



Silence of the Heart

Volume II

Spiritual Dialogues with
Robert Adams

Happiness is Your Real Nature

"Within You is Unimaginable Beauty, Radiance."

*Feel the Presence within yourself.
Feel the Happiness and the Joy
that you really are.
Feel it! You can feel it!*

*No matter how many so called problems
you may appear to have, what is going on
in your life, good or bad, forget about that.
It does not matter.
Feel the Presence.
The Presence of Pure Awareness.*

*Feel this in yourself. Do not think about it.
Just Feel It. When you begin to think about it,
you spoil it. Allow the mind to rave on.
Do not pay a bit of attention to the mind.
Whatever thoughts it brings you,
whatever it tells you.
Feel the bliss. You ARE the Bliss.
There is absolutely nothing that you need,
that you have to become.
When you go beyond the senses...observing
them, looking at them...not reacting to them,
then you find that you have always been in BLISS.
Bliss Happiness is your Very Nature.
YOU ARE THAT.*

The Dialogues of Robert Adams

Silence

of the Heart II

Spiritual Dialogues

with Robert Adams

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In Loving Memory of John Knapp
Whose Kind Generosity Made *The Silence of the Heart Volume II* Possible.

• Love, Compassion and Humility. •

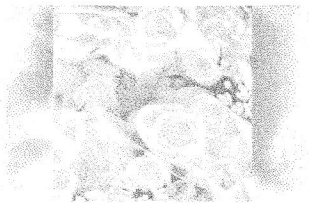


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Some people tell me:
"Robert why don't you just speak
The highest truth all the time?"
And some people ask,
"Robert, speak so that I can understand
What you are talking about."
So that is the dilemma.
So I do whatever I have to do.
I plan nothing.
Everything is extemporaneous.
I have no rehearsals.
I don't write anything down.
I just say what comes out of me.

Robert Adams

Dialogue 1

There Are No Problems

“Remember again,
Your body came to this earth because of Karma,
(The Scriptural Law of Reaping as You Sow)
And it's going to go through
whatever it has to go through.

But you've got absolutely nothing to do with that,
Because You Are Not Your Body.”

Topics

The Four Principles of Self Realization
The Character of Egolessness
You Are Not The Physical Body

August 19, 1990

Robert: I want to let you in on a little secret. There are no problems. There are no problems. There never were any problems, there are no problems today, and there will never be any problems. Problems just mean that the world isn't turning out the way you want it to. But in truth, there are no problems. Everything is unfolding as it should. Everything is right. You have to forget about yourself and expand your consciousness until you become the whole universe. The Reality in back of the universe is Pure Awareness. It has no problems. And you are That.

If you identify with your body, then there's a problem, because your body always gets into trouble of some kind. But if you learn to forget about your body and your mind, where is there a problem? In other words, leave your body alone. Take just enough care of it. Exercise it a little, feed it right foods, but don't think about it too much. Keep your mind on reality. Merge your mind with reality. And you will experience reality. You will live in a world without problems. The world may appear to have problems to others, but not to you. You will see things differently, from a higher point of view.

I had an interesting phone call this week...

Someone asked me: "Do Self-Realized people dream, or have visions?"

Now, in order to have a dream or a vision, there has to be somebody left to have it, and yet, if you're Self-Realized, there's nobody home. There's nobody left. So it's a contradiction, as truth is. All truth is a contradiction. It's a paradox.

The answer is, Sages do dream sometimes, and have visions. But they're aware of the dreamer. In other words, they realize that they are not the person dreaming or having the vision. But as long as there's a body there someplace, there will be dreams and visions. Even though there's no one home, there will still, once in a while, be a dream or a vision.

As an example Ramana Maharshi often dreamt and had visions. Nisargadatta dreamt and had visions. And they were both Self-Realized. But again, the question is: "Who dreams? Who has the vision?" There's no ego left. As long as the dreamer is separate from the "I". I can only speak from my own experience. There's no difference to me, in the waking state, the dreaming state, the sleeping state, or the vision state. They're all the same. I'm aware of all of them, but I am not them. I observe them. I see them happening. As a matter of fact, sometimes I cannot tell the difference. Sometimes I don't know whether I'm dreaming, or awake, or having a vision, or I'm asleep. It's all the same, because I take a step backward, and I watch myself going through all these things.

So, for some reason, lately, I've been dreaming about the Queen of England. She was coming to Satsang. I don't know why... for about three nights in a row. But I did have an interesting vision this morning, about four o'clock, and we'll spend the rest of the time discussing it, because I found it very interesting.

As many of you know, I have had a constant vision, periodically, of myself going to Arunachala, the sacred mountain where Ramana Maharshi lived. And in the vision the mountain is hollow. And I go through the mountain, to the center, there's a bright light, a thousand times brighter than the sun, but yet it's pleasing and calm, and there's no heat. And then I meet Ramana, Jesus, Ramakrishna, Nisargadatta, Lao Tse, and others. And we smile at each other, we walk toward each other, and melt into one light, and become one. Then there's a blinding light and an explosion. And then I open my eyes. I've shared that with you before.

But this morning, for the first time, I had a very interesting vision, which I'll share with you again. I dreamt I was somewhere in an open field, a beautiful field. There was a lake nearby, trees, a forest. I was sitting under a tree in this open field. I had on the orange garb of a renunciate. I must have been a Buddhist.

All of a sudden hundreds of bodhisattvas and mahasattvas come from the forest and start walking toward me. They all sit down in a semi-circle around me, in meditation. I wondered what I was doing. Then I realized that I had become the Buddha. And we all sat in silence for about three hours.

Then one of the bodhisattvas got up and asked a question...

He said: "Master, what is your teaching?" It was not in English. I don't know what language he spoke but I understood it quite clearly.

Without hesitation I said: "I teach Self Realization of Noble Wisdom". Then he sat down.

We sat for about another three hours in silence. Then another bodhisattva got up and asked a question: "Master, how can you tell when one is close to Self-Realization? How can you tell one is about to become Self-Realized? How does one tell...?"

This is what I'd like to discuss today. How can we tell if we're on the path correctly. I gave Four Principles which I really never do in the waking state. I never have a teaching. But in my vision I was giving a teaching, so I'll share it with you. I explained Four Principles. How you know that you're close to Self-Realization... Of course, we're all Self Realized already.

•Principle Number 1: You have a feeling, a complete understanding, that everything you see, everything in the universe, in the world, emanates from your mind. In other words, you feel this. You do not have to think about it or try to bring it on. It comes by itself. It becomes a part of you. The realization that everything that you see, the universe, people, worms, insects, the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, your body, your mind, everything that appears, is a manifestation of your mind. You have to have that feeling, that deep understanding, without trying.

So you ask yourself: "What do I think about all day long?". Of course, if you fear something, if you worry, if you believe something is wrong somewhere, if you think you're suffering from lack or limitation, or sickness, anything, then you're out of it completely, because you're not understanding that all these things are simply a manifestation of your

own mind. And if you worry about these things you become attached to false imagination. That's called **false imagination**. You've been attached to habit energy for many years, and all these attachments and beliefs come from habit energy.

It's like watching a TV. show and becoming one of the characters, even when you know that you're not on the TV. But you believe you're one of the characters in the TV. show. So it is with the world. Do not get involved. I don't mean you become passive. I mean your body does what it's supposed to do. Remember, your body came to this earth to do something. It will do something without your knowledge. It'll take care of itself. Don't worry. But do not identify your body with your Self. They're different. Your body is not your Self. And I'll prove this.

When you refer to your body what do you say? Don't you say 'my body'? Who is this 'my' you're referring to? You say 'my finger', 'my eye'. Who are you referring to? You couldn't be talking about your body, because you are saying it's 'my' body, as if you own it. Who owns it? This proves to your Self that you're not your body. So do not identify your Self with the body and the world.

Therefore the First Principle to see how close you are to Self-Realization is: You are not feeling that you are identified with the world. You're separate. And you're feeling happiness because your natural state is pure happiness. Once you identify with worldly things, you spoil it. The happiness disappears. It dissipates. But when you're separate from worldly things happiness is automatic. Beautiful, pure happiness. It comes by itself. So that's the First Principle.

•Principle Number Two: The Second Principle I explained to the bodhisattvas was that you have to have a strong feeling, a deep realization, that you are unborn. You are not born, you do not experience a life, and you do not disappear, you do not die. You are not born, you have no life, and you do not die. You have to feel this, that you are of the unborn. Do you realize what this means? There is no cause for your existence. There is no cause for your suffering. There is no cause for your problems.

Some of you still believe in cause and effect. This is true in the relative world, but in the world of reality there is no cause. Nothing has ever been made. Nothing has ever been created. There is no creation. I know it's hard to comprehend. How do I exist if I was not born, I have no life and I do not disappear in old age? You exist as "I AM". You have always existed and you will always exist. You exist as Pure Intelligence, as Absolute Reality. That is your true nature. You exist as Satchitananda. You exist as Bliss Consciousness, but you do exist. You exist as Emptiness, as Nirvana, but you do exist. So don't worry about being non-existent. But you do not exist as the body. You do not exist as person, place, or thing. Do you feel that? If you have a strong feeling about that, then you're close to Self Realization.

•Principle Number 3: You are aware and you have a deep understanding of the egolessness of all things; that everything has no ego. I'm not only speaking of sentient beings. I'm speaking of the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom. Nothing has an ego. There is no ego. And do you realize what this means? It means that everything is sacred.

Everything is God. Only when the ego comes, does what we call 'God' disappear. Everything becomes God. You have reverence for everything. When there is no ego, you have reverence for everybody and everything.

So you have to be aware of the egolessness of all things. Animals have no ego, minerals have no ego, vegetables have no ego, and humans have no ego. There is no cause, so there cannot be an effect. There is only Divine Consciousness and everything becomes Divine Consciousness. So if you look at your fellow man and animals and everything else as being egolessness, you will see them as yourself. Can't you see that?

It's the ego that causes separation. When I am full of ego, I become strong within myself. I become totally separate. So the more you like yourself as a person, the bigger your ego is. You say, "Well, I'm not supposed to like myself?". You're supposed to love yourself, but what self are we talking about? We're not talking about your body self, because that comes and goes. We're talking about your permanent Self, that has always been here. And your permanent Self is me, is you, is the world, is the universe, is everything. That's your permanent Self. Egolessness. That's the only state in which you can love your fellow human beings. The state of having no ego. That's how you can tell where you're at and if you're close to Self-Realization. That's Principle Three.

•Principle Number 4: You have a deep conviction, a deep understanding, a deep feeling of what Self-Realization of noble wisdom really is. What is Self-Realization of Noble Wisdom to you? You can never know by trying to find out what it is, because it's Absolute Reality. You can only know by finding out what it is not.

So you say, it is not my body, it is not my mind, it is not my organs, it is not my thoughts, it is not my world, it is not my universe, it is not the animals, or the trees, or the moon, or the sun, or the stars, it is not any of those things. When you've gone through everything and there's nothing left, that's what it is. Nothing. Emptiness. Nirvana. Ultimate Oneness.

Anyway, I explained these Four Principles to all the bodhisattvas and all the mahasattvas. Then we sat three hours in meditation and they got up and walked back into the forest. Then there was a flash of light, and I opened my eyes.

What do you think of that? Any questions?

Student: Was it a dream or a vision, and how do you distinguish between the two?

R: Well, I don't really know, to tell you the truth. I'm usually aware of what's going on, so all the time I was aware of the vision-dream's taking place.

S: Including this time.

R: Yes, I realized I was doing all these things. It was like I was watching everything taking place. But there was never a time when I actually became the dream or the vision.

S: Or felt totally caught up in it? You were always observing.

R: Right. I was always observing. But it was like an omni-present observer. So that's the teaching. That's how you tell when you're getting close to Self-Realization. So, do you remember the Four Principles? Why don't you repeat them for those who came late?

S: I don't think I remember the four.

R: I think they're very important to remember. Which ones do you remember? (The students struggle with trying to remember the Principles). See how easy we forget? (more struggle, and something close to the first one). That's right. The whole universe is a manifestation of the mind. Everything. You've got to feel that and know it's true.

S: As long as we're identified with the body or the mind, then we're very far off.

R: Exactly. You're part of the world.

S: Then how did you say the first one?

R: The first one is that everything, and I mean everything, the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, everything your senses show you, is an emanation of the mind. You're projecting a picture, just like you project a moving picture, and everything you see right now, in this room, comes from your mind. You may say, "How can we collectively see the same thing?". That's because of the habit energy that we're brought up in. So collectively we seem to be seeing the same thing, the same picture.

That's number one. What's number two? Who can tell me? (Students try to remember)

R: That's right. We're not born. We have no existence. In between the time we're born and when we die we really have no existence. And we do not die. There's no disappearance.

S: So how would you summarize it? That we are non-existent, or that we have no beginning and no end?

R: Both are right. We have no cause.

S: So you're saying that existence implies a relative cause, and existence only takes place in a relative world, and we're not really a part of that.

R: Yes, exactly.

S: And non-existence?

R: Non-existence also does not exist.

S: But then couldn't you say the mind doesn't exist. I mean you say that everything that exists...

R: Nothing that you can explain exists.

S: But earlier you said that everything emanates from the mind.

R: Yes. You're projecting the picture.

S: But then you have a mind.

R: You don't have a mind.

S: I think he means everything in the earth plane world.

R: In the relative world. In reality there's no mind. That's how the picture appears. The mind projects the whole universe. So if you get rid of the mind, there's no universe. We have to kill the mind. And the whole universe is annihilated, because it's the mind that projects the universe and tells us all these stories.

Think, for a moment, of all the problems that you believe you have. Think of what's bothering you. You can tell me your story for four hours. This is wrong and that's wrong. It's all a projection of the mind. So by getting rid of the mind, everything stops, and beauty and joy and bliss ensue. But you're covering the beauty and joy and bliss when you worry, when you fear, when you think something is wrong someplace. So that's Principle Two. What's Principle Three?

S: Egoless.

R: Right. Everything is egoless. Not only human beings, but everything. Mountains, trees, the sun, nothing has an ego. That means it has no existence. So where did it come from? When you have a dream, where does the dream come from? Same place. From nowhere. From false imagination.

S: I don't understand the expression "false imagination", because the word imagination implies a certain falsity.

R: You're imagining a false world and a false ego.

S: That's sort of a paradoxical saying.

R: Sure. It's all paradoxical. Because it doesn't exist. But that's how we imagine it. This is the reason I always go back to the sky is blue. Somebody takes me outside and says: "Look at the beautiful blue sky". And I agree with them, but I know deep inside that that's not true. There's no sky and there's no blue. It doesn't exist. Or the oasis in the desert. The water. It doesn't exist. It's a mirage. The world's the same thing. The universe only exists in the dream state. It's like a dream. Now what's the Fourth principle? What's Number Four?

S: It has something to do with "we are nothing".

R: Everything has to do with that (laughs). But it's actually to have an understanding, and a deep realization, of what Self-Realization of Noble Wisdom is.

S: And how is Noble Wisdom defined from regular wisdom?

R: It's the same thing. Just more wordy. It's a Buddhist expression.

S: They have all these very long expressions. And then they always say what it is.

R: The eight-fold path. And then they take years explaining it. But when you get into the highest teaching there's nothing. So the Fourth Principle is: The only way to know what Self Realization is, is by knowing what it is not. And whatever is left, that's what it is. So you say it's not the body, it's not the mind, it's not my organs, it's not my thoughts, it's not the world, it's not the sun, it's not the universe, it's not God, it's not creation, and you go on and on and on. When you get out of breath and out of words, that's it.

S: Is that what the expression "neti-neti" means?

R: Yes.

S: Is it boring? If all that goes away and there is nothing...

R: No!(laughs) See, that's what people think. That's why I explained before, the mind will make you say that because it doesn't want to be annihilated. It wants to rule you and control you completely. Because that's it's nature. That's the nature of the mind that doesn't exist.

S: When you're meditating, are you totally separate from this physical world?

R: When who's meditating? When I'm meditating personally? Well, I don't usually meditate. I sit sometimes with my eyes closed but I just rest my eyelids.

S: Because there's no one there, right? There's no one to meditate.

R: There has to be someone to meditate. That doesn't mean you should stop meditating. It means you should look at these Four Principles and compare them to where you are yourself, and work on yourself so that you can apply these Principles to yourself everyday, until the day comes when you don't have to talk about it any longer. You just become a total manifestation of those Principles. You just realize; you become aware.

R: There are Three Methods we use to help us on the path, so we can realize what we were talking about before:

•Number One is Self-Surrender, where we surrender completely to God, or to yourself. But that's hard to do for most people. It sounds easy, but it's not. It means that you have no life of your own. You surrender completely and totally everything to God. Totally. Every part of your life goes to God. "Not my will, but Thine". That's devotion, Bhakti. Again, it sounds easy to some people, but it's not when you get into it, because it means

every decision that you have to make is left up to God. You give your mind to God, totally, completely, absolutely. And that leads you to Self-Realization.

•Number Two is mindfulness, which we were talking about. Becoming the witness. Watching yourself continuously. Watching your thoughts, watching your actions. Sitting in meditation and watching what goes on in your mind. Not trying to change anything or correct anything. Just observing. Becoming the witness to your thoughts in meditation, and to your actions in the waking state.

•Number Three is the one that I advocate: Self-Enquiry: Asking yourself: "To whom do these troubles come? To whom does this karma come? To whom does this suffering come? It comes to me? Well, what is 'me'? I am me. Who am I? From where did the I come from?" And following the 'I' to its source.

You can use any of those three methods, the one that suits you best. But by all means do something. Don't waste your life with frivolities. Work on yourself, if you want to become free. It doesn't mean you have to give up going to the movies, or going to work, or anything. You give nothing up. You just become aware of what you're doing. You become a conscious being. You become conscious of your actions. You become loving, compassionate, gentle to all people. You stop watching out for number one.

Most of us say: "Number one. I'm number one". Forget it. That's how you suffer. That's ego. It's hard to understand, when you give up your ego, how you can have a better life, but you do. Try it and you'll see. When you stop thinking of yourself, and you start thinking on yourself, but yourself becomes Omni-presence, that means you're thinking of everybody else as yourself. So if any human being suffers, you suffer too.

But, in a way we differ from Buddhism. Not much, but a little. Because the bodhisattva says he will not be realized until everybody else is realized. But then they have a higher bodhisattva called the Arhat. It's like the Avadhoot in Hinduism, who becomes Self Realized, by himself, because he understands that his Self is the Self of all. And that's what we accept. In other words, if you want to help your fellow man, if you want to make this world a better world in which to live, find your Self first, and everything else will take care of itself.

Dialogue 2

How to Conquer Your Mind and Return to Your True Nature

“By being aware of it, and no longer responding to it,
no longer reacting to the Mind.

Something that usually makes you angry..
Before you would respond,
And you would want to ‘win’ the argument,
But now your reaction is No Reaction.
You simply smile and watch.”

Topics

Time to Go Within
I Am Not a Guru
The Origin of Inner Feelings
The Temporal Nature of Physical Reality

August 23, 1990

Robert: I welcome you with all my heart. Most of us have been searching for reality for many years. We've been to many teachers, many groups. But we still haven't found peace. Why? Because we're searching. That's a direct, succinct, answer. Because we're searching for something. No matter how many times I emphasize there's nothing to search for, people still search. Sometimes it would be better if we tore up all the books. Books are only to motivate us, to make us know there's something else.

But there comes a time when we have to go within, and try to understand what this body really is. The truth, of course, is not a teaching. I do not philosophize. I do not give a teaching, as a rule. I simply give a confession, and to most people it means nothing. But we're not trying to attract most people. Those who feel something in their heart will always come to Satsang. And you'll always attract a teacher that is more to your liking.

I do not consider myself a teacher or a Guru. I do not consider myself anything at all. But, the Reality that is left over is your reality. It is Omnipresence. There is one Unqualified Reality, and this is it, right here, right now. There are no bodies here. What you see is your own business. When you see others, you're making a mistake. There never were others. We're always looking for something.

We want to find the right teacher. But, as I often say, you are the right teacher. The right teacher is where you are. Person, place, or thing is not the right teacher. You probably saw the movie Siddhartha, where he found the river and the peace of the forest. Even that's a mistake, because he took the river seriously, and made too much of the forest. He was the forest. He was the river. What we're seeking is utter foolishness. There's nothing to seek.

I get so many calls. People tell me their problems all the time. And I really don't know how to respond. To whom shall I tell my problems? There just are not any problems. There are no problems. There never were problems, and there never will be problems. You may say to yourself: "If he only knew my problems." But, if you live in the moment, is there a problem right now, this second? There's nothing. Nothing is your real nature.

A problem begins only when you start thinking. But if you learn not to think, where's the problem? So, we have to empty the mind, and then get rid of the mind. And we cannot empty the mind by thinking. Only by observation. Only when there is no thought is there reality. There's no sense saying to yourself: "I am Para-Brahman, Absolute Reality. I am unborn." Those are just words. And the next moment you have a problem, you have an emotion. You feel something is wrong. But you keep declaring: "I am unborn. I am the absolute reality." It is better to say nothing, to believe nothing, to be nothing, and that's just being yourself. It's better just to sit, and think of nothing and try to become nothing, than it is to chant mantras, or to make affirmations, or to keep saying: "I am Brahman." Just by sitting you will become yourself.

