: Some people have healing powers. They can cure other people.

Maharishi: Yes.

Question: Are these suggestive powers the strength of one mind over another mind, or something else?

Maharishi: There is mental healing through the power of the mind. But this healing power is a quality of the body. Some rays are being emitted all the time through the body, sometimes through the hands or other extremities of the body. Some constitutions develop more of these energy rays in their body. And when they meditate, greater energy is produced and begins to flow through their body. It is just a quality of the particular body. Some bodies gather more of these rays.

Question: Placing the hand on the patient helps a great deal?

Maharishi: Because the healing power flows through their body. It flows through the hand and if they touch the suffering part it seems to get relief. The healing power of the mind will not require any touching of the body, just a thought will do. There can also be healing through vision. A man comes before you, you look at him and he feels better; the

same healing rays. Healing through speech—if someone has a headache one may say: “You have just a headache, go home, it will be all right. Some words are said and the headache comes to an end.

Question: It needs in the words spoken.

Maharishi: Belief or no belief, it depends upon the force of the speech. This is a physical phenomenon.

If he believes then he does not create a resistance. If he does not believe, then resistance is there, but if the power of speech is forceful it will break through the resistance. If the power of the speech is low and the resistance is great, then it will not have any effect. Might is right in this case.

Question: If a person is born with an illness, can he be healed by this meditation?

Maharishi: If the body is not healed, the soul will be healed. We cannot generalise as it depends on the type of illness and the ability to meditate. But there is no doubt that psychosomatic diseases can be easily cured by this meditation. We don't treat the disease as such, the cure is the natural result of meditation.

PSYCHOANALYSIS

Question: Psychiatric treatment does not seem to help someone suffering for many years from a psychosomatic ailment which has taken on a kind of up-and-down life-pattern.

Maharishi: The seed of the disease is not uncovered; it remains. In psychoanalysis the cause is traced back and brought to the surface of the mind, and thereby it is thought that the real cause is eliminated. The present illness may be the result of some past action, so the action is brought to the conscious level and plucked out. In so doing, only one cause has been eradicated. But what is the cause of the cause? This, the origin, the seed, remains uncovered. For example, someone has been mistreated. The mistreatment is analysed and the person feels better temporarily, but perhaps the cause of the illness may not have been eliminated. So unless all the intermediate steps or causes are brought to the conscious level, the attention directed to all the causes and—most important of all—to the cause of all causes, to the Transcendent, the seed of the disease will remain. This is what meditation does. It traces back cause after cause to the original source.

Question: Sometimes we have to go to psychiatrists and ask them to help us out. Does this meditation

help to take care of the subconscious mind, and does it help a man really to put things right? And then these things in the subconscious mind are very strong, and we don't realise what they really are. Could you comment?

Maharishi: Meditation takes care of all this a million times better than psychoanalysis. It penetrates much deeper levels of the subconscious mind than present day psychology does. The present day psychiatry thinks that to-days's worry is due to some past action or some attitude of the past, and through psychoanalysis the past memory is dug up. Now, if to-day's misery is the result of an incident of, say, twenty years ago, what was the cause of that incident? Some fifty years ago there was some other incident—and so on. We shall have to trace one effect to its cause and through the chain of cause and effect we shall have to reach the point where life first began. Thus we shall have to go back through the whole animal kingdom till we come to the cause of all causes, the source of creation. And if one could reach the source of creation, one would have worked through all the causes and effects, and thus all the effects would be eliminated once and for all. Psychiatry goes as far as only one or two steps in the chain of cause and effect because it works on memory, and the memory of man is short indeed and limited to his present life time.

An altogether different technique is required to trace back to the origin of all cause and effect. And this is only possible through this system of meditation whereby the whole depth of mind—conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious—is traversed till the Transcendental Being—the source of creation—is reached.

Question: Irrespective of time?

Maharishi: Through the whole span of time, the whole past.

Question: From the time of creation?

Maharishi: Right from the time of creation to the field of the Creator. This is the value of this meditation. This meditation is like a round-the-world ticket, while psychiatry is like a ticket to one station, or possibly two. If we are liberal we give it three stations.

Question: Does meditation teach them to be above the effect of family?

Maharishi: To make them above the effect of, not only family, but above the effect of their karma, give them meditation and let them transcend. Give them meditation and transcending takes care of everything. Not the suggestions to destroy their family ties. Then they are nowhere, just nowhere. Psychiatry is so incomplete in its effects that it is a surprise how such a treatment is spreading. It just destroys the relationship and homely affections of the people.

Question: If somebody doing meditation had reached the ultimate stage would it reach the rest of the family?

Maharishi: They gain quite a lot out of it because of blood affinity, the vibrations, the thought vibrations, they reach the blood relations more easily than they reach others.

Question: I don't agree, I think that blood relations irritate. I am an osteopath and a neuropath, and I find that when I get the people away from their own people, and have them on my plane, and treat them, I find that it is then that I can deal with them from a psychological point of view; and the more they get away from their families and see them-

selves objectively—their actions and reactions—the more they open up to me. They don't open up to their own people. They don't give them the right emanations.