Last Sunday I gave you Four Principles, which I usually don't do. But I shared Four Principles with you, and everybody was in awe. But in the next couple of days I received phone calls from people, still telling me their problems. If you understood the Principles, where is the problem? Even if you understood one Principle, and you ponder that, you would be at peace.

So what are the Four Principles? Who can tell me? Do you remember?

Student: I know it but I uh...

R: But yet you know about food, you know about sleep, you know about girls...(laughing)

S: I know the first one: That everything emanates from the mind.

R: Yes. Think about that! Everything in this universe, person, place, or thing, everything, your body, your thoughts, creation, God, everything you can think about, **EVERYTHING**, and I mean everything, is a projection of your mind. If you really understand this, how can you have a problem?

But you may say, "Well, my rent's due on the first, and I don't have any money, so how can this help me...?" You would be amazed at what it does for you. Do the trees lack for leaves? Do the flowers fail to bloom? If you could realize the truth, that everything is an emanation of your mind, you would become your Self, and your Self is Omnipresence. It includes everything for the survival of your body. Think about that. Your body comes from your mind. But as long as you believe your body is your Self, and you understand that it comes out of your mind, it will be provided for, just like leaves are provided for the trunk of the tree.

So this teaching is quite predictable, and it can be used to improve your humanhood, not by trying to improve your humanhood directly. That's where you've got problems. But by forgetting about your humanhood, and realizing everything is a mental projection. Again what happens? When you realize that the whole universe is a manifestation of your mind, you become Omnipresence. And in the Omnipresence is contained all of your needs, and all of your needs are met from within.

But, when you start worrying or thinking about it, you spoil it. Then you have to do human things to take care of you. But, if you leave the humanhood alone, and go back to the understanding that it's all in your mind, you automatically let go of your mind, and the Self takes over, bringing the right people into your life, the right situation, the right address.

Remember again, your body came to this earth because of karma. And it's going to go through whatever it has to go through. But you've got absolutely nothing to do with that, because you are not your body. But if you think about it, you spoil it. Subsequently, allow your body to do whatever it came here to do. Do not interfere. Do not fight. Simply observe. Do not react. You will be O.K.

S: Is it O.K. to ask questions during this Satsang?

R: Sure.

S: How about following inner feelings? What I've been doing lately is going by my inner feelings more. This feels really right for me.

R: You've got to watch yourself, because most of the time inner feelings are really habit energy, from past lives, and from this life when you were a little kid. You developed certain habits. Most people believe they're inner feelings.

S: Well I feel I go against my inner feelings, like church. I stayed in there against my inner feelings and it tore me apart to stay there. I feel so much clearer now that I've left.

R: Well, you were meant to leave, so you did. You were meant to leave, you were not meant to be there.

S: Well what about this inner voice people talk about. Is that the unconscious, and how reliable is that?

R: Most of the time it's a bunch of nonsense. Because, to whom comes the inner voice? The mind.

S: It's all part of the body.

R: Yes. It's all part of astral planes, mental planes, causal planes. It all has to do with the body. So you have to ask yourself, "To whom does the inner voice come?"

S: Would it be distinguished from instincts?

R: It would in the mental plane. When we're speaking of the mental plane, we speak of distinguishing between instinct and intuition.

S: And is one better than the other?

R: They're both the same. When we're talking about this path, we realize that intuition as well as instinct comes to the ego. It is the ego that feels these things. The Self is Omnipresent. There's no room for anything else. It's Emptiness, Nirvana, The Unborn.

S: Is it possible that this body and mind can go on living, like it seems like if you go on inner feelings. maybe not, yet always looking beyond that, as myself, into who am I?

R: Your body will go on living anyway. It'll take care of itself. And all those thoughts come from the ego.

S: O.K. So that's the point. If you look at it properly it goes on by itself.

R: But do not concern yourself with what you should eat, what you should wear, or where you should go. There is something within you that guides you. It'll direct you when you become still, when you make the mind quiescent, quiet, calm. You will then be guided to know what to do. It is true that some people use their intuition, and accomplish great things. But how long does it last, before it attracts misery to it?

As long as you're living in the world of cause and effect, the world of duality, for every good there's a bad, for every bad there's a good. For every up there's a down. Don't be fooled. You use your intuition, hear voices, and they guide you and tell you to do this, and you become successful. And you think you did something good. But before you know it the IRS gets a hold of you, and they throw you in jail.

S: I think the question is, is the inner voice superior to regular feelings.

R: Nothing is superior to the Self. Be your Self. Abide in the Self, and you'll never go wrong. But when you hear voices, it comes out of your mind. You're trapped. The mind is very powerful.

S: Isn't that one of the questions: Who's aware of this?

R: Tell me who. Who is? Who's aware of it? There's nobody to be aware of anything. Nobody is home. Emptiness.

S: I feel that that's true.

R: Who feels this? Even the feeling is wrong. You just abide in the Self. There's no feeling. There's Nirvana, there's Emptiness, there's the state of the unborn.

S: It's really interesting that all the manifestation can point to that. Even the words who am I? It just says, oh! To me it says something's aware of it. That seed.

R: The seed's got to go. You should have no feeling as yourself. But something will take over. Something that's beyond words. There's a something that will come. It can be called Satchitananda, bliss. Call it whatever you like. But something will take over, and you'll feel divine, and you'll be O.K., just the way you are.

Now, what's the Second Principle we were talking about. See, the secret, as I told you Sunday, is to think about these things as soon as you open your eyes in the morning. As soon as you open your eyes, what do you think about? You think about food, you think about your day, you think about work, you think about money, you think about friends, relationships, but you do not think about your mind being a projection of all the things that happen. Whatever you think about in the morning will carry you through. Therefore, you have to think about the right things in the morning, as soon as you awaken. Don't wait. So what's the Second Principle we discussed Sunday? Who remembers?

(students guess)

R: See, so again I ask you, "What do you remember?" You remember your personal problems, you remember your needs, and you think you're human. You think about the body continuously. That's why there is trouble with Self-Realization. So you've got to investigate your mind, and watch it all the time. See what it's doing to you. Watch how it controls you. It makes you emotional, it makes you believe something is wrong. It makes you angry. All these things come from the mind. The idea is to be aware of this. The awareness alone, leads you to the light. Just being aware of that, alone. You don't have to know any book knowledge. Just be aware of what your mind really is.

That's how you conquer your mind. By being aware of it, and no longer responding to it. No longer to react to the mind. Something that usually makes you angry, before you would respond, and you'd want to win the argument, but now your reaction is no reaction. You simply smile and you watch. When your mind sees there's no response, it will become weaker and weaker, until it disappears. Its just like arguing with a person. What happens if you stop arguing. The person goes away. They don't know what to think. They just won't have anything to do with you. They just leave. So when you stop responding to your thoughts, your mind will go away, and become weaker, and weaker, and weaker, until there is no mind. So what's the Second Principle?

(students guess some more)

R: See, think about this. There are so many things you remember. But they all have to do with your body. True?

(more remembering)

R: O.K. The second one was to have a deep feeling, and a realization, that you are unborn, that you do not prevail, and you will never disappear. Remember? You will never die. Think about that. Just to think to yourself that you are unborn. There's no cause for your birth. Cause doesn't exist. There's no reason for your birth. You never are born. And as far as your existence is concerned, it's not there. You do not prevail from birth to death. There is nothing going on. Absolute nothing. And you do not get older, you do not disappear, or you do not die. Think about that. How free you'll become when you understand what this means. It's a beautiful feeling to know that you were never born, that you've always existed, but not the way you think you are. Your life as it is right now, whatever you think you're doing, however important it may be to you, is totally meaningless. Why? Because it'll be gone soon. So whatever you're getting into, whatever excites you, is only for a time.

Take Elvis Presley. People still remember him. But will anybody remember him 500 years from now? Take your great classical musicians, concertos, Bach, Schubert, everybody else, Rachmaninoff, they're important to you right now, but 500 years from now nobody will remember them at all. Everything will be so different it'll be like you're in another universe.

So the point is, if you get too involved in those things, you're missing the mark, because you're not understanding your real nature. You're not understanding who you really are. You should be searching for the meaning to yourself. And spending 80% of the time

doing that. I know it's not easy to do for some people, because they seem to be involved in life. But yet, you can do it. It doesn't matter. You don't have to set aside a time for meditation. You can do it while you're driving your car, while you're at work, while you're playing music. Just be aware of yourself, of who you really are, and realize the rest is a projection of your mind. To be aware of these truths sets you free. Just to be aware of them.

S: Would that be the same, when you say you are unborn or you will never die, would that be the same as saying nothing exists?

R: Yes, it is. Nothing as you think or as it appears, exists. It appears to exist, but so does a dream. A dream appears very real. But is there a creation in a dream? Is there an end? Everything just begins, and ends when you wake up. The world is the same.

S: You should not say nothing exists, because even 'exists' is an idea.

R: It's an idea. That's got to go at the end. In the beginning, when you're finding yourself, you realize that I exist. 'I am that I am' means I exist. Same thing. But then you find out who is the I that exists, and you follow it through. And that's got to go. Everything has got to go. Now the average person will think, "If everything goes, what's left?" What's left is Everything. You are left, as your Self, and that's beyond explanation. Then you turn back to yourself and you become humble, compassionate, loving, because you are aware that you are the whole universe. And you can say, "All this is the Self, and I am That."

S: Is that an experience?

R: That's an experience. It's beyond experience. It's a revelation, that stays with you all the time. That can be called Sahaja Samadhi, when you abide in the Self all the time. But that's ineffable, it's beyond words.

S: The experience doesn't matter how deep?

R: There's no such thing as deep. Deep is a mind concept. You're either That or you're not... So what's the Third Principle?

(silence)

R: (laughs) I'm going to ask you again on Sunday. Egolessness is at the basis of everything. Everything has no ego. Now I'm not just talking about sentient things. **EVERYTHING**. The mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, and so forth. There is no ego behind it. That means there's no cause for its existence. And just to understand this perfectly makes you live in the moment, all the time. It gets you centered. Think what that means to you personally, that there's no ego in back of anything. There's no cause for anything to exist. Like the dream again, is there a cause for the dream? All of a sudden you find yourself dreaming, and everything exists. Where did it come from? It came from the mind. It's a dream. And the only way to get out of the dream is what? To wake up! So this is also a sort of a dream. It has no

substance. Everything is transient. No ego in back of it.

S: I don't quite understand there being no ego and there being no cause as being the same.

R: The ego is what makes something real. The reason your body is doing what it does is because of your ego. That's the cause of your body function, the ego. So if there's no ego, there's no lack, there's no limitation, there's no sickness, there's no death, there's nothing like that.

S: Are the ego and the mind the same, or are you making a distinction?

R: They can be synonymous, in a way. Take for instance, you've got a sickness of some kind. If you realize there's no ego in back of it, there's no cause, where did it come from? It didn't come from anything, so it doesn't exist.

S: So could you also just say nothing exists?

R: But is it meaningful for you when you say that? See, it has to be meaningful for you. If you say nothing exists, your mind and your ego will come and fight you and say, "What do you mean? Look, the chair is solid. It exists." So you become disappointed. But when you understand the entire principle, that everything is egolessness, everything, then you just exist in the moment, like that (snaps his fingers). You exist in the second, in the moment, and in that moment all is well, and everything is unfolding as it should, in that moment. But as soon as you start to think, then there's a cause.

S: So the only cause is the thinking process.

R: Exactly. And you may think it's hard to think like that, to be like that, but it's not. Just by remembering the egolessness of all things, will wake you up. And you will become free. Now, what's the Fourth Principle?

(more guesses - including "None of these Principles exist")

R: You're right. I usually don't do this. But I'm giving you these Principles to help you. (laughs) Right. They don't exist. But as long as you believe your body exists, they exist also. As long as you feel the world exists, and your body exists, and the mind exists, then the Principles also exist. And karma exists, and God exists, and creation exists. Nobody remembers the Fourth Principle? Well I'll share it with you again...

You have to have a strong feeling and realization of what Self-Realization means. And what's the only way you can do that? Remember?

S: Practice the other 3 Principles?

R: That helps. By realizing what it is not. You can't know what Self-Realization is because you are already That. But you can know what it's not. So, by eliminating everything, then what is left is Self-Realization.

S: So how would you simply define number four?

R: By realizing there's no body, there's no world, there's no God, there are no organs, there is no mind.

S: It sort of summarizes all the others.

R: Yes, That there's nothing. So every time you think of something you say: "Neti, neti." "Not this, not this." And you go all the way down until there's nothing left to say. Then you're That.

S: I still would like a simple explanation, three or four words.

R: Three or four words? (laughs) There are no others. Nothing else exists, but the self, and I am That. You've got to work it out in your own head. You've got to use your mind to destroy your mind.

S: But it's based on neti, neti?

R: Yes. Even if thoughts come to you like, "I am perfect." Get rid of that.

S: I don't have that problem. (laughter)

R: I am not the body. Get rid of that thought. Whatever you come up with, it's not that. Until you're completely empty. It's like emptying out a garbage can. As long as you keep turning it back over, the garbage will stay in. You've got to hold it upside down until all the garbage falls out. So, we've got a lot of samskaras, past tendencies, karma. All that's got to go. So empty everything out so there's nothing left. Stay upside down. Then you become free. It's really simple. It's not complicated. But if you remember the Principles it helps you. That's all I've got to say.

Dialogue 3

Introduction to the Ancient Spiritual Practice of SELF INQUIRY

“ What comes first in this life again?
Whatever comes first in your life,
That is what you become.

In the end you are going to have
To leave your body, your thoughts, your possessions,
your loved ones. Everything is going to be left in the end.
So the wise person searches for Truth now,
and tries to become free now.

Topics

Who and what defines “I”?
The Only Way to Become Truly Happy
The Four Principles Examined
The Three Vehicles

August 26, 1990

Robert: Good evening. It's good to see you again. Who ever's here again, please do not be shocked at some of the things I may say. I am not a teacher, nor am I a lecturer, nor am I a minister. I am merely a looking glass, so that you can see your own reflection. What you think of yourself, you see in me. I may say certain things you're not used to.

Bear with me. You should not accept anything I say, nor should you believe anything I say, until you're able to prove it to yourself. I simply give my confession, that I am not the body nor the mind, nor the phenomenal world, that I am Pure Intelligence, Absolute Reality, Satchitananda, Divine Mind, Unborn, Emptiness. When I use the word "I am", I am not referring to Robert. I am referring to "I AM THAT I AM", Omnipresence, the Infinite.

I get lots of phone calls from people asking me all kinds of questions. One question that most people keep asking again and again is, "What can I do to resolve my problems? Can you give me an affirmation, a mantra, a meditation, a breathing exercise, something I can use?" These things have their place, but they will not awaken you to your true self. In all of the higher scriptures it is written that the path of Advaita Vedanta, or Jnana Marga, is only for mature souls.

Now what does that mean? It is for those who, in a previous lifetime, have already practiced sadhanas, breathing exercises, yoga techniques, etc., and now they're ready to awaken through this type of teaching. And the Buddhist scripture declares that those who want to do yogas, or breathing exercises are the simple minded and ignorant (he chuckles).

Now, what do they mean? They don't mean to insult you, but they are referring to those who are attached to the world, those who believe the world is real, and who feel the pull of the world. They want to use all kinds of gimmicks to free themselves from their problems, but not to be totally free.

Now, what does Jnana Marga teach? We teach simply this: Not to accept anything, unless you can demonstrate it. Not to believe anything, unless you can use it for yourself, and you can see it's true. To do affirmations, mantras, yoga exercises, and so forth, will not awaken you. You start from the beginning. You simply admit to yourself, that you exist. This is the truth. You do exist, don't you? So you say to yourself:

"I exist. I know that for sure. I exist. I exist. That's all I know. I'm ignorant of everything else, but I do know that I exist, because here I am." And, as you keep saying this to yourself, "I exist", you begin to put more space between "I" and "exist".

"I ... exist". Say that to yourselves: "I ... exist". "I ... exist".

If you're doing this correctly, you'll soon find that "I" and "exist" are two separate words. In other words, you'll come to the conclusion that you exist as I. You'll have to ask yourself, ponder: "Who is this I that exists? What is I?" You never answer. It will come to you of it's own accord. When you sleep and you awaken you say: "I slept." When you

dream you say: "I had a dream." And when you're awake, of course, you say: "I am awake." But that "I" is always there. You start to enquire within yourself, "What is this 'I' that exists at all times? It exists when I'm asleep, when I'm awake, when I dream. Who is this 'I'?"

And now the enquiry starts: "Where does this 'I' come from? From whence cometh the 'I'?" You ask yourself. The answers are within yourself. And you keep asking yourself, over, and over, and over again, "From whence cometh the I? Where does the I come from?" Or, "Who am I?" And you wait a little while, and you repeat the same question, "Where does the I come from?"

While you're doing that, you follow the "I", deep, deep within. You keep following the "I". You go deeper and deeper into the "I". "Where does this 'I' come from? Who is this 'I'?" Whatever answer comes to you is the wrong answer. Do not accept it, but do not deny it. You simply put it aside. And you continue with the Self-Enquiry. "Who am I?" And you wait. And you ask again: "Who am I?" It is not a mantra. "Where did the 'I' come from? How did it get there? Who gave it birth? What is the source of the 'I'?" You continue to abide in the 'I'.

As you continue this process, someday something will happen. To some people it comes like an explosion within, where all your thoughts are wiped away. For you see, "I" is the first pronoun, and every thought that you have in the world, is attached to the "I". It is secondary. Think about that. Whatever you have to say about yourself has "I" in it. Everything in the world is about yourself. "I" am going to the movies. "I" am going bowling. "I" feel like crying. "I" feel terrible. "I" feel wonderful. "I" feel sick. "I" feel well. There's always an "I", "I", "I". What is this "I", and what is it all about? Everything is attached to the "I". Subsequently, when the "I" is wiped out, everything else is wiped out, and the troubles are over. All thoughts go with the "I".

Now, there's no answer to "Who am I?" When you get to the answer, there will be emptiness, a void. You will be of the unborn. But it is not a void like you think. It is not emptiness like you think. For want of a better word you can call it Godliness, Nirvana, Satchitananda, Bliss Consciousness, Absolute Reality.

It doesn't matter what name you give it. You will become That, and there will be no explanation. You will just become That, and you will feel a profound peace, that you have never felt before. You will feel a bliss that is unqualified. You will try to explain it to yourself and to your friends, but you cannot. For the finite cannot comprehend the infinite. There are no words.

That's the method you use: Self-Enquiry. You follow the "I" thought to its source. How long does it take? It depends on yourself. How sincere you are, what else you're doing with your life. If you're using this like you do everything else. For instance, if you say, "Well today I'm going to practice the "I" thought, then I'm going to go to a movie, then I'm going to go bowling, then I'm going to watch TV, then tomorrow I'll do the same thing."

Of course, what's going to happen in a case like that? Very little. But if you put your energy into it, and you practice it every chance you get, and you put this first in your life, you will see amazing results. Amazing results. But you have to put it first in your life.

Think right now. What is first in your life? Don't tell me but just think. What comes first in your life? Can you take it with you when you die? Don't you see by now that you live in a world of constant change? That the only thing permanent in life is change. All facts change. Only truth is real. And truth is personal. You have to find it for yourself. For the sincere devotee or student, they will put this first in their life, and then you will start seeing results. But if you're still worrying, and fearing something, and you think other duties come first, then you've got to work on yourself.

That's why, with great compassion, I give you certain things you can do before you get into Self Realization. Just before you become Self-Realized you begin to feel certain things. And those are the Four Principles I gave you last week. That comes to you automatically. But, as I mentioned last Sunday and Thursday, you have to, upon awakening, become aware of these Principles. You cannot think of them at your leisure. But you sort of have to coax the mind. You have to coax your mind to think upon the Four Principles as soon as you open your eyes in the morning.

So you have two things to do. When you open your eyes you can either ask yourself: "Where did the 'I' come from? Who am I that slept last night? Who am I that has just awakened? Who am I that exists now?", or, you can think about the Four Principles.

Whatever is convenient for you. But, by all means, if you want Self-Realization, and you want to become free, and you want to be free from the ocean of samsara, worldliness, and become blissful, then it's up to you. I can share these things with you, but I can't make you do it. It's just like I can bring you to the gold mine, but you've got to do your own digging.

What comes first in your life, again? Whatever comes first in your life, that's what you become. In the end you're going to have to leave your body, your thoughts, your possessions, your loved ones. Everything is going to be left, in the end. So the wise person searches for truth now, and tries to become free now.

So let's briefly go over the Four Principles again, for I feel they're very important. Another thing I do is this: Most ministers, teachers, whatever, philosophers, they always search for new knowledge. They research, research, research, and then they share with their congregations or students something profound, something new every Sunday. And, of course, you always forget the previous Sunday, and you go into new words. It's a game of words. You may learn about the astral planes, the causal planes, reincarnation. You may learn about how to become positive in your life, how to attract the right mate, how to attract money, health, and all kinds of stuff. How to channel, how to do this, and it's very exciting to the ego. What we do here is we try for you to remove your ego so you do not get caught up in the world. That's the only way to become happy, truly happy, and Self Realized. This is why I reiterate, and repeat again and again, the same principle. So it can soak deep into your subconscious mind, and you can become a living embodiment of this truth.

THE FOUR PRINCIPLES

Now what are the Four Principles? Who can tell me? Who remembers? What's the first one?

Student: Everything emanates from the mind.

R: That's right. But you had to think. It should be like second nature to you. When it's second nature to you, then you're going to find true happiness in your life, and reach your goals. But when you have to think about it first, it means your mind's impressed with something else. You've got other thoughts that you're thinking about most of the time.

•**The First Principle**, again, is that everything, and I mean EVERYTHING, the universe, the world, your body, your fears, your problems, your happiness, everything that you can think about, everything that your senses behold, is a manifestation of your mind. It's a mind quality. When you close your eyes, it goes away. When you sleep you transcend it. But when you are awake, the world exists. The world only exists because your mind exists, and your mind exists because your ego exists.

Therefore, when you begin to work on yourself, and you begin to realize that everything comes from your mind, you stop fearing, and you stop worrying, for you realize it's of the mind. And as you begin to change your mind, transcend your mind, annihilate your mind, bliss, happiness, peace, love, joy, truth, comes all by itself. It is the mind that is your enemy.

What is your mind? It is a conglomeration of thoughts, about the past and the future. You worry about the past, and you worry about the future. That's all your mind is. It is not your friend. Therefore, ignore your mind. Do not believe what it says. Simply watch it, behold it, become the witness to it. But just to realize that everything is an emanation of your mind, that alone sets you free.

And you have to practice Self-Enquiry, by realizing everything comes out of your mind, asking yourself: "What is my mind? Where did it come from?" And you will realize that "I" is the mind; "I" is also the mind. Because you say, "I think", don't you see? "I think", and the mind is thoughts. So we get back to the "I" again. We always come back to the "I". Subsequently again, if you want to remove your mind, you remove the "I". You ask yourself again, "If the mind is I, then where did I come from? What is the source of this I? Who am I?" You always get back to the "I". Everything leads to the same thing, doesn't it? All the processes we use lead to the same thing. To "I".

So the First Principle is: The whole universe is a projection of my mind. Then you say, "My mind. Who is 'my'? I'm referring to 'my' mind." And then again you tell yourself, "I am referring. I'm back to 'I' again. I am referring to my mind." Again you go back to, "Where did this 'I' come from? Who created it? What is its source? Who gave it birth?" And you keep questioning this way, again, and again, and again. And, as I said before, with most people, one day there will be like an explosion, and the 'I' will blow itself to pieces. And you'll see light, tremendous light. You'll become light. The light of a

thousand suns. But that's not the answer. You have to go through the light, into Emptiness, into Nirvana, into Absolute Reality, which is called Parabrahman, Nothingness. That nothingness becomes everything.

Now you go back to the Second Principle. Who remembers that?

S: The Self is beginningless, without beginning.

R: Not quite. You're on the right track. But not quite. Any more volunteers?

S: There is no birth. No existence, no death.

R: You're on the right track.

S: I am not born? I do not persist. I do not die.

R: Yes. See, if you remember these things it will carry you across the ocean of samsara, into the land of the Self Realization of Noble Wisdom. But you have to think of these things all the time.

•**The Second Principle** is this: You are unborn, you do not persist, and you do not disappear. In other words, you were never born, the life that you're experiencing does not exist, and you do not die. You have always been. What I am saying is, there is no cause for anything.

As an example, we speak about creation. How did creation begin? What is its cause? Of course the Bible will tell you Adam and Eve. That's a nice story, if you like stories. But if you're talking about reality, it just began out of nothing. What came first, the seed or the tree, the chicken or the egg? You can say to me, "I was born. My mother and father gave me birth." Well, go all the way back. Who was the first mother and father, just like what came first, the tree or the seed? It's perplexing.

The best way to explain it is taking a look at your dreams. How do you create a dream? Does it start with a beginning? As soon as you start dreaming there's no creation. The dream just starts. Everything is already there. The trees, the sky, the earth, the flowers, the grass, people, insects, birds, flowers, everything just appears. Does it die in the end? You just wake up, and it's all gone.

What we're doing now is living **THE MORTAL DREAM**. We believe in our bodies, in our existence, as it were. We believe the world is real, the mind is real, our experiences are real, and we get involved in them, like we get involved in a movie. You know you're not the movie. You watch the movie, it ends, and you go home. The more you get involved in the world situations, and in yourself, the small self, your body or mind phenomena, the more you get pulled into ignorance.

You have to loosen yourself from this maya. And thinking about every day, that you are unborn, you have no personal life, and you do not exist, and you will not disappear, just thinking about these things does something to you. You begin to feel different. You

begin to feel alive. But not as a body. As Omnipresence. You begin to understand what Moses said, when he said, "I AM THAT I AM." You begin to feel free, untarnished. Your past is dissolved, because it never existed to begin with. You have no past. There's no cause. It's all a manifestation of your mind. As you think about this, you become totally free.

Now what's the Third Principle?

S: Everything is egoless.

R: Yes.

•**The Third Principle** shows you the egolessness of all things. You have to have a deep realization, and a deep feeling, that no thing has an ego. No thing has a cause, again. There's no reason for anything to be. No thing really exists. You are not a sinner. You are not an evil person. Your past is dead, forget it. You're born again, now, and all is glory and joy. This is what it means to be born again, to realize that you exist now, in this moment. Not a moment ago, and never mind what's going to happen a moment from now. But you exist in this moment as Pure Intelligence, Unqualified Love, Absolute Reality, Unconditioned Oneness. That's you. You live in that reality. And again, that sets you free.

Now what's the Fourth Principle? As long as you don't remember them, I'm going to repeat them every week until you get sick.

S: Neti, neti.

R: Yes, but what is the Principle?

S: The realization or knowing the truth through the discarding of the non-truth.

R: Yes.

•**The Fourth Principle** is to have a feeling, a deep feeling, a realization, of what Self Realization of Noble Wisdom really means. And, of course, you can't explain it, so you negate it. In other words, you think of what it isn't. Self Realization is not the world, it's not the universe, it's not my body, it's not anything I can think about. It's not my mind. Then what is Self Realization? Whatever answer comes to you is wrong, for it has no answer. There are no words that can describe it. Forget about your intelligence. Human intelligence sucks. It doesn't exist. Why? Because it dies with you. We're talking about something that's eternal, that has always been, and will always be.

You have to become aware of these Principles. I give you these things with great compassion, that you have something to do every day, besides watching TV, or reading comic books. Think, but not intellectually. Let's play some music...

THE THREE VEHICLES

R: Because of Richard and Jim, who are going back to Santa Cruz, I'll cover something else, which just came to me. After you learn the Four Principles, and they become a living embodiment within yourself, then you learn about the Three Vehicles, which carry you over the ocean of samsara, into the land of Self Realization of noble wisdom. That's why they're called vehicles. But you can only feel these Vehicles when you've mastered the previous.

•**The First Vehicle** is this: You have a deep feeling (now remember, this is before Self Realization, afterwards it doesn't matter what you do), you have a deep longing, a deep feeling, to be by yourself. Now, in the West they tell you this is antisocial behavior, but you have a feeling... in other words, you don't mentally say to yourself, "I want to be alone", like Greta Garbo. It's not a mental game you're playing.

Because of your enquiry and your feeling and knowing the Four Principles, you have a feeling to be by yourself, so you are not pulled down by the world, to give you an opportunity to make the Four Principles and Self Enquiry work for you. So you enjoy being alone. You want to be by yourself. You look for times that you can be by yourself, so you can work on yourself, and that becomes a total joy for you. It's like total heaven to be by yourself, not all the time, but most of the time. It's only when you're by yourself, that you can argue with yourself, and you can tell off your mind, and you can scream a little, if you like, and do what ever you have to do to get rid of the ego and the mind.

•**The Second Vehicle** is: you have a deep feeling, a deep desire, to always be at Satsang. Now Satsang is not just spiritual meeting, as most of you know. It's not a gathering of people where they hear a lecture. Who can explain what Satsang is? How about you Narada? What is Satsang to you?

S: Well ultimately I suppose it can't really be put into words, so to realize that. I understand what the essence of Satsang is, that it can't be put into words. Satsang is like the embodiment of the teaching. So I think that there's a growth in Satsang that takes place; a growth that does not take place in the words.

R: O.K. That's a good explanation. Anybody else like to say what Satsang is?

S: Abiding in the Self.

R: Yes. Exactly. Being together with people who abide in the Self; the realization that there is one Self, and you are that. So being in Satsang is being at the feet of God. That's what it literally means. Sitting at the feet of God. And God is none other than yourSelf. So you want to be with yourSelf when you come together with us. And you're still alone. You're still by yourSelf. Because all the people with you are yourSelf.

S: Doesn't it usually involve the presence of a Sage?

R: Yes. But remember, the Sage, the Guru, and God are yourSelf. It's all the same. What I mean by that is, I don't want you to look at me as being a Sage, or being anything at all. When you see me, as I mentioned in the beginning, I am a mirror. You see yourSelf. And when you see yourSelf as divinity, you will also see everyone else here as divinity. We're all one. There's no difference.

•**The Three Vehicle:** You will have a deep feeling, and a deep desire, to be around people like yourself. In other words your old relatives, your old friends, your old cronies, that you used to drink with, and get high with, or whatever you did with them, they don't turn you on anymore. You want to be with spiritual people like yourself. You're not putting it on. You're not intellectualizing it. You're not imagining that you want to do that because I told you to. From your practice you become like that. It's an inner feeling, a deep inner feeling. Those are the Three Vehicles.

Now again, because Richard and Jim are leaving, I brought along a couple of lessons. Once in a while I give out lessons I wrote years ago.

R: O.K., now we're going to have some prasad, and then we'll have questions and answers.

S: I have a question for you. About meditation. You said sit and do nothing. My question is, when I do that, thoughts stop, but the world appears. By doing nothing do you mean no world appearing?

R: Let the world appear, but do not react to it. Let whatever appears, appear. But just do not give any response.

S: Should you sit with your eyes closed, or open, or does it make any difference?

R: It doesn't make any difference.

S: Plus if you were to try to make the world appear or disappear, you would be doing something. Of course if you could do nothing...

S: You'd be realized.

S: You'd be there.

S: That's why it's so direct.

R: Of course, the proper action to take when the world appears, is to ask, "To whom does the world appear?" But if that doesn't work for you, just do nothing at all.

S: I've also tried, in doing that, I've tried the Principles you gave. Say if I'm thinking of someone, what I've noticed is, if everything is egoless, that seems to do away a lot with any kind of judgment I had about others, or about myself.

R: Exactly. Sure. That's what it does.

S: It does away with it. Just like (snaps his fingers) that. It's really nice.

R: That's what it's supposed to do.

S: In an everyday situation it seems like it pays to use that too.

R: Of course. And the more you think of that, the deeper the feeling goes, and the greater the experience.

S: I wasn't really thinking about it. I just thought maybe to use it as the situation arises.

R: You can do that. Whatever helps.

S: Well how do you handle this? Let's say you're opposing a strong negative force, a very destructive force, people, who embody that force. You have to confront it and work against it, knowing that there is no ego in the force?

R: No, you don't do that at all. You simply ask yourself: "To whom does this force come?"

S: You don't confront it?

R: No. You don't avoid it or confront it.

S: Alright. What if we were in danger of losing our lives right now? What would we do?

R: Whatever you have to do.

S: What?

R: Your body knows what to do.

S: That would be confronting it then.

R: But you have nothing to do with it. Your body will do what it has to do. But it has nothing to do with you.

S: You mean you'll run or you'll fight...

S: It's more spontaneous than the thinking?

R: Yes. Everything will happen spontaneously. Your body knows what to do. There is a power that takes care of your body. It will know what to do.

S: Alright. What if it's more abstract though. There I used an example of something immediate. Let's say the current situation in the near east, that you're going to be called up or something. And that also is a very destructive and terrible force. How would our bodies react to that?

R: Leave that to God. God knows how to take care of the universe. Focus on yourself. Ask yourself: "To whom do these feelings come?"

S: But what if it comes right down to it. What if a telegraph or telephone call comes?

R: Then you do what you have to do. Your body will know what to do. You will take care of yourself. If you're a major in the air force, you fly a plane. You go wherever you have to go.

S: All the while asking or reminding yourself, to whom it ...

R: As long as you're aware that it has nothing to do with you. You are not your body, you are not your mind, you are not the situation. You are free from it.

S: Isn't it like watching yourself as if you were a character in a play?

R: Yes.

S: Or watching yourself on a film. You know if you've ever had that experience. Where you know it's you, but your not...

S: O.K., but it's still confusing to me. Let's say, to follow this little possibility, I can go away and fly the plane and so forth, and I can say that's not really me doing it, or I can stay home and say I don't want to be part of that destruction, and that's also not me doing it.

R: No. Both are wrong. If you have to say it's not me doing it, then it is you doing it. You don't say it's not me doing it. You ask the question: "To whom does it come?". There's a difference. It's keeps the me out of it completely.

S: It's more obvious than that. It's more obvious that it's not you doing it, that it is you doing it.

R: See, when you say it's not me doing it, you believe that you are the one, you are the body.

S: All right, let's strike that part of it from the record. Still it seems to me a choice must be made.

R: The choice will be made. But you have nothing to do with it.

S: That's very difficult. Very, very difficult.

S: Will you be guided?

R: Something will take care of you. When you came to this earth, everything was predestined. And everything is aware of how to take care of you, and what you're going to go through. But it has nothing to do with you. The secret is not to react. Just do what

has to be done. And you will do what has to be done. You can't help it. If you're meant to go to fight, no matter how you try to stop yourself, you couldn't. You'll go to fight. If you are meant to be a pacifist, you couldn't fight it you wanted to. If they gave you a million dollars you couldn't do it. Because you're predestined. It's your karma.

S: So you're saying if you face a decision, that's already been predestined also.

R: Yes. Everything will work out. The secret is not to identify with your body or your mind. And then, if you're doing it correctly, things will change on the outside too.

S: I can accept it theoretically. It's the same teaching, the same response the rabbis had, the wise Jews at the time of the holocaust. Get into the cattle car, off you go to Auschwitz, and the rabbis say, well you know it's God's will. What difference does it make? It doesn't matter. And now that we've lived through the holocaust, now we think maybe they should have said something.

R: There's a difference. You're right. There's a difference in knowing the truth, and just letting yourself be walked on. This does not mean you become a rug for somebody to step on you. You become a doormat for no one. You are abiding in the Self. When you abide in the Self, everything will be O.K. You're not a coward. You're not running from anything. You're abiding in the Self. When you abide in the Self, if you have to pick up a sword and fight, you will. If you have to run, you will. But you will do what you have to do. But it has nothing to do with you. It's different than you think. It's not like you think.

S: I can theoretically ... it all makes sense. In actual practice is where I get confused.

R: If it made sense it wouldn't be the truth (everyone laughs).

S: What kind of answer can one expect when you ask who is it for?

R: No answer.

S: So therefore the action would be non-personal.

R: Exactly. If there's an answer, it's the wrong answer. See, all these years we've been dealing with a finite mind, with our own intellectual processes, with our preconceived ideas, with our concepts. But I'm saying we have to transcend those, and use a new part of us that we've never used before. And that's the Self.

So when you abide in the Self, everything will be O.K. Everything will work out. It has nothing to do with being passive, or being violent, or anything else. It's a completely new ball game. You're on God's team, and you're well taken care of, but it's different. There are no words to explain it.

S: You have to know how to go inside in order to understand it.

R: Yes, you have a deep understanding, and a deep knowledge, that all is well and everything is unfolding as it should.

S: Robert, then it is imperative that we do have a guide or a master, isn't it? People can't just do this on their own.

R: It depends. Very few can. But the majority cannot.

S: Did Ramana have a guru?

R: No. But he's one in a billion.

S: So what you're also saying then is in predestination, the soul chooses to be born in a particular time or to a particular life in order to continue with its existence.

R: That's part of the appearance. And if you believe in your body, and you believe in your mind, then karma is real, and predestination is real. But if you abide in the Self, everything else becomes redundant.

S: Because of your Four Principles that we ...

R: Yes.

S: And if you become realized you can get off the karmic wheel.

S: But in the mean time on this earthly plane, or this particular plane, one way of describing it is predestination. The answer is there, but if you look at it as a continuum, it's part of the Four Principles. Nothing appears in the beginning, no end.

R: Yes, exactly. To put it in an easier point of view so you can understand it, if you believe in your body, again, if you believe in your mind, if you believe that you are a body, then everything else exists, karma, God, creation, everything exists.

But when the realization comes to you that I am not the body, and I am not the mind, everything disappears. Like the Four Principles. So that's why the secret is to practice abiding in the Self. Then everything else will happen by itself. You don't try to get rid of your karma, or get rid of negative situations, because that's like cutting off a tumor on one arm, and it grows back on the other arm. You go right to the source, the Self. And then everything is resolved.

Dialogue 4

There is Nothing That Can Destroy You

As soon as you wake up, all that disappears,
Nothing can ever happen to you
that is of a destructive nature
There is absolutely nothing that can ever destroy you.
You cannot be destroyed.
Your body may appear to vanish, but it is like a dream.
That is why I feel that a spiritual path,
Not necessarily this one, but a true spiritual path,
Should be the first thing of importance in your life.
Why? Because it wakes you up.
You just have a great love for all things.
A GREAT COMPASSION.
And you know that the substratum
of all existence is harmony.
Peace, emptiness, and you feel wonderful all of the time.
What can disturb you if you are at peace?

Topics

On Overcoming Feelings of Weakness and Fear
Overcoming Karma- The Law of Cause and Effect
I Was Never Born, I Will Never Disappear
We Are Not the Doer

August 30, 1990

R: Greetings and salutations. We can be real informal. All I can do is tell you about my own personal experiences, not what I read. And I can tell you that nothing exists the way it appears. Everything is an appearance, and the trap is that we get pulled into the appearance. We react to it. We feel hurt. We feel slandered. We feel as if something is wrong. We have emotions and they become negative, because we are falling for a false premise, and the false premise is that the world is real.

In fact, the world is not real and neither are you. What we have to do is stop reacting to anything. And the only way to do that is to discover who you are. When you discover your true nature, when you awaken to your true nature, everything becomes perfectly clear. You're at peace. If something works out, it works out. If it doesn't, it doesn't.

But you don't look at it that way. Your feelings have been transmuted. You no longer feel what human beings feel. You just have a great love for all things... a great compassion. And you know that the substratum of all existence is harmony, peace, emptiness, and you feel wonderful all the time. What can disturb you if you are at peace? If you've found true peace, what can possibly disturb you?

The world comes and goes. One day the world is like this, the next day it's like that. But what does it have to do with you? Nothing. You are free. You are not the world. You are not your body, you are not your mind. You are total freedom, total joy, total love. You have to awaken to this fact. It's truth. Science is beginning to see this more and more. They are beginning to see that the only thing permanent in life is change.

**We speak many words, we take many actions, but to what avail? Does it matter in the end? We build our life. We own positions. We father children. And what happens at the end? Poof! It's all gone. Everything just disappears. (Laughs...)
There's nothing... So what's the purpose?**

People say: "I'm making this world a better world for my children." They're just dreaming. The world will never be better, it'll never be worse. The world just is a dream of existence, and it's like this one day, it's like that another day.

But you are not the world. You have to awaken to that fact. You are not your thoughts. You are not your karmic expressions. You are not your inclinations from past lives. These things appear real as long as you believe in them.

As an example, if you believe in the devil, the devil will appear to you, because you are creating the devil yourself. If you believe in a god, the god will appear to you. For instance, Ramakrishna believed in the god Kali. Kali used to become very real to him, and he used to dance and sing with Kali (laughs...). This was true as far as he was concerned. But he created Kali. That's why nobody else was able to see him but Ramakrishna. That's how we create our lives.

Think of the things you fear in your life. Say you fear becoming sick, you fear poverty, you fear getting divorced, you fear getting married. Whatever you fear is a concept created by your own mind. There is no question of should I get married or shouldn't I get married. It doesn't matter. What matters is how you react to it, how you see it, what you expect of it.

This is true of every aspect of your life. That's what you've been trained to believe since you were a little kid. It first started in kindergarten. Your teachers brainwashed you. Your family brainwashed you. The outside world brainwashed you. The system brainwashed you... And here you are! You are filled with ideas, concepts, notions, feelings, attitudes, and that makes you what you are: miserable. (laughs).

As soon as you wake up, all that disappears. Nothing can ever happen to you that is of a destructive nature. There is absolutely nothing that can ever destroy you. You can not be destroyed. Your body may appear to vanish, but that's like a dream. You dream about yourself, you are doing something, and you get shot and you disappear. But then you wake up. So my question to you is: "What do you believe about yourself and about the world? What's most important to you?" This is why I feel that a spiritual path, not necessarily this one, but a true spiritual path, should be the first thing of importance in your life. Why? Because it wakes you up.