Maharishi: That is why modern psychology is the curse of the present time. Because it helps a man to be away from his own nearest and dearest ones, and to get attached to some foreign ones. Their getting away from their parents is the fruit of modern psychoanalysis. You see how extremely dangerous it is for everyone. The near ones, the dear ones, the mother and father and surrounding friends, they are the means of happiness to which a man should cling. When he leaves that which is a real and natural source of rest, leaves that field and goes to some new field—the new field is but a mockery of the real blood relationship, then the real trouble begins. They just begin to talk nicely, and for some days she is talking nicely, and then they are gone, and it is broken, and he goes to someone else, and then to someone else. His life is just like a football. This is the bad effect of modern psychoanalysis, and generally the psychoanalysts are fond to be recommending: “You keep away from your wife, keep away from your mother, don't write to your father, have no connection with your husband.” Completely they want to cut off the natural family connections because their understanding is faulty. They think that the wife is miserable because her husband is not good, so let her be away from that atmosphere, so that the negative atmosphere of the husband may not affect the wife and then the wife will be found free from the negative atmosphere. But it is very harmful basically, harmful to the lives of thousands of people, just running the lives because a man goes to the psychologist thinking that he is a master of the mind. Whatever he suggests, he suggests from his mastery of psychology, and his diagnosis must therefore be right and his prescription good. Thinking

... .., they follow his prescription believing, “It will make me happy”. The result is that they are cut off from the source of natural happiness—their family, the husband is cut off from the wife, the son is cut off from the father and mother. Generally it is found that the mother did not give her love to the child. Who is it that must give love to the child if the mother does not? Nobody else is there who could give that love to the child of which the mother alone is capable. All these fancies of these people, they are simply ruining the consciousness of the whole nation and depriving the people of their natural source of peace and happiness at home.

HYPNOSIS

Question: Do you think it is right to use hypnosis, because hypnosis is a kind of enslavement of another person's mind?

Maharishi: Yes, it is very bad. You are enslaving another mind and annihilating his personality, and using his body through your mind. It is very wrong. But inasmuch as he is healed, well and good. Hypnotism has both good and bad point. If a man is hypnotised occasionally for short periods of time to produce some specific result, to minimise some pain or some such thing, then it is helpful. But if we make use of a man all the time and annihilate his personality and gain power over his body, that brings dis-coordination between his mind and body. His senses are being used but not by his own mind. Another mind dominates. This creates a state of disintegration of body and mind, senses and mind. One's consciousness is suppressed and this eliminates the chance of development of higher consciousness. Therefore it is not a good practice to be used repeatedly on a person.

Question: Will the same apply to self-hypnosis?

Maharishi: The same will apply to self-hypnosis, though not the same logic. Self-hypnosis is a process which cuts away the intellect. The mind is not allowed to

...

... am and is made to fill the mind to such an extent that only that idea becomes a reality. The intellect is cut out. A man feels: 'yes, I am sleeping.' If the intellect were awake it would say: "What a fool you are! Why? You are wide awake!" The man has identified himself with that idea to such a great extent that it alone becomes a living reality. That is done at the loss of the intellect. So self-hypnosis suppresses intellectual development. It gives rise to emotional development. Not giving a chance to reason, to the intellectual aspect of one's personality, it makes the man dull and his intellect dull. Those who are the victims of self-hypnosis are generally found to be emotional rather than intellectual. One aspect only, that of the emotion, is awake and the intellect is put to sleep.

Question: Is it possible to use self-hypnosis without knowing it?

Maharishi: This is the common man has hypnotised himself and has come to be out of bliss. Being blissful in his own nature, he finds that he is suffering. but if bliss alone is out of experience and everything else is a positive experience. This is self-hypnosis. It is as if man has hypnotised himself with, or identified himself with, his surroundings to such an extent as to completely forget his own real potential nature.

Question: Is there any trace of self-hypnosis in meditation?

Maharishi: There is no hypnosis in meditation.

Question: It cannot even enter into it?

Maharishi: Not even a shadow of it!

Question: Not even unknowingly?

Maharishi: No, it cannot. Because this meditation does not dwell on the meaning. When we medi-

tate ...

is simply not an aspect included in the process. We do not aim at anything.

Question: An aim sneak in.

Maharishi: The aim is sneaked out! When we begin meditation we sneak out the aim! What we do is experience the subtle states of thought, then the subtler state and further subtler states of thought. We do not apprehend each subtler state but experience what comes. It is a process of experiencing, not of manipulation, apprehending, aiming or any such thing.

Question: I might stop thinking at that stage.

Maharishi: It is thinking.

Question: Is it?

Maharishi: Thinking, positive thinking. If it were not thinking, what are you experiencing? We experience the thought process. The thought is of a flower. At every stage of the process we experience the finer phase of the sound aspect of thought. There is no imagination, no cessation of thinking. The whole process is one of positive experience of the subtle states of thought. This is meditation.

Question: The experience is of thinking?

Maharishi: Grosser states of speech, subtler states of speech, much subtler states of speech are all derived from thought—gross and subtle thought. This means that we are creating a thought and experiencing it, then reducing it to a subtler degree and experiencing the subtler aspect and so on till we reach the Transcendent. This is meditation. We are experiencing what comes, not imagining what has not yet come. Imagining what is not yet a reality would amount to self hypnosis.