No matter how good a life you live, you may become the richest and most famous person on earth. One day you will have to experience the other side of the same coin and be the poorest, most miserable person on earth. That's the way it works. You may say to me, "My neighbor never has any problems. It's like he fell into a pot of gold. Everything he touches turns into money. He's as healthy as a horse. He's got a beautiful wife, a big house, everything he could possibly need, and look at me! And I know that guy's life hasn't changed in forty years."

You're making the wrong conclusion. He has earned this karmically, and, if he doesn't pull away from it, he might spend his whole life in goodness, human goodness. But then he will be drawn back again, by the law of karma, which is in his mind, and he doesn't know it, and this time he will be a homeless person. And whatever he does, he won't be able to make a dime. He'll try his best, but he'll always be poverty stricken. He won't be able to earn a dime no matter how hard he tries.

This is why we should never judge. You have no idea what your neighbor's going through. Never say: "He or she has a wonderful life and look at mine. Why am I poor? Why am I sick? Why am I this way? Why am I that way?"

The idea is to wake up, not to look at yourself, not to feel sorry for yourself, not to compare yourself with others, but to awaken.

When you awaken, something happens that is unexplainable. There are no human words to explain. When you awaken you just understand, not even understand, you know, you feel, and those words are inadequate. You become Divine Harmony. You are no longer fooled by person, place, or thing. You no longer react.

As an example, someone tells you: "Oh, you won the lotto, you won fifty billion dollars." It's O.K. You do not become a slave to that. Someone tells you: "You lost fifty billion dollars." Same thing, same reaction. You do not become a slave to that.

What happens in the human life does not matter. When you know who you are, you do not say it doesn't matter. You simply exist. You exist as yourself. You're at peace. No one can ever take the peace away from you, no matter how hard they try. You're not fooled by things. Rather, what you do is you deal with yourself.

You can give to yourself because you become the Living Self. Therefore, you can give yourself away and you're still there, for you've become the Infinite Self, the Divine Mother, Omnipresence, Total Oneness with all things. So you can give of yourself, and yet you're always there.

When Ramana Maharshi was being robbed by robbers, his devotees wanted to attack the robbers, and he said: "No, no, no. It's our dharma to be what we are, and it's their dharma to be what they are. We should not interfere in their dharma. Therefore give them what they want." And that's very profound.

We are spiritual people. The world is not. Therefore, we act in accordance with spiritual principles. What this really means is we, as human beings, become last, not first. That's what Jesus meant when he said: "Those who are first will be last, and those who are last will be first."

You have to develop a great humility. Do not long for anything. Do not long to be famous, or rich, or great. And do not say: "I want to be poor and have nothing," either. They're both wrong. Just be yourself. When you are yourself, you will be amazed how the universe takes care of you.

It's like the body with vitamins and medicines. Your body, you know, is a natural healing factory. It really knows how to heal itself. But when we start taking too many vitamins, and not enough sugar... (laughs)

When we start taking medicines too much, the body says: "Well, you have made that into your god, so now you've got to depend on it." And then you have to keep gulping vitamins for the rest of your life, or you get sick. Really, think about that.

You've got to depend upon yourself to take care of everything. Now yourself is yourself. There's one Self, so we take care of each other. But you don't think of that. When you think of others you're making a mistake.

The feeling will come to you one day that you are all others. There are no others, there is just the Self, appearing as others. So how do you treat others? As you treat yourself.

You don't think about it. You do not say that person is worthy, and that person is not, so I'm going to help this person, not that person. You give of yourself automatically. You do not think about it, because everything is yourself, and that includes the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, and everything else you don't understand.

It's all part of the One. What you do to the One, you do to everything. How you treat one person is how you treat the whole universe, because everything is one.

Now, these Four Principles I gave you have to do with all these things. You're supposed to ponder these things. How do you work with these Four Principles?

First, who can tell me what they are? (A student recalls them). Now you said them correctly in a way, but it's like you're reciting a lecture.

S: We're just learning them.

R: But it's the way you say it to yourself. As soon as you open your eyes in the morning (I'll speak in the first person) you have to say to yourself: "I feel, and realize, and understand, that everything, everything, say everything twice, is a projection of my mind." And think about what that means. Forget about the other three. Work on that. "Everything! Everything! I feel that; I realize that; I understand that; that everything is a projection of my mind."

And then you may think of the problems you have, if you have any, and you say to yourself: "If everything is a projection of my mind, where do these problems come from?" You then realize, "Why, they came from me. I projected them. I created them." And then you say: "Who is this 'I' that created them?" See? Now you're getting to the meaty part, to the substance. "Who is the 'I' that created all this illusion in my life? Where did the 'I' come from? Who gave it birth...? My mind. Where did my mind come from...? From the 'I'. Why...? They're both the same! The 'I' and my mind are the same." And it's all a revelation.

You think along these lines. "Where does the 'Mind-I' come from and to whom does it come?" And you follow it deep, deep within yourself. If you do it correctly you will realize there is no 'I', there is no mind, so there are no problems, and it'll be over, and you'll start laughing. You'll actually start laughing at yourself. You'll say: "To think, I feared this and I feared that." And once you get into that consciousness, something will happen to actually physically relieve you of the problem, or what you think is a problem.

As long as you believe in your mind that there's a problem, whether it's little or big doesn't matter. They're both the same. But as long as you believe you've got a problem, you'll have a problem, and it'll grow, and you can't change it. It may appear that you change it, but it turns into something else, of a worse nature when you try to work with the problem itself. Never try to work with the problem, but ask: "Where the problem came from...? How did I get it...? How did I get this birth...? Where did it come from...?" That's the problem. The birth's the problem. Because you believe you were born; you have the problem; and you can go on and on and on.

That's how you work with the Principles:

I feel and understand that **EVERYTHING** is a projection, a manifestation of my mind. Whose mind? My mind. Who's 'my'? 'Mine'. 'My'. 'I am 'my'. Who am I? Who am 'I' who has this problem?"

And as you ask yourself this question, you will begin to feel better, and better, and better. You will actually begin to feel better. And as you feel better, the problem becomes less and less important, and it will vanish. This is great psychotherapy. It works. If psychiatrists gave this to patients, they wouldn't have to give them any drugs.

So you understand, you feel, that everything is an emanation of your mind, or it wouldn't exist. All existence, from the smallest atom, to the greatest cosmic galaxy... it all comes out of your mind. But even if I tell you this, you still feel that something is real, don't you? You feel that something is real. You may say, "The sun is real." You may say, "Well, God is real." You may say, "An atom is real,"

But you do not comprehend that you are creating these things. They're all a projection of your mind. If you didn't have a mind, you would not have these concepts. That's why we are told to annihilate the mind, to kill the mind. No mind, no concepts. All these ideas come as you begin to realize that everything is a projection of your mind.

S: Can you say the Self is real or is 'real' a term that doesn't exist?

R: Well, if you say the Self is real, you don't really mean it. If you meant it you wouldn't have to say it, but you can say it when you are truly yourself, because it makes you feel better. It helps you live. It's better than saying that my world is real or my problem is real. It's better to say the Self is real than to say that.

S: But better would be ...

R: To keep silent.

S: That nothing is real?

R: Don't even say that. Say nothing. When you ask yourself the question: "Where does the mind come from?", or "Where do my problems come from?", then you keep still, that's real. The emptiness is real.

S: Isn't the emptiness the same as the Self?

R: Yes, but when you speak you spoil it to an extent.

S: That's right because the Self doesn't know...

R: When you say the Self is real, that becomes personal. When there's silence it becomes Omnipresent. Silence is always the best policy, after you say all those things to yourself. And it's in the silence that your problems just dissolve. Try it. It really works. When you keep still after saying all these things, your problems will dissolve by themselves.

Do not think, "I am getting rid of my problems," because that enhances the problems. Do not think about the problems at all, but work on yourself to see your own reality. In reality there are no problems. You may also note that to most people, no matter how many times I say this, their problems are very real to them. They've got a hold of them like a vice.

They really feel their problems. So to those people I say: "To the extent that you can realize that your mind has created these problems, and in reality you are mind-less, to that extent, your problems begin to dissolve."

But do this when you wake up, when you open your eyes in the morning. Don't go through the Four Principles all at once, and say: "I'm finished. Now I can go worry about my problems". Take one at a time, even if you do not get to the second one that morning. An hour or two has passed and you're working on the first one, that's good. You can work on these things all your life, if necessary. It's better than worrying about your problems. But take them one at a time.

Now you go to the Second Principle and you work on this one just like on the first one.

-He asks a student for the Second Principle-

R: Yes... but it's the way you say it to yourself that counts. Use your own words that are comfortable for you. You have to sort of say something like this: "I perceive, I feel, I understand that I was never born. I am unborn. I do not prevail. All my existence does not exist, and I will never disappear."

S: Do you say, "I perceive" or, "I understand", before your mind really has fully accepted it?

R: Whatever's more appealing to you. Whatever you can work with. But let yourself know that you perceive or you understand that you feel.

S: I mean, how about... would it be more honest to say: "I am beginning to perceive?"

R: There is no beginning. So when you say: "I'm beginning" you begin, and begin, and begin, every day. Isn't that right? Stay after the truth. You can say: "There's something within me that perceives, there's something within me that knows I was never born, I do not prevail, and I will never disappear. And I am that one that knows." So you start working on that. What does this mean, "I was never born. I am unborn?" It sounds like a contradiction, because you say my father and mother gave me birth.

This appears to be true. Who gave them birth? My grandmother and my grandfather. And you go all the way back. Who gave them birth? Who gave them birth? And you go back to the beginning. Where did the first man and woman come from? Who started this? Who started the human race? Who started the idea of birth? Now don't come up with your answers, because the mind answers. You can say: "Adam and Eve, God". Somebody told you that. You learned it from reading in the Bible. But is it true? Where did God come from? Who created everything?

So you go back to the beginning. It's like saying what came first, the chicken or the egg? The tree or the seed? It's the same thing. What came first? The man or the woman? How did they both get together? Who made them?

Then you will realize they don't exist. Nothing gave you birth. Because the whole origin is false. That's what they call false imagination. The whole origin of birth is false. It's a dream. It doesn't exist. Therefore, I do not exist the way I appear to be.

Then you go right back to the first premise. Then, who am I? See, you're always going back to Self-Enquiry. Who am I that exists? If I am not the body, am I my thoughts? I can't be my thoughts because they keep on changing and changing.

Then, who am I? Then you keep silent for a while. You know it's working when you start getting a quiet, loving feeling. You start to feel peace that you have not felt before, and you start to feel that all is well.

S: So even if you say... what if you say: "I am the eternal now"? Even that's a product of the mind.

R: Yes it is. It's a temporary help, because the mind creates it. If you do this often enough (this is why you have to do this every day when you wake up), pretty soon you will start to feel something. Really, you will feel a happiness that you never felt before. An extreme happiness. You couldn't care if they dropped a bomb on your head. You would feel this happiness because you will know that you can't die.

See, right now they're just words. But you will actually know, some day, that you just can't disappear. Nothing can kill you. "Kill" is just a word that means something that you have accepted. It's just an ignorant word. We make up words and we put feelings behind them. Say it to yourself for a while. See how ridiculous it sound: Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill... kill. It's just an English word that human beings make up to connote some kind of danger. The word has no power except the power that you give it yourself.

When the mind is silent, then reality comes of its own accord. When you're thinking, and thinking, and thinking, then the world has got you and you become worldly again. So Self-Enquiry causes the mind to be quiet.

And after you work on that, you go on. "I do not prevail." So you say to yourself: "You mean my entire existence, since I was a baby, until I die, means nothing?" And then you say to yourself: "I have just proven that I was never born, because I've gone way back to the beginning. So if I were never born, how can I prevail? What prevails? Who prevails?" And you will see it's the mind that prevails.

The mind wants existence, wants strength, wants power. It makes you believe that you are a body. You ask yourself: "To whom comes the mind? Where does the mind come from? Who gave it birth? How did it originate? What is its source?"

And then keep quiet... keep still. And you will begin to laugh because you will actually feel, even if for a moment, that there is no mind. You will actually feel no-mind. In the beginning it may last for a moment or two. But as you practice everyday, those moments of no-mind will become greater, and greater, and greater, and greater.

And then you go on and you'll say: "I will never disappear." So now you're laughing again, because you realize: "Who disappears? That which never existed disappears. But I am no-mind, so how can I disappear?" And this becomes very meaningful for you, and as you do it everyday, you become stronger and stronger in mindfulness. And something happens that's so beautiful that I can't describe it. You feel such love, such joy, such harmony, such bliss. Then you carry on.

Now what's the Third Principle?

-Student responds-

R: Say it the way you're supposed to say it. You begin with: "I feel." You've got to feel it. You've got to say: "Something in me feels, understands, the egolessness of all things." All these Principles are alike. Did you come to that conclusion yet?

They all have the same source: **-nothing-**. But you have to work with them until you get there. I feel and understand the egolessness of all things. And you say all things, not just some things, but all things, from the smallest atom to the greatest galaxy. Nothing has an ego. If it has no ego, it has no source, because to have an ego there has to be a source, and just by realizing this great truth you become free immediately. That blows your mind. It's like a Zen koan. All of a sudden something snaps in your mind, and your mind is gone because it has no source, since there's no ego. It never existed, and you feel so good.

[There was a tape break here... -Must have been a question concerning Hussein and the gulf war-]

I can like them or dislike them. For this is a worldly thing and you are not of this world. So you react completely differently to things like this. When I discuss these things with you, it's to make conversation. But it doesn't exist. It will come and go. Whether there is a war, whether there's not a war... the fact remains, you're still going to die. So what's more important? To discuss who's good and who's bad in the world, or to find out your true Self, and become free from everything.

S: I just meant would it help something like that, not matter...

R: Of course it helps because it makes them disappear. You realize its part of the mind, like the blanket, like the radio.

S: And just saying it is egoless doesn't mean it in the way we would say that. But it means he has no source; he came from nothing.

R: How he appears does not exist, just like his body. Same thing. See, when you say: "I am not the body", you are not speaking of your body. You're speaking of the body, the universal body. Nobody is the body.

S: So you could say: "I am is not the body"?

R: Yes, you could say that. That's why I tell you not to use that too much, because you make it too personal. You're still into yourself as an individual. When you read in the text books, "I am not the body, I am not the mind," they're referring to the universal body and universal mind. That there is no body, nobody, noooooooo body (everybody laughs). Nobody exists. That sounds ridiculous to the average person.

Now you may say: "What does this do for me?" It does everything for you. If you are creative in music, or in art or in anything else, you'll become a greater musician or a greater artist, without wanting to, without going after it. Your body will do what it's supposed to. There will be no karmic attachment. As an example, if you are a great artist and a great musician, or a great carpenter, or a great loafer, or a great homeless person, and you go after it humanly, this is what is holding you to the earth, and you're going to have to come back again, and again, and again, because you made yourself earth bound, don't you see?

Anything that you attach yourself to pulls you back to the earth, whether it's good or bad. If you hate something it's the same as if you love something. It pulls you back to the earth. You've got to let it go. If you read that lesson on non-attachment I gave you last week, it explains it all. It's not being indifferent. It's just that you're letting go because you know, "I am my brother and my brother is me. I am everything." So you're not into attachment or into anything.

And now I go to the last Principle, which is what?

-A student replies-

R: Good! You say: "I perceive and understand what Realization is. I know, something within me understands, and feels, what Self-Realization is," Then you keep still. Then the thought will come to you that the only way to find out is through negation. So you can say to yourself: "It's not the sun, because the sun is a projection of my mind. It's not the moon. Same thing. It's not my husband or my wife. It's not my body. It's not my organs. It's not Hussein. It's not peace. It's not the war." And everything you name, it's not. So when you get tired of naming things, you keep silent, and that's what it is. Everything is silence. All Four Principles end in silence, they're all the same. Any questions about this?

S1: Yes, I have a question concerning two things that you said which I have difficulty with. One of the things you said is never deal with a problem.

R: Right.

S1: And I know that if you concentrate on the positive things you were speaking about, that's the essential teaching, say to express all the ideas you already talked about today. I realize that that is the energy that must be expended. But still, in this period of life that we have, as we make these statements, and as we move towards this goal which I can accept, and this theoretical idea which I accept, still there is the life to be lived, and there are issues to deal with. So it seems to me that if you say, don't deal with the problem, this leads to enormous problems.

R: On the contrary. You're separating both. You're putting them into categories. But, there's only one. As an example: Say somebody cheated you and you sue them in court. When you sue somebody, and you're getting involved in something like that, you're sending up an energy. Even if you win the case, you're going to have to sue somebody else, and then sue somebody else, and it never stops, because you've created a pattern for yourself. But, if you go about it the other way, if you know the truth about yourself, you also know the truth about the guy who cheated, because you're both one.

S1: All right. Let me give you another example. Let's say that we are all here and we all stay here and we have no money. And tomorrow were hungry. We're all hungry in the morning, and we say we're not going to deal with this problem, but because our hunger is so great and keeps mounting, we really can't think of anything else. Eventually we can't think of any of these ideas that you told us about because we're so extremely hungry.

R: Your first premise is wrong. It doesn't work like that. It'll never work like that. If you are hungry, something will happen to appease your hunger. See, what you're thinking about is you sit down and you do nothing. It doesn't work like that. When you know the truth, somebody will knock on the door and bring you food.

S1: I brought up the example a week or two ago about the holocaust, and remember I said how the attitude of the Jewish people, and especially the Rabbis was that God is living in Nazis, God has manifested himself through Auschwitz, and the others, and so we must go along with this. Would you say that is the attitude the Jewish people should have had?

R: On the contrary, because that's an attitude. I'm not talking about attitudes. I'm talking about Realization. See, reading the Bible and making quotations is one thing. Being a living embodiment of the truth is another thing. So I'm not saying you're supposed to be passive. There are times that you're not passive.

S1: Then, you are saying: "Deal with the problem".

R: On the contrary, if you are in the truth, the problem will deal with itself.

S1: Yes, but you're speaking of a state to which we are aspiring, and I grant what you say. I believe that would happen, but we're not in that state yet. I mean, we are, but we are not fully in the state because we cannot fully grasp it and manifest it.

R: If you take it personally, and you work on yourself as I said, you will do what's right. You will not be passive.

S2: So you didn't exactly say, don't deal with the problem. Just realize that the body doesn't really exist.

S3: So you would say that your body will do the right thing by itself. It's not a matter of trying to think of it or not think of it. That's the easiest way to look at it.

S1: It isn't that at all. It's your mind that tells you to put on clothes and go out and find food in the morning. Your body too... but it's the body and the mind working together.

S2: Remember what Christ said: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all these things will be added unto you." Isn't that sort of the same thing you're saying?

R: Yes, it is.

S2: If you dwell on Self-Enquiry or Self-Realization, somehow these things will be taken care of, maybe even by the body.

S1: Wasn't it Christ also who said: "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's?" That's the critical point here. There's no argument with the concept, the idea, and the goal and the abstract reality. I am talking about the interim period as we live in our daily bodies during the day. That's why I bring up these problems of the fan, which I did the other day, and the food, as examples of these things that we have to deal with every moment.

R: Your body and your mind are motivated by karma. The law of karma takes care of them. But you are not your body. If you are aware that you are not your body, the right action will ensue.

S2: You mean you can be aware that you're not your body, and yet your body will go out and get food.

R: Exactly.

S2: But you would know that you are not the doer.

S1: But you say: "If you are aware", those are your words: "If you are aware that you are not the body". I would say, from my understanding of the teaching, there are degrees of awareness. If you are fully and completely, and absolutely, and totally and wholly aware that you are not the body, then O.K., I grant you that. But there are these degrees of awareness, and if you are not at that particular state, then you must render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.

R: In reality, there are no degrees. So you either are or you're not. If you think you're not, then you have to fetch for yourself. If you think you are, you'll think about these things, and then you'll go do something. But you won't be doing it. It will do itself.

S2: That's what I was going to say. The answer to me is what Robert was telling us before about not being the doer. The realization that you are not the doer is even what Christ was talking about. That is, you dwell on the Self, on Realization, and your body will continue to do whatever is necessary karmically, but your realization that you're not the body and you're not the doer doesn't mean it doesn't get done.

S1: Well, now we're getting down to the nitty gritty. All right, then what you're suggesting is this. Let's talk about tomorrow morning. I'm hungry, so if my body-mind says go out and try to find some money to get breakfast, but all the time that I'm doing this I can still think, I am not doing this. I am not going to be getting the money. I am not going to be eating it.

R: No, no, no. See what's going to happen when you work on the Principles. If you have hunger in your body, you will automatically, spontaneously go get food.

S2: But you won't be dwelling on it.

R: Your mind will be somewhere else.

S2: Could you say like, "O.K., Here I am going to La Brea Bakery, but this is all a dream".

R: See, take my life, for instance. When I get up in the morning, I have no idea what's going to happen during the day, but I am active and I'm not active. I do certain things, but I don't do them purposely. It happens spontaneously. I didn't ask to teach classes like this. It happened. I never asked for anything. But it happens because my body does it, spontaneously. But my mind is not aware of it and I'm not involved in it. But I'm fed, I live in a house. I come to these meetings. But I never say I'm going to do it.

S2: You don't plan?

R: I don't plan. I may plan a couple of hours in advance, or something like that, but I have no long drawn out plans. But everything works out. I know it is hard to perceive. It's really hard to perceive this...

S1: My second point is related to this one. At the beginning of your speech you quoted Ramana when he was being robbed, and you said that he told his followers to allow the robbers to take what they wanted, and that was their dharma, and it was his dharma to have it and to give it. Why couldn't it also have been his karma to protect?

R: Because it was not his dharma, it was not his way.

S2: What's the difference between dharma and karma?

R: Dharma is the way things are. The truth. The truth is the way things are.

S3: Another enlightened teacher could have said anything. They're two sides of the same coin. He could have said go kill them, or don't kill them, but you know what I mean. In reality there's no difference.

R: That's true. You're right. It's like in the Bhagavad Gita with Arjuna, where Krishna told him to fight.

S1: So he could have said: "Let's protect what we have."

R: But he said: "This is not our path."

S2: You're saying dharma. I had the same question because I thought dharma and karma were the same thing. So they're not. So the dharma would be the teaching them not to resist. But their karma might be to beat the shit out of them.

R: Yes.

S2: But if you were holy enough you would go with the dharma.

R: It depends on the path that you're on. People are on different paths. Not only that, Krishna himself didn't have to fight, did he? He told Arjuna to fight. You see? When you get to the highest, there is peace. There is no need to do anything.

S3: Maybe to just show, maybe as a demonstration for somebody else you could say fight or don't fight.

R: It's like the martial arts. When somebody becomes so proficient in the martial arts, I mean proficient to the highest you can ever go, higher than that, they do nothing. They don't even defend themselves. They go the other way. They just sit. They accept being killed. There's nothing to fight. But Arjuna was not up there. He belonged to the warrior class.

S1: But so do we belong to one of the lower...

R: You belong to whatever you believe. It's all in your mind. If you want to believe you've got to fight, then go fight. If you've absolutely got to take care of yourself, because if you don't do it who's going to do it, then you've got to. You've got to do what you've got to do. But I'm speaking of the highest teaching, where everything is taken care of. Look at Ramana again, as an example. When he was a boy, he would have been dead if it were not for this mysterious power that took care of him. He just went into the jungle, went into a cave, and sat there. He didn't know where his food was going to come from. He didn't even think about it. Who was going to take care of him. It didn't enter his mind. He just sat motionless for days until a woman came up the hill and started to feed him.

S2: But he was more or less born enlightened and we're just struggling.

R: But I'm just speaking of the highest ideal. I'm trying to tell you, if you have trust and faith, there's a mysterious power that will take care of you, and supply all your needs.

S3: (to S1) You've mentioned several times, "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's," but also continue to "render unto the Lord that which is the Lord's," and that "man does not live by bread alone, but every word proceeding from the mouth of the Lord." So let us ask ourselves: "What is Caesar?", "What is the Lord?", "What is the bread of life?". To feed the body alone does not sustain you. Life does not proceed from the body alone.

R: That's a good point. Jesus himself never rendered unto Caesar. He told that to the people.

S3: (Students laugh) He passed it on. Better you than me...

S1: I don't dispute what you're saying at all, but my problem is the acknowledgement of the bread part of it, the Caesar part of it, how one deals with that. I think people have those concrete problems, life in the world, dealing with the world as you deal simultaneously with the work of the Lord.

While you pay your attention to spirit, at the same time you have these other problems.

R: Remember, you're speaking from your point of view.

S3: Ultimately there are no problems. It's a matter of where we put our attention. Wherever we put our attention, that becomes our reality. So if we focus in on the bread, if we focus in on the Caesar... But what if we ask ourselves: "What is the source of our life? Is it from Caesar? Is it from the bread?" That's the question. So even if you solve the problem of the bread, then you are fed. But if you never know who you are, subsequent problems are inevitable.

S1: Well that's true. I don't deny that.

S3: So it's not only finding out who we are. It's also a matter that there's a flow, and to realize that flow, and connect ourselves with that flow, and from that flow comes the bread. But it's not just us. It's all things. So it's not just conquering that one problem. When you conquer the problem of yourself, all of the other problems are conquered.

S1: Theoretically. But remember also in the past, I've mentioned that in every culture, in every time, whether it's Catholicism in the middle ages in the West, or whether it's the Buddhism in the East, because of the awareness of this problem, those who are in control have established communities. They have established ways in the world for the process to go on. That's why these communities have existed. That's why monasteries do exist. That's why there are groups of teachers, of Sufis, throughout the desert everywhere... that sort of thing. Arrangements are made for survival while the process is underway.

S3: But even as those arrangements are made, they're not really made. They happen of themselves. And again, that's the flow.

R: You're speaking of appearances. That's how it appears to you. That's what I said in the beginning. This is your point of view. That's how you see it now. But it's not like that.

S3: The Ashrams themselves didn't say: "Well let's make an Ashram." They happened of themselves because the people who were involved out there were unfolding of themselves. Everything unfolds of itself. Our life should unfold of itself. But when we think we're the doer, then there's a problem. It's not that we don't do anything. It's not that we do nothing. It's not that we do. We exist as we are and life unfolds of itself. There's no stopping of action, and there's no action.

S1: Let's try another tack. When I came here... someone said to me several times that I should come here. It just happened. I didn't go to him. I didn't say: "Please, tell me what to do, where to go." I didn't ask, I wasn't even aware that he was thinking of me. It came to me just in the manner we're speaking of. And I did come. Nevertheless, every week I have to arrange to come here. So the two energies exist simultaneously on this plane. That's all I'm saying.

R: No. This plane doesn't exist. But, as long as you believe it does, it does, because you are creating it. You're giving it its power. You are its power source. When you take the power away, everything just is.

S3: That kind of gets to a question that I have, which isn't really a question. Everything is an emanation of the mind. But the mind does not exist.

R: Exactly.

S3: So we have different levels here. Everything is an emanation of the mind as if it's a dream. However, the dream does not exist. So one level is, everything is an emanation of the mind thus there is a process which is a dream. Yet the mind does not exist. The dream itself has no reality. It's real but it's not true.

R: It's better to ask questions to yourself than to make statements. When you come to this conclusion you ask yourself: "Who's mind doesn't exist? Where does the mind come from? To whom does it belong?" And you keep silent. Then your answer will be Emptiness, Nirvana, and you will know.

S2: Well, what questions should S1 ask himself?

R: The questions he's asking me. He should ask himself: "Who has all these questions?"

S2: You mean like: "Who has to get his act together?"

R: All these things. You start with realizing that 'I' have to do these things. And go back to the 'I' and say: "Where did the 'I' come from? Who has to do all these things?" And follow the 'I' through to its culmination, to its source.

When you realize that you are not the doer, your body will do whatever it came to this earth to do. Your body follows karma and your body will do whatever you're supposed to do. But it's not you, and that can only be experienced.

S3: So you do all the worldly things, but you just say: "I am not the doer."

R: You don't say that. If you have to say that, then you are. You just realize you are the universe. You're playing all the parts. That's why you have to enquire: "For whom are there levels?" When you know you're not the doer you won't say anything. Remember, you can never become God, because God is you. You don't become anything, because you don't exist as it appears.

Remember a couple of weeks ago I mentioned that this is my confession. This is the way I feel about it. To most people it's ridiculous. It's gobbledegook. It doesn't mean a thing, it doesn't seem practical at the beginning, to most people. Because most people want something practical, so they can improve their humanhood with it. But the highest truth is humanhood does not exist. And if you come to that conclusion, your life will be bliss.

S: But, isn't one of the purposes of Satsang to ask questions?

R: Yes, that's what Satsang's all about. But then you have to practice the things I tell you and watch what happens. In other words, you can't go home and get caught up in the world and forget about this until the next meeting. You've got to work on yourself. Work on yourself and you'll see what happens.

S: I'd like to write the Four Principles down in your words, as succinctly as possible.

R: Sure.

THE FOUR PRINCIPLES

- 1. I understand, I feel, I perceive, that everything, everything twice, emphasize the second everything, put a line under it, is a manifestation of my mind.**
- 2. I feel and understand deeply, that I am unborn, I do not prevail, and I do not disappear.**
- 3. I feel and understand the egolessness of everything, of all creation.**
- 4. I have a deep understanding of what Self-Realization is.**

That's it.

S: Now when you said that we perceive or have a deep understanding... though we don't feel that, we say that...

R: It's good to say that when you wake up, because it starts something going.

S: But during the day when we do the Principles, do we say the same thing?

R: You can sort of make it a little different. During the day you can just think that everything is a projection of your mind. In the morning it's good to say: "I perceive." You know why? Because when you first open your eyes, you're not awake yet and you're your real Self. So you're actually confessing to yourself your real nature: "I perceive, I understand." And it goes deeper into the subconscious mind, because you just woke up. Your mind is fresh...without ideas. And during the day, when the world's got you, you can just say: "Everything is a projection of my mind, everything". Leave the 'I perceive' off.

Dialogue 5

The Only Way to Solve All Illusionary Problems

"There is only one way in which to remove
all so called problems..

There is only one way to eliminate everything.

And that way is to realize that "I" am not the doer.

Pure Awareness is our Real Nature.

Loving Kindness is Your SELF.

These other things seem to be attached to you,

But they really do not exist..when you turn on the lights, the
Darkness disappears forever..

The Silence is another name for GOD.

Quietness is a name for Consciousness. Peace.

Everything is found in the Silence and not too much in words."

Topics

The Power of Silence

Annihilate the Ego

Development of the Ability to Observe Your Karma

Karma (The Law of Reaping as You Sow)

The Grand Drama

The I Am Meditation

Loving Kindness

October 11, 1990

Robert: It's good to be with you again...

I know some of you can't wait until I start talking, but I tell you, it is in Silence when you receive the best message. Silence is another name for God. Quietness is a name for Consciousness, Peace. Everything is found in the Silence and not too much in the words: In quietness...

You should try to be quiet for as long as you can. Especially when you are at home. Try to sit in the Silence and quietness for as long as you can. It's in the Silence where you will receive the message. It's in the Silence where Pure Awareness reveals itself freely. You'll never be afraid to sit in the Silence. It's your greatest asset.

I get many phone calls. One of the most frequent requests I get is how to resolve personal problems. I had one this morning in a phone call. And, this person had so many problems yet she had been meditating for 25 years. And, yet she still has problems.

There is only one way in which to remove all problems. I don't care how great the problem may be. It makes no difference how serious you think it is. There is one way to eliminate everything. And that way is to realize that 'I am not the doer'.

In other words, the problem has absolutely nothing to do with you. Even though it appears to. It's only an appearance. What is a problem really? A problem is something that is not going your way. The world is not spinning the way you want it to. That's a problem. Things are not going the way you'd like them to. When things are happening that you have no control over. You believe therefore you have got a problem.

If you look at everybody on this earth, when one person has a problem another person has a problem usually. Where do these problems come from? We have been told what is good and what is bad, so if we don't have the good that we think we should have, we've got a problem.

But really, nothing is good and nothing is bad. The thinking makes it so. If you therefore get rid of your mind, you will not have any problems.

The main aspect of our teaching is to annihilate the mind and the ego. When the mind and ego are transcended, some mysterious power takes over. And takes better care of you than you could ever do yourself. But, first, the mind and ego have to go.

It's difficult for most Americans to do things like this because we've been taught to use our minds. Mind is everything and most of you believe that if you don't use your mind, you will vegetate. On the contrary !

What is your mind? It is only a conglomeration of thoughts of the past and of the future. And, you usually worry about the past and dread the future. Your mind brings up all sorts of things not only from this life but from past life experiences, samskaras. Tendencies that you have. If you begin to realize 'I am not the doer', where is the problem?

To begin with, the Universe is your friend and can never hurt you. It is the substratum of all existence. It is love. Consequently, if you develop a consciousness of love, there will be no problems. For, love will take care of everything. Love is the same as Absolute Awareness. Pure Intelligence. Love is the same as the power of Brahman. Again it is the substratum of all existence. So, if you have enough love, there is no problem. The problem only arises when you think you are human and you think you are the doer. In other words, when you believe that unless 'I do this', something terrible will happen.

Something terrible is only a preconceived idea. It is not the truth. Something terrible is something you've been brainwashed to believe. When you believe you have to live a certain way and if you can't live this way, it's terrible.

You have to have certain possessions, certain things in your life. If you do not do this it's terrible. When you start to understand what 'I am not the doer' means, you become free of all problems.

What does it mean when you say: "I am not the doer?" And this is what you should do whenever you think you've got a problem. To begin with, you must first realize that everything and I mean everything was determined before you came to this earth. Everything has been planned for you, even the day you are going to give up the body.

Everything is preordained. If you accept this and feel this, where is the problem? What is the worst thing that could happen to you? If you really analyze this, nothing is bad. It appears bad but it is not. And, remember how the appearance works. It's like the snake and the rope. A man gets out of his bathtub in the dark and steps on a rope and thinks it's a snake. And, he has a tremendous fear. When he finds out it is only a rope, the fear dissipates and he is never afraid again.

So, in the same instance, when you believe and believe and think and think that you have a problem, it's like the snake and the rope. It's not really a problem. It's just a preconceived idea of what's going to happen if you don't get what you want. Because you have been brought up, again, to believe that your life has to be a certain way. When in truth and reality, it does not have to be anyway.

As an example; if I go home this evening and I find out somebody has robbed my house, and he has cleaned everything out of my house; is that a problem? It has all been preordained. This was determined before I came to this earth in my body. I will not react negatively. I will not react at all. Because I feel that I am the Universe and all is well. There are no mistakes. Therefore, I will bless the thief. No problem whatsoever.

If I'm looking across the street and a car passes through a red light and hits me, it isn't the driver's fault. It has all been preordained. So why should I get angry? The point is that everything, everything that happens to you has been preordained. There is nothing wrong.

Now, how should you handle things? The first concept is to realize that 'I am not the doer'. When you realize you are not the doer, it means that your body is going through the experience but not you. The next thing you do is you ask yourself: "Who is having this experience? To whom did it come? It comes to me. I'm feeling depression. I feel hurt. I feel out of sort. I feel that I've been robbed or hit by a car. I'm angry. I'm mad."

Who is this I? How can the I be so many things: Angry, mad, depressed, hurt, out of sort. You therefore hold onto the feeling of I. When you hold onto that feeling and you follow it through to its source; the source of I is always Consciousness or Absolute Awareness when you follow it to its source.

But, now, the only way you're going to follow it to its source is to forget about your problem. You can't do both at once. So, you have to turn resolutely away from your problem. Totally away from your problem as if it doesn't exist, and, hold on to the "me". Hold onto the "me" who thinks it has a problem. As soon as you begin to hold onto "me" or "I" the problem will begin to dissipate all by itself. And, you'll start to laugh. You will. For it is virtually impossible for your real Self to have a problem. For your real Self is Omnipresent, Absolute. Your real Self is Emptiness, Nirvana, Pure Intelligence. Your real Self is Omnipresent. It is as if two of you were present at the same time. When you understand who you are, nothing will ever disturb you again.

People ask me: "If I develop a sense of 'I' and I follow it to its culmination, does that mean I will never have a problem again?" I have to laugh when people ask me that. For as long as you identify with 'I', it is the 'I' that has the problem. So when you say: "Will I never have a problem again?", you're defeating your own purpose. For, 'I' is filled with problems. Not only from this life but from previous existences.

The trick is to follow the 'I' to the source. And, then the 'I' will disappear. Totally. Completely. Absolutely. And, when the 'I' disappears, so does your problem. In other words, the world doesn't change, but you do. Your reaction changes.

Just like the screen and it's images. When the time comes when you have transcended 'I' you become like the screen and like the images shown on the screen. Which means, the world doesn't change. Everything in the world will present itself to you like it always does.

It will be like water off a duck's back. It will not be attached to you anymore. You will now have identification with the screen or with the Self. Am I clear in this? In other words, the screen and images are the same. But the screen is aware of itself and also of it's images. And, it is not affected by the kinds of images you show.

You can show a bank robbery taking place on the screen; a murder being committed; people making love; houses burning down; wars ensuing. How does that affect the screen. It doesn't. The screen is never affected. Yet the images change one after the other. In the same way, your Self is like the screen. It is never affected by problems of any kind or any sort. The problems come upon the screen. They come and they go. But, you remain the Self forever. You never change.

How do you begin to become this way? Everytime you think you have a problem; you must ask yourself: "To whom does the problem come? After all, I am not the doer. I am not the body. I am not the mind. So, to whom does the problem come?"

And, of course, the answer will be: "To me. I feel this problem. The problem comes to me." You hold onto the 'me'. You abide in the 'me'. And, you go deeper and deeper and deeper within yourself. Abiding in the I consciousness.

As you keep doing this everyday, every time a problem appears; the day will finally come when you transcend your sense of 'I'. You totally transcend it. The sense of 'I' disappears and you will become Pure Consciousness... That's it! Any questions?

S: On the path; compassion and humility are important. Is this something that develops of itself or is it something we can work on?

R: As you keep asking yourself: "To whom does the arrogance come? Who is belligerent? To whom do these feelings come?" They will begin to dissipate of their own accord and in their place will come compassion and humility. Therefore you have to catch yourself. Whenever you feel arrogant, whenever you feel belligerent, whenever you feel out of sorts, do not get into that feeling, do not hold on to it, but immediately ask yourself: "To whom does this come? Who has this feeling? It comes to me? Who's me? Who am I?" And again you hold on to the 'I', or hold on to the 'me'. If you do this often enough the day will come when you transcend 'me' and there will be Pure Love.

S: So, it is not a matter of developing humility or compassion itself, but more recognizing the opposite and what of practicing Buddhist loving kindness meditation?

R: Yes. Pure Awareness is your real nature. Loving kindness is yourself. These other things seems to be attached to you but they don't really exist. As you begin to enquire: "To whom do they come?" you will find out that they never existed to begin with, and you will be free of them forever. But if you try to develop them the other way it doesn't work quite as good, for you may develop kindness for a certain problem but when it comes to another problem the kindness won't be there. Therefore you forget about the problem and enquire: "To whom does it come? and when you follow the 'I', then the very thing that is attached to the 'I', the whole thing, will be transcended into nothingness and you will be free.

S: Let's assume we recognize when the ego rears its head... Very often we justify our own actions.

R: But now that you know, you wont. That's only when you don't know what you are doing here, that you justify your actions. But since you begin to understand, you'll be able to catch yourself more and more. Whenever you start to get egotistical, you'll nip it at the bud and it will eventually disappear.

S: I know what you say is true...

R: How do you know...? (laughs)

S: OK, most of what you say is true... (laughs)

R: Why? (everybody laughs)

S: Wait a minute! I found it a long time ago, but then I went in other directions and then got back to the problem.

R: If you really found it a long time ago, it would never have left.

S: Well, no, it hasn't left, but it's just that I've been playing other roles and doing other things...

R: When you turn on the lights, the darkness disappears forever. So if you really had it, you would have it now. You never lose no matter what role you play. You can play any role you like. It is like the screen; you can show any kind of picture you like: Murders, rapist, assassins, lovers, whatever you like, but the screen never changes. The image does. Therefore if you really had it once, you'd never change, no matter what you go through. How can you lose yourself?

S: I don't know, sometimes I feel like it was myself...

R: Impossible!

S: Really? Well, I feel I lost myself a lot of times...

R: What is real is real. You are referring to your ego, not to the Self.

S: Yes, it's the ego!

R: We call the ego the Self sometimes. It is a case of mistaken identity. Remember, the universe is your friend. It's on your side. There is nothing against you. The only thing against you are your thoughts. If you learn to quiet your mind, you'll have no problems.

S: Well like you say: You don't have a problem, you think you have a problem, but you don't really have a problem. Didn't the ego create this problem?

R: The ego is responsible for all your faults. But the ego does not exist, so you have no problems. You think it exists and because you think it exists you have to get rid of it. If you just realize all of a sudden that it doesn't exist you'd be free. But as long as you believe it exist you have to do all these techniques to get rid of it. Because you refuse to accept that you have no ego.

S: I don't know... I guess I have a problem in trying to be responsible.

R: Responsible for what?

S: Well... responsible I guess again is the ego. Responsible for what happens.

R: There is a greater power than you, that knows how to take care of everything for you. All you have to do is be still and quiet your mind and everything will work out harmoniously. We always think we have to get involved. There is nothing we really have to do. The world was here before we came. It will be after we leave. Your job is to find out who you are, and what you are doing in this world, by Self-Enquiry.

S: If everything is predetermined, as you said, that will leave no room for spontaneity if something just happens on its own.

R: Exactly, nothing happens on its own.

S: Everything happens.

R: Sure, but not on its own.

S: There is no such thing as spontaneous action...

R: No, it appears that way, but it is not. When I speak of being spontaneous I am referring to just doing everything in the moment. Living in the moment rather than planning for the future.

S: It feels like it's spontaneous.

R: Of course it does. The world also feels real.

S: There is nobody making it happen, it's just happening?

R: It's how it appears, but nothing is really happening.

S: Just the appearances dancing, playing themselves...

R: It's called false imagination. There is absolutely nothing going on.

S: That's nice to know! Are you sure of that? (laughs)

R: I am positive!

S: OK I'll take it on your word!

R: Take it on your own word! Find out for yourself! (laughs)

S: Well, I haven't quite done that, so I'll take it on yours to start out...

R: You shouldn't!

S: Well I have confidence in you...

R: Why? I may be a big liar...

S: You could be; maybe you are, but I don't feel it. I have to go on what I feel.

R: Why? You should not believe me at all. Find out for yourself.

S: Well because you look like you know...

R: That's an optical illusion.

S: That's a nice one.

R: The truth is we all have to go within ourselves and discover our own truth. Otherwise you become an automatron.

S: No, I am not depending on it, I'm not counting on it...

R: Good! Anytime you depend on a person you'll be disappointed.

S: I think I make the error of thinking that the things that are nice are not projections of my mind, you know, like the things that are bad. It's easy enough to say that's just a projection of my mind but when I look at my 6 month old kitten as something, I think: God if that's a projection, it sure is a good one!

R: That's the trick of maya!

S: A lot of maya is really pleasing.

R: Of course. That's to keep you earthbound. The more you love something on this earth, the more earthbound you become. When I speak of having a Consciousness of Love, I am not really speaking of human love. I am speaking of Pure Consciousness, Pure Awareness: That's Love.

S: I can't help being grateful for the pleasant projections of my mind. Is that an error?

R: Yes, because when you are grateful for the pleasant projections, what happens when the kitten dies?

S: Oh...! I'll think about that when the moment comes...

R: Then you'll be totally disappointed.

S: It's worth the risk to me.

R: But if you came out of both; if you were able to transcend the good and the bad you'd be in a completely different state of love. Then when something is alive you love it, and when it's dead you understand it because you realize nothing dies.

S: I already conceded to that.

R: So you'll be happy all the time.

S: You know, life doesn't die but the vehicles which it inhabits temporally, they certainly die.

R: But where do the vehicles come from?

S: Where do the vehicles come from? Where do the bodies come from? You weren't told about the birds and the bees? Or Adam and Eve? (laughs)

R: It comes from the same place the dream comes from: The mortal dream. You should actually figure it out by yourself, your body-self and focus on the 'I.' It is hard to understand for most westerners that the body is only an appearance. It seems to be a fact but is not the truth. Why not...? If the body were real it would stay the same always, wouldn't it? It would never change. You'd be the same way as when you were a baby. But you change every year. We become older, we become different. So how can the body be real? Soon it appears to be old and just drop away. But what is real is immortal, can never change. You are reality but your body is not, therefore you are not your body. So, what are you? Find out for yourself. Go within and discover who you are.

S: Can we say in the relative sense that each of us, although it seems that we are separated, we are connected too. There is something inside each of us that is somewhat unique in a relative illusionary sense but that we all have our own self transmitter and if we connect with that, within ourselves, which seems to be slightly different, but if we really find that particular thing in our individual selves there is something guiding us, that we can submit to.

R: That sort of becomes a little complicated! There is one Self and all this is the Self and I am That. So it's not really different for everybody. The same Self is true for all people

S: The same Self?

R: See we are going to complicate things. Just realize 'I Am That' and end it. If everyday you can say to yourself: "I-I" "I-I", and use that as a mantra that will suffice, because "I" is the first name of God, and when you say "I-I" you are declaring the truth about yourself, so try that.

There is no need to get technical, it's very simple. You are not the body, you are the Self: I am that I am, Pure Consciousness... That's your real nature, focus on that, and forget about everything else.

Again, it's difficult for Westerners to comprehend this because they say: But what about my work? What about my family? What about this? What about that? Everything will be taken care off. You will never get to the point when you want to run away and live in a cave. You will go on just like you are going on, only you will know yourself and you will be happy and peaceful all the time. You will have a feeling of immortality. A feeling of divinity, joy, bliss, happiness, and you will act out of that.

So if you want to bring peace to this world, do not change anybody or anything. Discover

who you are and that becomes the omnipresent. Look at all the peace groups we've had since time immemorial... What has it done for us? Things appear to become relatively worse! That's not the answer, trying to make people peaceful. The answer again is to discover your true reality, discover yourself, and you'll have peace.

You have to develop loving kindness and humility in this world. I am not referring to the fact that you should become a doormat for people to step on. You have to put on an act sometimes. Imagine yourself as being an actor or an actress and that's how you act in the world.

That reminds me of the story of a little village where there lived a gigantic snake who used to eat all the children and the parents were so worried that they never let the children go out to play. One day the word got out that a great yogi, a great master, with all kinds of supernatural powers was coming through the village.

The fathers of the village approached him and said: "Master, please help us, the snake is eating our children, what should we do?"

The Master said: "I'll take care of it."

He went to the snake's lair, (he spoke snake language) and he said: "Snake, come out" and the snake did. He rebuffed the snake saying: "I don't want to catch you eating these children again. Leave them alone, do you hear?" And the snake could do nothing but obey him. She said: "Yes Master." The Master left.

Six months passed and the Master was walking through that same town again. He saw all the children playing peacefully, and then he saw a crowd of children. He went over to see what was the matter, and there in the middle of the crowd was the snake nearly dead. The kids threw stones at it and the snake didn't respond. The kids kicked it, the snake didn't do anything. It was half dead.

The Master chased the kids away and said: "Snake, what's the matter with you? Why do you let the kids do this to you?" And the snake said: "But Master you told me not to do anything!"

The Master said: "You stupid snake, I told you not to bite, but I didn't tell you not to hiss!"

And so it is with us: Sometimes you have to act accordingly. For instance, when you are bringing up children, sometimes you have to scream a little, do certain things, act a certain way, but you should never lose the fact of who you are. Always remember your real nature and always remember you are putting out an act. Therefore when I tell you to have a consciousness and loving kindness and humility, I don't mean for you to become a doormat for people, but to act accordingly. Remembering it's only an act and it will pass.

Any questions about that?

S: Well, that's what I feel like I am doing, is acting.

R: As long as you are aware that you are acting you'll be at peace.

S: Yes and if I am really aware of acting, I am OK, but not really putting on a show...

R: Do not get caught up in it. As long as you are aware of yourself, you'll not hurt anybody else, you'll hiss. Feel free to talk about anything if you like talking...

S: How does one understand that they are not being the doer, that they are somehow accomplishing the practice but not being the doer?

R: Simply by enquiring: "Who am I?", "To whom does the I come ?", "From whence comes the I?". When you follow the 'I', the doer-ship disappears and your Self emerges. Through Self-Enquiry you get rid of the idea that you are the doer.

S: And until then?

R: Until then, do the best you can! (laughs) Practice Self-Enquiry but do the best you can otherwise, make every point of your life Self-Enquiry, all during the day. As soon as you get hit by a question of some kind, or some kind of feeling or mood, ask the question to yourself: "To whom does this come?"

S: You could practice Self-Enquiry or you could practice 'surrender' also? Does it matter if you go back and forth?

R: It doesn't matter at all as long as it helps you. Surrender is when you say to yourself: "Not my will but thine" And you totally give up living your own life. That's not as easy as you think.

S: Isn't saying "I am not the doer" surrender?

R: In a way it is, yes.

S: Is it the same as the popular expression: "Let go and let God"? Is that surrender?

R: Yes it is, but it's easier said than done and because it means you really have to let go of everything, everything. You no longer have a life of your own. Everything is given up to God.

S: When you are confronted with certain circumstances in your life and you are trying to deal with that circumstance; one way to deal with it would be with Self-Enquiry "To whom does this come." Another method if you find that may not be effective, is to say: "I am not the doer, not my will but thine".

R: Or you can use just ordinary language. You can say: "Take it God, take it". And feel the sense of release, a sense of peace. That's not your problem but God's.

S: The concept of everything being predestined, more or less is the same thing, isn't it?

R: Yes, yet if you can grasp that, go back to God and surrender to God. Whatever is easier for you.

S: But one might say and change a little relatively in the mind and think that's God's will has already been decided.

R: You can also think that God's will is decided and you have to suffer, and that's not right. You have to watch what you're doing. I recall in the Old Testament when I read it years ago, I forgot where in Chronicles or somewhere... It says: "The battle is not yours but God's. Set yourself, stand still, and see the salvation of The Lord". It's the same thing we are talking about: Become still, become quiet.

S: Should one still do action?

R: Whatever you have to do you are going to do. It will happen by itself. You have nothing to do with it.

S: What if one finds no action happening?

R: Then that's what you are suppose to do at the moment.

S: And if it continues for what seems to be long periods? (laughs)

R: That's suppose to happen. You have absolutely nothing to do with that. Take yourself away from that.

S: Because it's a dream...

R: Your body is going to go through whatever it has to go through. But it has nothing to do with you.

S: I think sometimes there is confusion when you say: "You are not the doer". People think that means that they can just sit and life will happen to them.

R: They won't be able to. Even if they try to sit, they won't be able to. Unless you are suppose to. Everything is planned. You have nothing to worry about, **BE HAPPY**.

S: If someone has mental anguish, yet they may think: "This is predestined" or "I am not the doer" or in a sense they may accept that... You see what I'm saying...?

R: Sure, the way they handle that is you don't fret over it, or concern yourself, you simply ask yourself: "To whom do these feelings come? Who is feeling this way?" And it will go away. The feelings will leave you and you'll be happy.

S: One may think, say for instance, if you think: "I am not the doer" yet this comes to you, you may think: Well I am suppose to experience this.

R: Not if you are practicing Self-Enquiry.

S: Right, so that's why there is a difference between thinking "you are not the doer" and thinking "everything is preordained" therefore I suppose, to feel anguish, or doing Self-Enquiry which cuts through...

R: See, everything is preordained. In other words, if you are supposed to get hit by a car and have your legs amputated, that's going to happen no matter how you try to stop it, but if you are a Jnani and you're practicing Self-Enquiry it won't matter because that's not where you are at; you are no longer body-conscious, and you see it completely different. You would see a different world: You see wholeness, completeness, and it won't bother you.

S: What about the ajnani?

R: Then you suffer! That's why the solution for the world is not to react to any condition, but to practice Enquiry and ask: "To whom does this come?", that's the freedom you have. As a matter of fact, that's the only freedom you've got. Not to react to any condition but to turn within. That's the freedom you've got.

S: Since not reacting is so difficult on the earth plane at least, is the next step to say: Who is reacting?

R: You can say that too if it helps you, but if you practice beforehand, then if there is a war, and everything gets bombed, you won't be affected. In other words, don't wait until the last minute.

S: Well, true, but say something catastrophic happens or appears to happen to you and you just can't seem to bodily not react, then the next solution I guess would be to say: "Who is reacting?" or "To whom does this come?"

R: You can say that or you can practice mindfulness and become the witness to the situation. You do whatever you have to do.

S: Robert, I've been thinking about my own experience here, and it seems to me that since I've been coming to you, my mind is more active and not less active. (laughs)

R: Is it good for you? Do you find that you're happier?

S: It is both, it is both good and bad. I can't say it's one or the other. But this is the way I thought about it: Years ago I read a book called "Exodus & Kabbalah, a marvelous book, and this author says that if he reads the tales of exodus as symbols, as a metaphor, when the Israelites tried to leave Egypt as he sees it, they were held by the body who is Pharaoh. And I thought: As I try to still the mind, the mind will use every cunning and every bit of power that it has, that's why it's more of an intense experience since I've been coming here.

R: The reason I asked you if you were happier is because sometimes it's not the mind any longer, you think it's the mind, but it's your feeling of 'I' that's doing that for you, it should make you happier. Give you a sense of peace.

S: You mean the 'I' would take delight in more mind activity, the true 'I', the real Self?

R: You don't become passive, that's a good point. Many people think when you become Self-Realized, you become passive, you just sit, like me. (laughs)

On the contrary, you do things better. It all depends on your bodily Karma, what you are going to do will be done, so why worry about it?

S: Didn't you say Robert, that it's the stillness or the space between the thoughts that we are seeking?

R: Yes, think of the thought between words. That's your real Self. Space is your real nature. Consciousness is space, therefore when there is space in your mind, there is Consciousness and that only happens when you become quiet and still. Therefore all methods, yoga, Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Ashtang Yoga; all these yogas are simply to quiet your mind, but they take the long way around. Here we have no intermediates. That's why this is called the direct path. There is no fooling around! You go directly to go, you don't stop.

S: Do you have a name for this path? Is this Buddhism?

R: No, it's called Jnana Marga, the path of wisdom.

S: But it's not different from what Ramana Maharshi taught, right?

R: It's the same thing.

S: Can Jnana in addition to wisdom mean knowledge? And Marga means path?

R: Yes, and Self-Enquiry is Vichara.

S: Well, Vedanta is the same too?

R: In a way Advaita Vedanta is the same. It makes no difference what you call it, do it! It is all the same thing.

S: So, the knowledge we are referring to, is the knowledge of the Self, right?

R: Yes. If you discover yourself you'll know everything else. That's the only knowledge you really need. When I was in Ramana Ashram for the last time, I met a judge, an Indian, and he said he never went to school, but since he was 8 years old he has been practicing Jnana-Marga, Self-Enquiry, and when he was 28 he took the Bar exam in India and passed without any training and with this he became a judge 10 years later.

So it shows you when you know yourself you know everything else, or again your body is going to do whatever it has to do. There is a reason why your body came to this earth. It's going to accomplish the mission and you have absolutely nothing to do with it.

S: Your body's mission?

R: I don't have any body.

S: What your body is going to do tomorrow?

R: I have no idea.

S: So there is not such a thing as a mission that was not accomplished?

R: No. The mission is for the ajnani. They see a mission. But for the Jnani there is no mission.

S: But your body whatever it's here to do, will do whatever it was here to do no matter what.

R: That's how you see it, but in reality nobody is doing anything... Look at everything you do as an optical illusion, the appearance is there. I guess the example I can give is that when some of these great masters such as Ramana Maharshi for instance would die of a horrible case of cancer, but He was laughing all the way, because He didn't see it like that. His disciples did and they were worried, but He did not see that at all, for He realized that there is nobody to die, because nobody exists, NOBODY EXISTS, for there is nobody to die.

S: How did He perceive the pain of the cancer?

R: He didn't.

S: There is no pain?

R: He claimed it was very slight , like a bee sting. They gave him operations without any anesthetic. Try not to think of your body too much. Just take proper care of it. Exercise it a little, eat the right foods, give it a good kick when it doesn't behave. Treat it like you treat a dog, your pet, but don't make too much of it. Ramakrishna used to call it his buddy "his donkey" and when it didn't behaved he slapped it, "behave!"

Intermission & Reading from The Tripura Rahasya

R: So again to get rid of your problems and your faults and everything else, by searching for yourself and in that searching get rid of everything because all these things are attached to the 'I'. When the 'I' goes, everything else goes with it and you become free. The point of these lessons is: Never try to heal a problem at the level of the problem. It cannot be done.

It appears as if it can be done. For instance if somebody owes you money and you sue him in Court, you may win the case and get back your money, but that's at the level of the problem.

But then you'll find that somebody else gets money from you some other way and never stops until you find out: "To whom it comes?". When you find out: "To whom the trouble occurs, who has this problem?" everything disappears and you are healed.

S: Would you said that applies to everything, including illnesses of the body?

R: Everything.

S: You would ask: "To whom does this illness come?" And the answer would be: "The body is non-existent?"

R: Exactly, so you become free.

S: Right! Free as opposed to necessarily cured?

R: Yes but who is not cured? It is a completely new perspective.

S: So, Self-Realization could be considered Self-Liberation, right?

R: Same thing, yes...

So let's practice a form of meditation. Just stay the way you are... Become still... You should do this at home. Close your eyes to remove obstructions... First you focus your attention on your breathing and sort of emphasize your breath...

-Students practice the I AM meditation-

Do not underestimate this kind of meditation. It's very powerful and will bring you to total peace.

Thank you for coming, it has been nice being with you...

Remember to love yourself, to worship yourself, to pray to yourself, to bow to yourself, because God dwells in You as You,

Peace!

Dialogue 6

Understanding the Divine Dream of Life

What you do to anybody else, you are doing to yourself
If you hurt somebody, you are hurting yourself.

What your body does is karmic.

There is a Great Compassion, there is a deeper Wisdom

A deeper knowledge.

Hold on.

You will Awaken soon.

Turn within and you will become liberated,

Because it is all a dream.

Topics

Death and Reincarnation

You are Dreaming a Dream of Life

Identify with the Real, not the False

How does a Jnani think?

The Importance of Compassion.

The Parable of the Zen monk.

October 18, 1990

R: I always take my dog for a walk in the morning and I go to the park, where I meet interesting people. There's a little old lady who walks in the park with me every once in a while. She is very spiritually inclined, and we have discussions. This morning she asked me a very interesting question; we will focus on that.

She asked me: "Robert, you say that the world is phenomena or transitory and in continuous change, change, change. And you also say that Consciousness is Reality, the substratum of existence. Now, we can confirm that the world is changing because we can see it, but how can we confirm Consciousness? How do we know that it is unchanging?"

And I thought it was a very interesting question: Now, you know that you exist, don't you? Everyone is aware of their own existence. When you go to sleep, and you are in the state of deep sleep, you still exist, but the world does not. And as far as you are concerned, the world only exists when you are awake. But once you go to sleep, the world no longer exists for you, and you are in a state of dreamless sleep. The state of dreamless sleep is like Jnana, Self Realization, except you have consciousness. But there is no denying that you exist, for when you wake up you say: "I slept well."

The state of dreamless sleep is like a person who died. It gives you an idea of what happens to you when you die, so to speak. You are in a state of dreamless sleep, and you usually stay like that for about two to four hundred years, earth time, before you do anything else. So the first state of consciousness is dreamless sleep, and you exist in dreamless sleep.

And you also exist when you dream. Take a look at your dreams. A person dreams he is married, and his wife has cancer. She is dying of cancer. And they both come to see me. He says: "What should we do? My wife has had ten operations, and is dying of cancer."

And I say: "The only proper thing to do is turn within, and not react to it, because everything is determined before birth."

They look at me and say: "That's not a practical answer; we want to hear something practical."

And I say: "That's the best I can do. It's a dream. Hold on. You will awaken soon." But that's not good enough for them. They are caught up in a dream.

Now remember, you are dreaming the dream, everything is going on in the dream. In your dream there is a sky, there are stars, there is a moon, there are people. Just like the world. And the dream seems to be external from you, but if you investigate, you see the dream is all taking place in your mind. While you are dreaming you still exist as the dreamer.

And in the dream somebody comes to you and tells you: "Look there is going to be a recession. There is going to be a failure of the banks." And you've got money tied up in stocks and bonds, IRA accounts, and everything else. Everything is going down. You ask: "What should I do?"

You both decide, "Let's go see Robert." So you come to see me, and I say: "Well you can do two things, you can take your money and we'll build a large ashram and help others see the truth that it's only a dream. Or give everything away to the poor, to the homeless, and you won't have any problems."

So they both say: "What, are you crazy?"

That is reminiscent of Jesus. If you recall the story of when the rich man came to him. He probably was a Pharisee, and very wealthy. He was embarrassed to go listen to Jesus because his kind never heard anything like that. They never went out; they were snobs. He sneaked out one dark night, and he came to Jesus and said: "Master what should I do to enter the kingdom of heaven?" (Entering the kingdom of heaven simply means, to be Self Realized.) And if you recall, Jesus said: "Give all your worldly goods to the poor, and follow me." This person couldn't handle that and left. And that was the end of that.

So we go back to the dream, and we say to both people: "This is only a dream, can't you see? Do not take it so seriously." They both leave.

Then somebody else comes to me in a dream, and he says: "Robert, I've got a lot of anger in me. I do not trust anybody. I have no friends. I feel inferior and have low self esteem. What should I do?"

And I say: "Turn within, and you will become free and liberated, because it's all a dream."

And he says: "I can't do that, I want a practical answer. I guess you can't give me a practical answer." And he goes away.

So you're here having a dream all this time, but then you wake up, and it's all gone. It never happened. Your wife never had cancer. There never was a recession. And you were never angry. But you still existed while you were having a dream.

So now you existed during dreamless sleep, and you existed during the dream, and now you are awake, and you still exist. So you see the part of you that exists is permanent, it is the "I AM", the Self. It is Consciousness. Everything else is illusory; it comes and goes. It is always changing, changing, changing. You are real, what you appear to be, is false.

Identify with the real, not with the false. Do not accept anything you see as reality. The only freedom you've got is to turn within, and not react to any condition, and you will be safe. For just like in the dream one day you will awaken from this dream, for this is also a dream, and you will be free.

So let's talk about you. Look at all the so called problems you think you have. Where do they come from? How do they get there? Why do you become upset over them? Think of all the possessions you are afraid to lose. Think of all the sickness you think you are going to catch, or that you think you have. You look at the world, and you become upset because you don't like what you see.

You have to ask yourself: "For whom is the world? For whom are these problems? For whom is the anger? Am I really the doer? Am I the body? Am I the mind? What am I?" Ask yourself...

Now how does a Jnani think? I can tell you. Say there is a man; he's a Jnani; he's the manager of a bank. He's got two sons that he loves dearly. One day the two sons are going to New York by plane, and the plane crashes. Both sons die. He takes care of the funeral arrangements, goes to the burial, and when it's all over goes back to work like nothing happened. His wife and his friends and relatives approach him, and they look at him and say: "You heartless bastard, how can you treat your children like that? They loved you so much, and you loved them! You don't seem to care that they died. You never shed a tear. You were not upset at the funeral. How can you be like that?"

And he smiled and said, "Sit down with me, let me explain: A day prior to the death I had a dream, and in that dream, I was a king, and married a beautiful princess. We had six lovely sons. I used to go hunting with them, and fishing, and we truly loved each other. Then one day there was a hurricane, and all six of my sons got killed. But then I woke up! So my question is to you: For whom shall I mourn? For the two children who were killed in this dream, or for the six sons that were killed in the last dream?"

This is how a Jnani sees things.

What do you think of that? It had nothing to do with being heartless. It had nothing to do with not having compassion. There is a great compassion, but there is a deeper wisdom, a deeper knowledge. There is no such thing as birth, and there is no such thing as death. Nobody is born, no one dies, and no one prevails in between. Nothing as it appears, exists. Only the Self exists. And all this is the Self, and I am That.

You are Absolute Reality, Ultimate Oneness. You are Consciousness, Emptiness, Satchitananda. That is your true nature. Why not abide in it, and be free. Why think about other things? Even while I am talking to you, some of you are thinking of other things; you can't help it; it's force of habit.

Empty your minds. Become still, and everything will happen of its own accord. There is really nothing you have to do, just be still. Be still and know that I am God. I am as the Self. The Self is Omnipresence. This means that everyone, everything, both sentient and insentient is God, or Consciousness. Accept that and be free.

Why do you think of other things? Why concern yourself with your body? Or your mind? Or the world? Why bother with yourself with trying to solve problems. This doesn't mean that you are going to do nothing, for as I have told you so often, your body is going to

perform the acts it came here to do. If you are meant to be an accountant, you are going to be an accountant, if you are meant to be a preacher, you'll be a preacher. If you are meant to be a homeless person, you will be a homeless person. But you have absolutely nothing to do with it. For you are Para-Brahman, Absolute Reality, and you have absolutely nothing to do with the workings of your body or your mind.

Allow your mind to say and think the way it will, only don't identify with it. Allow your body to do what it must, but do not react to it. Everything will happen of its own accord. When you allow your mind to think of its own accord, the thoughts begin to dissipate, and soon you have Empty Mind. Empty Mind is Consciousness, Realization. That's all you have to do: Have an empty mind.

But as long as you believe, "I am the doer", and you try and you force yourself to have an empty mind, you never will, because the forcing makes the mind stronger. Rather, observe your thoughts, watch your mind thinking, and leave it alone. Do not identify with your thoughts, or with your body. For in reality there is no body and there are no thoughts, for there is only the Self, and you are That.

Pause. . .

All is well, and everything is unfolding as it should. There are no mistakes. None have ever been made, none are being made, and none will ever be made. It's all perception, it's how you perceive things. For instance, when you look at me what do you see? If I ask each one of you I get seven, eight, nine different answers, but the truth is you are seeing yourself. I am simply a mirror for your own reflection, but I am a self-contained mirror.

So all this is taking place as an image on myself. All of life's experiences are images on the screen of eternity. The screen is for real, the images change. Consciousness is the screen. When you identify with Consciousness you become Consciousness. When you identify with the image you enhance the image, and you worry and you fret and you fear and you have all sorts of experiences.

As soon as you begin to identify with Reality, with Consciousness, all fear leaves you, all doubt leaves you, all false thinking leaves you, and you become free. But that's the only free choice you get. Everything else has been preordained.

The free choice again is: With what am I going to identify? With the image or the screen? If you identify with Consciousness you are no longer reacting to conditions, because you understand that all things are for a short time only, then they disappear. Consequently nothing will irritate you, nothing will upset you, nothing will bother you for you will know it is only an image and will soon disappear.

Just like this planet which has been here for billions of years. There have been civilizations on this planet for billions of years, and they come and go. We have had civilizations on this planet that surpassed our existence today. They are all gone. No trace. As a matter of fact, a couple of years ago there were some findings in Egypt of a city that was buried about 5,000 years ago.

The only thing left is a sign. They deciphered the sign and it said:

"My name is King so-and so, and this is my city that will last forever."

So today we think we are going to make this a better world in which to live, and we are going to save the world and so on. The world has its own collective karma. It's going through a phase. Your job is to save yourself. If you find yourself in a burning building, you do not stop to admire the pictures on the wall, you get out of the building as fast as you can. So, when you know you have a short time in this existence you do not stop to play the games of life, you try to find yourself and become free as fast as you can.

R: Any questions? You look like you are dying! It's not that bad... You are already dead!

S: Perhaps you could say something about compassion. Over at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital there is a dear friend who is suffering, and I would like to see him soon. I feel a natural concern and compassion for his suffering, and I don't know what to say or do, other than to be with him.

R: You automatically have compassion, that's very good. By all means you should help each other with great compassion. And you should also be aware of the truth, that there is no suffering and there is no death, but of course you can't tell him that because he is really suffering. Therefore you should do your best to help him while you can, and have great compassion for him... Remember again, that what you are, what you do, is all preordained anyway. If you are going to have compassion, you will. What I am saying is not to worry about it, just do what you have to do.

Hold on to the truth, realize the truth. He is not the body, I am not the body. This is a dream, but it appears real. But again don't tell him that. He is suffering and you have to help him. By all means you should have compassion. Before you become Self-Realized the greater the compassion you have, the better. But you don't shout it from the roof tops: "I'm compassionate, I'm a loving person." You keep quiet most of the time. By your actions people know what you are.

S: You see all things as yourself, and therefore you are compassionate for yourself

R: There is only one Self, and what you feel toward somebody else, you are feeling toward yourself. It becomes automatic. What you do to anybody else you are doing to yourself. If you help somebody else, you are helping yourself, and if you hurt somebody else you are hurting yourself. What your body does is karmic. It has nothing to do with you. There are many ways to look at this. When you realize, "I am not the body, I am not the mind, and I am not the doer", then you are safe. But as long as you think you are doing something kind for somebody, then you want a reward, you want recognition. But when you know there is only one Self, you are automatically kind to everybody. And virtue has its own reward. So by being kind, compassionate, even though you may not become Self-Realized in this life, you will be born to better parents, spiritual parents. Then you will be a step ahead of the game of life next time around, if there is such a thing."

S: What if you don't believe that, Robert?

R: That's fine. Then it has nothing to do with you.

S: So actually the belief in the area of reincarnation isn't too much different from the theories of other beliefs, say, evolution?

R: All beliefs are the same. They are all false.

S: Then one could say: "Well if I don't make it in this lifetime, I'll make it in the next lifetime." But what if you don't subscribe to that belief?

R: You have no choice. What's supposed to happen is going to happen. Then again the only choice you have is not to react, and to turn within and become free. Everything else will take care of itself.

S: Does the ego have that choice, to turn within?

R: No, you do. You voluntarily turn within. Ask yourself: "To whom comes the ego?" And you will find out the ego has never existed. It is nonexistent.

S: But it's an appearance; it appears as though it were there.

R: The sky appears blue, but upon investigation you will find there is no sky and no blue. Upon investigation you will realize: "I am not the body, I am not the ego." And you'll just disappear.

S: The choice is only apparent too. By looking back we say: "I made a choice. There is really no one who made a choice, it just occurred.

R: It seems to occur, but nothing ever happens at all. It doesn't even occur, it appears to occur, and you appear to become Self-Realized but there is no one to become Self-Realized, and Self-Realization doesn't exist, just words.

S: So Self-Realization is the erasing of me as a separate entity.

R: Yes, exactly. It's also the erasing of the idea, "I'm Self-Realized." There is only Silence. It's beyond explanation. It's a mystery. The finite can never comprehend the infinite. There are no words to explain. All is well. Consciousness is Bliss, Love, not as we know it, but a million times stronger than what we think it is. And that's our real nature. Be your Self.

You see, this is why I usually have nothing to say, because what can I say? New people come here and they expect a profound lecture... About what...? Some people will let me talk for hour after hour, yet when they walk out the door they forget everything. So it's not really a lecture you want to hear. You just want to be your Self and I am simply a mirror for yourself.

S: Why do we forget, Robert? Why do we need to use you as a mirror? Why can't we use ourselves as a mirror?

R: You can if you try hard enough, but sometimes karmically, you are drawn to a book, a tree, or a teacher, or a lake, or something that can open your heart so you can see yourself for real, who you really are. So I'm like a catalyst for you to open your heart and jump inside, and become free.

S: Why is it that as soon as we walk out the door we forget?

R: Because of samskaras, past tendencies from many lifetimes. Maya is very strong, very powerful, very realistic. And it grabs us, some worse than others. But if you keep coming to Satsang, if you keep asking yourself the question: "Where does the I come from?" and abiding in the I, your samskaras become weaker and weaker, and the I becomes stronger and stronger, until one day you will disappear, and you will be your Self.

S: It sure is hard to get there.

R: For whom? Why do you keep identifying with the body...? It begins in the morning when you wake up. As soon as you open your eyes have the realization: "I slept, I dreamt and now I am awake." Who is the 'I' that slept...? Who is the 'I' that dreamt...?

When I say: "This is my finger, this is my nose," who is the 'my'? To whom am I referring? It's like there are two of us. "This is my foot". Who is the 'my'? Find out! Ask yourself and you will realize there have been two of you. There is your Self and your body to whom you are referring. But when you realize "I slept, I dreamt, and I am awake," This will give you a clue to your existence, and will get you started.

And then you begin to search: "What is the source of I? Where did it come from?" You never answer those questions. You just ask. Because if you answer, its from the view point of the ego. Therefore you never answer the question, you simply abide in the I. You follow the I to its source. All of your problems are attached to the I, and when the I disappears in the source, so do all your problems. They go with it, and so will your question. They will all disappear, what do you think of that Henry?

H: It's true!

R: See, someone agrees with me!

S: Robert, when we are here in Satsang and you give examples like this, it seems so clear to see who is involved in waking up, who woke up, "This is my finger, this is my foot!" It seems so, so clear. But when I am alone, in my own awareness it seems fuzzy.

R: This is true for most people. Then, again it is because of past samskaras, past tendencies from previous lives, they pull you back into Maya. But you have to keep turning around, and keep practicing. The more you practice the less fuzzy it will become, until you become free, that's all...

Convert yourself to spiritual life, think about it all day long. Before you go to sleep, and when you wake up.

S: Is practice then mainly a matter of paying attention?

R: Paying attention to yourself, yes, your enquiry. For instance, when you wake up in the morning if you are filled with fears, collective fears, about the world situation, about what's going on in Iraq... Don't follow the train of thought, but rather ask yourself: "To whom does this fear come?" and it will go away. When you follow through, the answer will be: "It comes to me; I feel it." Then you further enquiry: "Who is the source of I? Where did the I come from that feels the fear...?" You will feel better right away... The fear will go away.

S: What if you are in a position where the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. You say to yourself: "I will practice this discipline, I will simplify my life." Yet when the situations come up in your life, you forget. Is that karmic? Is it just a matter of time?

R: Its all karmic.

S: So even if you have a longing within to simplify your life, still things come up?

R: Things can always come up. They are like pests. Do not react to them. Turn away from them. Simply abide in the truth. Ask yourself: "To whom is the flesh weak? Who has that thought?" Keep turning back again and again to the I. Keep abiding in the I, and you will become stronger and stronger. All you have to do is keep turning back again and again. Have patience. It took you thousands of incarnations to be the way you are, so have patience. Continue to practice. Something has to give, sooner or later. How are you feeling from the first day I met you until now? Is there any difference in you?

S: Oh, I'm reborn!

R: So what are you complaining about? (laughter) Continue what you are doing. Have patience. I'll tell you the story of a Zen Buddhist monk, if you haven't heard it:

There was once this Zen Buddhist monk sitting on the side of the road meditating. He apparently had been meditating for years and years, because his hair had grown down to the floor, and birds had made a nest in his hair.

Intuitively he felt somebody walking by, who was a Self-Realized being. So he opened one eye to look. And he saw this old wise man walking by. He said: "Holy Father, where are you going?" And the old man said: "I'm going to see God."

The Buddhist Monk said: "Please, intervene for me and ask God how much longer I've got to sit this way and meditate before I get liberated?"

So the old man said: "I will my son."

The old man continued walking. A mile down the path there was another Zen Buddhist Monk. Same story, he apparently had been sitting here for many years, because his hair had grown down to the ground, and birds had made a nest in his hair. And he, too, felt somebody coming and knew it was a realized being. He opened his eyes and said: "Where are you going, Father?"

And the old man said: "I'm going to see God." So this monk asked the same question, "Would you please ask God for me how much longer I have to sit like this and meditate before I become liberated?" And the old man said: "I will my son", and he continued walking.

Six months passed. The old man was walking down the road again. The first Zen Buddhist Monk intuitively felt him coming, and he opened his eyes and said: "Father, have you seen God?"

The wise man said: "Yes."

"And did you ask him for me how much longer I have to sit like this and meditate before I become free?"

The old man said: "Yes I did my son."

"Tell me, tell me, what did he say?"

The old man pointed to a tree, and he said: "Do you see all the leaves on the tree? God told me you have to reincarnate as many times as there are leaves on this tree before you can become free."

And the Monk got mad and said: "What? After all the years I've spent meditating? What nonsense! This is all a waste of time! I'm through with this!" And he got up, brushed himself off and headed toward town to get drunk.

Later the old man passed the other monk, who also felt him coming, and opened his eyes and said: "Father, did you intervene for me? Did you ask God how much longer I have to sit like this before I become free?"

The old man said: "Yes my son, I did." He again pointed to a tree and said, "God told me that you have to reincarnate as many times as there are leaves on this tree."

But this other monk became happy, and sang for joy, and he said: "Thank you, thank you! It could have been two trees or three trees or five trees, but its only one! Thank God!" And he walked away, happy.

So that's the difference between us. We have to have patience. We are all hell-bound for heaven. Have no fear, we will get there.

Try to remember the main points: Birth and death are like going to sleep at night and waking up in the morning. When you go to sleep at night, you die. When you dream, it is

like being on the astral plane for a vacation. And when you wake up in the morning, its like being born. Through all those states of consciousness somebody exists, and that somebody is none other than you. In other words you are aware of dreaming. You are aware of sleeping. You are aware of waking up. You are aware of dying, and you are aware of being reborn. Somebody is watching all this. That's you. You exist through all those states. Abide in your existence, not in the states. Ignore those states of consciousness. Abide in the reality, which is called Absolute Awareness, Consciousness. Abide in that and be free.

Is there anything you would like to talk about? Feel free at this time to talk anything you would like... Don't be ashamed... I'm not any different from anybody else. Never look at me as anybody special.

S: Robert, have you always had this Realization?

R: I guess. There is no telling. People have asked me about this so I will tell you a little bit about it even when I hate to talk about myself...

When I was a small child in a crib, back when I was about 4 or 5 years old, a little man used to be on the other side of the crib, about this big: (Robert describes a small man about 2 feet tall). With a long beard and white hair... He would be talking to me from the edge of the crib. Of course being a baby, I didn't know what he was talking about. As far as I know he was talking to me ever since I was born. He was talking gibberish and I couldn't understand what he was saying.

When I was 5 or 6 years old I used to believe everybody had that experience and then I told my parents about it. They thought I was playing games. I told my friends and they laughed at me. So I stopped saying anything about it. The visitations stopped when I was about seven. My father died. And all of a sudden, the little man stopped coming to me.

Then I asked my mother: "What am I doing here?, I don't belong here." I didn't understand what I was saying but I felt that I was out of place. My mother thought I was strange, and so did a lot of other people. She took me to the doctor, and the doctor told her it would go away. When I was going to school I never really fit in because I was always daydreaming. I had strange experiences. I used to sit in the class and all of a sudden I was swallowed up in Consciousness. I became Omnipresent. It was not out-of-body experiences. I just merged into Consciousness. I couldn't understand what happened.

Then when I was about 13 or 14 years old, I went to the library for a book report. I passed the philosophy section and saw a book on yoga masters. I didn't even know what that meant at the time. I opened a book to a page, and there was a picture of Ramana Maharshi. My hair stood on end, because there was the same person who appeared to me when I was a baby in my crib! Since then I have never been the same. So basically that's my upbringing.

S: That is what led you to Ramana Maharshi?

S: When you first saw Ramana Maharshi did he remind you of the person you had communication with as a baby?.

R: Definitely yes.

S: Did you speak of this later with him?

R: No, I never did. We just smiled at each other. I had some personal conversation with him, but even at the end of 1947 he was sick. He couldn't walk very well and had to be assisted by his devotees. He had a cane... he could hardly walk. I usually never go into these things, because, number one, it can't really help you, and... I forgot what number two is! (laughter)

S: Would I be correct to say that no one outside, by his grace or touch or shakti, can lift your consciousness beyond what you do with your own work?

R: To an extent. But some devotees who are ready, who are really up there to a certain extent a certain quietness, a certain touch, will get rid of the rest of their karma and set them free. It depends, even a hug...

S: This is the teacher's grace?

R: You can call it that, but the grace is always available. It's not the teacher's grace; the teacher doesn't own it.

S: It almost seems like it's more of the devotee's grace. In other words, it's the attitude or something that brings it out.

R: Yes, you could say that. Before I went to Yogananda, I was introduced to Joel Goldsmith. Does anyone know him? He was actually my first teacher. He explained to me what was going on within my feelings, because I used to think I was crazy.

Joel Goldsmith told me about Paramahansa Yogananda and gave me the book to read. Joel Goldsmith was a Christian mystic who has written about 12 books. They are available at the Bodhi Tree. The books are on mysticism, mostly based on Saint John. It is interesting...

S: About 4 or 5 years ago I had a client who was a schizophrenic, a well adjusted schizophrenic.

R: Like most of us.

S: I tried to get him to own his feelings, to recognize what was going on in his mind and so forth, as psychologists usually do, and after a while he converted me to spirituality!

He said to me: "I'm not doing any of this, God makes me do it". I was trying to get him to accept his individuality and responsibility, his function in life. He said: "I have no need for functioning". And I tried to convince him, but he would say: "Well, on one hand, there is your point of view", and he would tell me what it was. And on the other hand, there is my point of view." And he would tell me his point of view.

After I began reading Nisargadatta, I saw that his point of view was far more real than my point of view, and I began siding with him. I told him: "I understand completely where you are," and we parted friends. It was wonderful!

S: I've heard famous psychiatrists say: "Schizophrenics suffer from the truth. They have no defenses against the truth, and the truth prevents them from ever becoming a normal individual.

S2: So it doesn't mean they have two personalities?

S: It means that society has labeled that person because they have certain kinds of experiences. It means nothing.

R: You are right about that. When you label somebody, they believe they are that and they get worse... "Paranoid schizophrenic, that's me." Then you begin to act that way.

S: When you are doing intense sadhana, wouldn't you be aware of your own growth or the lack of it, and wouldn't you take care of your needs automatically?

R: Sometimes yes and sometimes no. It depends what's going on in your head. It's different for all people. The safest path is simply to ask yourself: "To whom do these emotions come...? Who's experiencing all this...? For whom is sadhana...? Who wants to go through all these things...? Ask yourself. Always argue with yourself... Who wants to do all these things...? Who's going through this sadhana...? And you will find out it is only for your ego, not for you.

S: After enquiring that way, then one becomes detached. Then one can choose.

R: No, there is nothing to choose because when you become that way you are abiding in the 'I' and when you abide in the 'I' there's nothing to choose. If you abide in the 'I' the right thing will happen. Right action will take place by itself, just by abiding in the 'I' and it's all good.

You cannot become insane by asking the question. It's only through other methods like intense pranayama for instance that could make you insane, if you don't have a competent teacher. Or practicing siddhi yoga, like Muktananda, that could drive you insane, because

the kundalini can wake up all of a sudden and drive you out of your mind. You have to be careful. That's why this path can only make you well (laughs). In the beginning this path is great psychotherapy because it gets rid of all your stuff and then brings you enlightenment...

So how can you lose? You can't lose with the stuff I use!! (laughs)

S: That could be a marketing slogan!

R: That's what asking the question shows you in the end: That there is no ego. There is no purpose for creation. There is no creation.

S: Which one is it?

R: Both.

S: Maybe that's the purpose of it: To realize there is no purpose.

R: Right.

S: The purpose of life, is to realize that there is no purpose to life?

R: That's the ego. Because you believe you are the body! As long as you believe you are the body there is an ego, mind, universe, god, world, reincarnation. The ego is to show you that everything you believe is attached to something. And we call it ego for want of a better word. But there really is no ego. But again, as long as you believe you are a body, then there is an ego. It all has to do with your belief of the body and the mind phenomena.

S: If one dissolves the ego and realizes the body to be Consciousness, Satchitananda, the body as the Self, and all other bodies as the Self, then the body is the Self!

R: Sure!

S: Is there a body then?

R: There is the Self! The appearance is like a body to you, but there is nobody, there is only the Self. Nobody home!

S: What do you think of scientists that have come up with the theory that DNA and genes determine our personality or ego?

R: Because they believe in the body. So you can work on the body for centuries and come up with all kinds of things and never get anywhere.

S: But are not the chromosomes the ones that carry all this...

R: Why are you concerned about chromosomes? Who cares about chromosomes? (laughs)

S: The Jnani realizes the body is an illusion, which he can't get rid of ?

R: What happens in some forms of Jnana enlightenment, the illusion of the body is there, but the Jnani knows that it is not. But the illusion still hangs on until death. In other words here's an illusion of a body.

I know I am not the body but there's still an illusion that appears as a body. So it's just like I am the screen in the movie and there's an image on the screen. I know I can't feel the image or touch the image or have anything to do with the image because I am the screen. But the image still appears. So this body still seems to appear. But it is not real.

S: Does it still appear to the Jnani?

R: As an image, not as reality. See the body appears to be real, but I don't identify with it, even though it appears to be real. That's why if I cut my finger, I hardly feel anything. I've got to be careful, because a cut, no matter how deep it is, I feel, may be, a little sting. But I hardly feel anything.

Dialogue 7

The Secret of Living Spontaneously

What does it mean to be yourself?

To live spontaneously.

Most of us live from the past, as you know,
and then we worry about what we are going to do in the future.

If you learn to forget about the past and the future

You are safe.

When you live spontaneously you have no time to think,

And that is when you become the witness,

Living spontaneously in a meditation.

Topics

On How to Live Spontaneously

Breaking the Cycle of Suffering

The Art of Spontaneous Living

Your True Nature is Happiness

November 1, 1990

R: Let me ask you a question. Where do you think you were, or what were you prior to consciousness? What do you think you were? Who can tell me? (Silence) In other words, before you came into this body, before you became conscious, what were you?

S: You mean prior to individual consciousness, to consciousness itself per se?

R: Both.

S: Is there any prior to consciousness?

R: Yes there is.

S: The Witness? The witnessing I perceive in dreams sometimes?

R: Not really.

S: Prior to consciousness, would that be consciousness at rest, no content?

R: Exactly. What were you prior to it?

S: There is no prior.

R: There's no prior? Are you sure?

S: Yes.

R: Any more bright answers? (laughter)

S: There can't be! It's absurd!

S2: Why can't there be, why just dismiss it entirely?

S: Because consciousness is fundamental. Consciousness is all. It's all that is. What can be prior to all that is?

R: Tell me.

S: Potential?

R: Any more bright answers? (laughter)

S: Anything that would be said would only be a concept and would be in phenomenality. It would miss the point entirely.

R: That is the answer. You got it. As long as you can describe it, it is not that. It is a mystery. It's beyond description. The finite can never comprehend the infinite. So, as long as you can describe it, you can talk about it, it is not that. This is something you should always remember.

So the answer is silence. That is the correct answer. You are space. And now you appear to be the image superimposed on space. Now you identify with the image. But prior to consciousness, you were not the space, really, nor the image. The reason I say you were not the space is because we can talk about it. You have a concept of space. And as long as you have a concept of space, it is not that.

The only way you can find out is by not saying anything. By catching yourself between thoughts. When you have a thought, and you're trying to figure out what it is, and when the thought stops, before your next thought enters, that's it. The space between thoughts is what we are talking about. So the thing to remember again, as long as you can talk about it, as long as you can describe it, as long as you can argue about it, as long as you stick up for your rights and say it's this or it's that, you are wrong. You're not really wrong, just on the wrong track. Because if you are wrong, then something is right. And nothing is right, so there is nothing wrong. It goes beyond duality concepts.

That's why I tell you to spend so much time alone, when you don't watch television, and you don't listen to the phone ring and where you can cut yourself off from the radio. Just sit and be yourself. Then you will experience pure being. For as long as you search, you'll never find it. After all, what are you searching for. You are searching for something you already are. That is why you can never find it. If you are not that, then you would search. But you are already that, so searching becomes fruitless.

What is that? That is the space between your atoms. Every sentient and insentient thing is composed of trillions of atoms, but the space in between is Consciousness. Again we use the word 'Consciousness' for want of a better word.

We have to function in the world. So don't walk around trying to be smart. Instead what we do is function in the world as ourselves. Be yourself. If you are yourself, then you're safe. In other words, do not try to be anything. Just be yourself.

What does it mean to be yourself? To live spontaneously. Most of us live from the past, as you know, and then we worry about what we're going to do in the future. If you learn to forget about the past and the future, you're safe. When you live spontaneously you have no time to think, and that's when you become the witness. Thoughts are simply about the past and the future. True? You want to act in the moment. When you're acting in the moment you can't think because you're acting.

Therefore, your thoughts are only on what you're doing and that stops other thoughts. Then you go on to the next thing. But you should not try to analyze the thing at all. Whether it'll work out, whether it's good or bad, whether you're making something out of it or not, whether it's in your favor or against you. All that's got to go.

I received a call from a lady in Santa Cruz the other day and she started to tell me about her marital problems. So I stopped her. I told her I didn't want to hear anything about any marital problems. Does she know who she is? That's all I care about. If she knows who she is, then she goes beyond marital problems. She goes beyond concepts, longings, wants, desires. She'll be safe.

For once you lift yourself up, nothing can touch you again. The world no longer has any power over you. The world only has power over you when you identify yourself as a body. If you identify yourself as a body, then the world becomes real, objects become real, situations become real, the universe becomes real, God becomes real, everything becomes real, and you live in duality.

So one day you suffer, the next day you're happy. Happiness leads to suffering, suffering leads to happiness. Of course, this is human unhappiness I'm talking about, human suffering. As soon as you learn to go beyond that, and again that happens by living spontaneously, all suffering ceases. After all, for who is the suffering? For the one who identifies with the thoughts.

As an example, somebody got fired from their job. They start to worry about that, and this leads to worrying about the future, because when you worry about the past, getting fired, you're going to start worrying and thinking: "How will I pay my rent next month, how will I buy my food?" and your mind loves that. It starts feeding you more. Pretty soon you start imagining yourself evicted from your house. Then you see yourself in the welfare lines, and you see yourself becoming a homeless person, and sure enough you do, because that's what you believe. That's where your mind is leading you.

As long as you feel you have a mind, it becomes very, very powerful. Then you can see that thoughts are things, for your thoughts will materialize in this world of effects with that which you believe is real. Subsequently, if you start worrying about your job being terminated, and you start worrying about food, and you start worrying about evictions and all that stuff, you're really saying to yourself mentally: "That's what I want to happen" and you always get what you want. You had better watch yourself.

The secret is not to change your thoughts, but to get rid of your thoughts completely. We're not trying to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts, for our positive thoughts lead to negative thoughts and our negative thoughts lead to positive thoughts. That's duality. We're trying to transcend the whole ball of wax, to go beyond, and that's what happens when you live spontaneously. It happens by itself.

Living spontaneously is a meditation. Do not concern yourself with the fruits of your efforts. Everything will take care of itself. What I mean by that is, if you're in a job for 24 years, do not concern yourself if you get terminated or you don't. That's not the point. The point is who do you think you are? Do you believe that you're that frail human being that's been terminated or that frail person who has emotional or marital problems, or that frail person who doesn't know if he's going to die or live? Forget about all these things, go beyond them. Identify with the absolute awareness. Identify with the total reality which we really are.

You do not identify with those things by affirming them. You identify with those things by what? By silence. You see the difference? There are many schools that tell you, change the negative into a positive, but that is based on the world of relativity. You'll have to experience both, and there will be no end to it. But when there's silence in the mind, that means you get rid of all concepts, of all desires, of all needs, of all wants, of all hurts. You become oblivious to everything.

Then the real Self begins to take over, which is you; and you'll automatically do or gravitate to the place where you have to be. It will all happen by itself, but don't think of that. Think of nothing. Learn how to quiet your mind. Learn how to make your mind quiescent like a motionless lake. A motionless lake can attract our image, reflect the sun, the stars, the moon, trees, grass. A lake that is noisy cannot reflect anything.

So, when you learn to quiet your mind you reflect yourself, and yourself is always harmony, always bliss, always Satchitananda, always the Absolute Reality, always Absolute Oneness. That's your real Self. That's who you really are. It's all up to you. What do you do with your life everyday? How do you live your life? This doesn't mean that you have to sit home and meditate all day long. It means you can go about your business. You can work. You can go to a movie. You can watch TV. You can do whatever you like, but never identify with the object! Never identify with what the body is doing.

Let the body do whatever it came here to do, but you keep the mind on yourself, on your heart, on the light, on Consciousness. Quiet your mind any way you want, whatever method you use. Become the witness of your thoughts. Use Atma-Vichara, Self-Enquiry. Whatever method you have to use, do it, but do it all day long. That's the secret, not just when you come here, not just an hour a day, but all during the day.

So, how would you handle that? If you go to your work and they terminate you? Instead of worrying, you would ask the question to yourself: "To whom is this happening? Who's going through this experience? (Long pause) I am." Hold onto the 'I' with all your might. Follow the 'I' to the source. Look at the 'I' as a thread that seems to be connected from the source to what you're thinking about. And all of your thoughts are attached to the 'I' thread. All of your fears, all of your frustrations, all of your desires, everything is attached to the 'I' thread, and as you hold onto it tight, as you follow it, follow it into the heart center, then it will just seem to disappear. The reason I say: "It will seem to disappear" is because it never existed to begin with. (Robert laughs) So it appears to disappear, but once that happens you're free and you will not be disturbed by any mortal condition, and you will be happy.

But when I say you'll be happy I am not referring to human happiness. I am referring to happy-happy, happy hour, really happy for no reason, again because your true nature is happiness, your true nature is bliss. When you get rid of the other stuff, your true nature shines forth effortlessly. That's why we call this the pathless path because there's really no path. There's only a quietness of the mind. Following the 'I' to the source, then all of a sudden you become Omnipresence, you become Omniscience, you become Omnipotence. Then you can say: "I Am That I Am," but there will be nobody left to say anything really. You will just bask in the sunshine of your love, of your happiness, of your bliss.

Dialogue 8

Are You Seeker, Disciple, or Devotee?

"A Seeker becomes fascinated by different teachings. He buys every book about that particular teaching. He becomes well read, but never has a spiritual experience. A Disciple stays with a Teacher a while, then they go to Another teacher, and then to another... And they go on like this from incarnation to incarnation.. The Devotee is completely different. The Devotee is oblivious to everything that is going on. He has only love and good feelings towards all. So it is the devotee who awakens faster than anybody else! I would rather have five devotees around me than ten thousand People who are Seekers."

Topics

Defining the Three Students
The Power of Free Will and Choice
Bhakta, Self Surrender and Atma-Vichara
Predetermination
Maya and Lila

SEEKER, DISCIPLE or DEVOTEE ?

Someone else called and asked me to explain; and I've done this before but we'll go into it again; what is the difference between a seeker, a disciple, and a devotee. We talked about it a couple of times, but some of you have been calling and asking about it, so we'll just touch on it again.

SEEKER: A seeker is a blessed person, who because of experiences in different lives, has been fortunate enough to begin searching for truth. A seeker spends many years, perhaps many incarnations, seeking truth. The mistake they make, is they go from teacher to teacher, from Hatha Yoga to Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga to Kundalini Yoga. They go from Christianity to Hinduism, from Hinduism to Buddhism. From Buddhism to Zen, from Zen to Tao. And the searcher keeps going from one to the other. The searcher has not yet practiced anything. They just listen at different meetings. They read book after book on all kinds of subjects. They become very intellectual as far as truth teachings are concerned, and are able to discuss anything under the sun. They can talk about everything. They can talk about all kinds of spiritual subjects. Yet, they have never had a spiritual experience. This can be dangerous if they do not find an efficient teacher who will explain to them what they are doing, for they can go on like that all their lives, and go from one life to the next, one life to the next, one live to the next..., they will remain a seeker because the path becomes interesting. You know what it's like? It's like a king has invited you to the kingdom to share it with him. And he lives on 200 acres of beautiful land. So you drive in the front gate and you're on the way to the king's house, but you see beautiful flowers, and you become fascinated. You forget about the king and get into agriculture and start planting new flowers. Then you remember the king again so you start driving. This time you see beautiful caves and rock formations and you become fascinated so you stop again, and get involved with rock formations and caves. You forget about the king. Years pass. You remember the king again, so you go forward. And this time you see dancing girls dancing in the flowers and you get fascinated with that. Again years pass. You never get to the king. If you got to the king, he would have shared the kingdom. That is what a seeker does. A seeker becomes fascinated by different teachings and buys every book about that particular teaching and becomes well-read, but never has a spiritual experience.

DISCIPLE: Now we come to the disciple or a seeker who has been touched by a teaching. The disciple discovers Zen and just loves it. But, instead of staying with one teacher, he goes from Zen teacher to Zen teacher. Not like the seeker who goes from one teacher to the other, at least the disciple is settled down and they stay with a teacher a while, then they go to another Zen teacher, and then to another Zen teacher. And they go on like this from incarnation to incarnation.

DEVOTEE: Now a devotee is completely different. A devotee has found the path they were looking for and the teacher they want. So they become the path. They become the teaching. They become the teacher. They take care of the particular path they are on. It becomes a reciprocal thing. A devotee realizes the teacher of their Zen path has given up everything to teach the path, so they take care of the teacher's needs and devote themselves to that path. What happens to that kind of devotee? Pretty soon they merge with the teacher's Consciousness, they become One. They become realized. That's the

basic difference between the seeker, the disciple, and the devotee. Any questions about anything?

S: Is there a choice for a seeker to be a disciple, or a disciple a devotee?

R: No, not really. You're going to do whatever you came here to do. But, the only choice you have in life is not to identify with the body. When you do not identify with the body, you will gravitate to where you are supposed to be, and everything will happen. Ultimately, we have no choice.

S: There is no 'me'.

R: Exactly. This is why I say, those of us who have come here, it is not by choice, it is no accident. You are here because that's where you are supposed to be, that's the way it is, and I am here because it's where I am supposed to be. I never chose to be a teacher. I never chose to be anything. But I am here and you are here. So what are we going to do about it? Why complain?

S: If there is no choice, then you also can not choose whether or not to identify with the body.

R: That's the only freedom you have.

S: Do you have that freedom?

R: You have that freedom.

S: But that is out and out choice.

R: That is the only choice you have.

S: I was under the impression that there was no choice whatever. Period!

R: There is no choice, period, except not to react to conditions, and not to identify with the body. If it were not for this, we would be automatons, but we are not. The awareness in us, the reality, makes us have this choice not to identify with the body or to react to conditions. Everything else is predetermined.

S: To the extent I don't believe that, then I have a 'me'.

R: No you don't... As long as you believe you have a 'me', you have a choice. In reality you don't have a 'me'. But if you were speaking from Reality, the question would be redundant. There would be no need for the question.

S: I don't understand.

R: As long as you believe you have a 'me', then you have a choice...

S: Choice as to whether I am a seeker or a disciple?

R: No. The choice is whether to identify with the body or not.

S: That, clearly I understand.

R: That is the only choice you have got.

S: I don't believe that.

R: You have the choice because you are a 'me'. You believe you are a 'me'. When you don't believe you are a 'me', and you are not a 'me', then nothing, that's it. Nobody to talk about a choice.

S: So the question is, according to how much I think I am a 'me', and I don't believe that things are predetermined. In other words, I seem to think or feel I have a choice if I want to be a disciple or a devotee or I'm going to go somewhere or not.

R: It appears that way, but again you are speaking from an ego viewpoint.

S: That is the 'me' that is blocking understanding?

R: (Robert sighs laughs) If you were not a 'me', there would be no one to ask the question. The question would not even come up. But as long as you are the 'me', then you think whether you have a choice or not. Just the thinking about it, shows you are a 'me'. You follow? So this is addressed to "me's". (All laugh)

S: I think what is arising with you and which bothered me for awhile is that Ramesh Balsekar teaches that all you need to do is to believe you are not a 'me'. The teachings themselves will perform their work even though you still feel like a 'me'. He says practice is unnecessary. There is no practice outside of listening to the teachings. He says you should believe you are Krishna and deny that you are Arjuna, even while you still feel you are Arjuna.

R: He has a point, to an extent. It is like a razor's edge. I don't like to say that, is that it gives new people license to do what they like, to become arrogant and belligerent, and to say: "I am total awareness, it makes no difference what I do. I can kill animals, I can do anything, nothing matters." I have seen many people with those attitudes who were just beginners. So you have to be careful.

That is why Ramana Maharshi was so wise. He taught two ways: One of Bhakta, Self Surrender, and one of Atma-Vichara. They are both correct.

S: If you have tamistic tendencies, Ramesh says that they will manifest no matter what you do. There is no choice.

R: This is true, so the secret is not to identify with the body, but to identify with the Self. That will take care of everything.

But to identify with the Self is sometimes not easy. So you have to practice certain disciplines or meditations, or surrendering yourself to God. This will make you humble, it will give you humility, and will automatically lead to Atma-Vichara, Self-Enquiry. Then everything will happen of its own accord. We have to be very careful, especially with Westerners, not to believe: "I am Consciousness" or "I am God" and "I am Ultimate Oneness." We realize that this is the ultimate truth about ourselves. But then watch yourself, watch your actions, see what you are really about. Don't use truth to cover up your weaknesses.

For example, if you were a drug user, it is true if you come to Satsang, and you understand reality, eventually you will stop using drugs. But in the meantime do the best you can, physically, mentally, and otherwise to stop the habit. It is preordained anyway, but do the best you can. As you follow the teachings, everything will take care of itself. What do you think of that?

S: Could it lead to a neurosis? (All laugh) You try the best you can to do something, and it is not preordained to happen, so you are constantly frustrated.

R: The only neurosis you have is that you believe that you are the body. When you take your mind off the body, then you will know what to do to stop the drug habit.

S: What if it is not preordained that you stop the drug habit?

R: The you won't do it. But, if you realize your choice is not to identify with the body, that feeling alone will cause something positive to happen.

I hate to use those words sometimes because you may say to yourself: "Well if it is preordained, I might as well enjoy it" and will continue to take drugs. You have to be careful with that. It is preordained to the extent that you identify with the situation. As soon as you start to identify with the Self, with Total Awareness, things begin to change. They have to.

S: That will happen when it happens. There is no you that can make it happen.

R: Exactly. Everything is predetermined. Is that clear enough?

S: How can 'you' get in the way if it doesn't exist? It can only appear to get in the way, but actually it isn't so, everything is going exactly the way it should.

R: Yes, but do not identify with that, identify with the Self. Then you will not think about how slow things are, or how fast. If you work spontaneously, if you stay centered in the now, there will be no time to think about your habits and by not thinking about your habits pure meditation takes place. They stop of their own accord.

S: No one stops them, it happens automatically?

R: Because you never really had them.

S: They appeared to be there.

R: The appearance is that you stopped them too. There is nothing to do and there is no one to watch.

S: There is watching.

R: Who watches?

S: No one. There is just watching only. Which is awareness.

R: Watching doesn't exist. Awareness doesn't exist. Those are just terms, concepts for the ajnani to talk about.

S: Then we are reduced to silence because any term used will be shot down.

R: Yes. That's it.

S: Again, it comes to the mind shutting up, shutting down.

R: Ask yourself: "Who has to shut up?" Nobody. There is nobody home.

S: In Self-Enquiry, do we ride the thought to its duration?

R: No. There is just the watching at that time, and the observation of the 'I'. Observe the 'I', go to the source in calmness and peace. When the 'I' goes to the source it disappears and then you are free. There is nobody left to do anything. You just become pure intelligence. The realization comes that the I was never there to begin with. But it doesn't come in words, it comes in your beingness.

(Approximately five second long segment missing).

The Self you always were, shines forth. So don't get too technical, because simplicity and realization are synonymous. You don't need to read volumes of works and go into all kinds of concepts and meditations, and things we have to do. Just calmly realize there is nothing to realize. (laughter) Be free of the whole thing.

S: I have noticed a difference in myself having been with you now about a month. When I first encountered Nisargadatta's teachings 2 years ago, I only felt emptiness inside. Now I definitely feel a sense of I-ness located in my heart area.

It feels both painful and blissful, but the emptiness is not there anymore. I think this is due to your emphasis on practice, concentrating on the 'I'. Nisargadatta talks from the absolute point of view, there is no I to concentrate on, practice, or to think about.

R: Certain people are attracted to certain teachers, that's all.

S: The people I saw at Ramesh's talks seem to be more into conceptual understanding. That is, they think they have attained, when in fact all they have is a conceptual understanding.

R: Who knows. I don't compare teachers. I don't even know what I am doing. I don't have a teaching. I'm just here. Nothing is planned. This is not even a teaching. It is nothingness, emptiness. You can call it whatever you like.

S: Are you able to share that with me?

R: With who?

S: With me.

R: You don't exist. To me, there is no-one with whom to share. I see you as me. There is only One. Again, it is like a mirror and its reflection. I identify with the mirror, but I also see the reflection. But I realize the reflection is the mirror. The mirror creating images, reflections.

S: The mirror creates its mistaken conceptions and images?

R: They don't really exist.

S: That is a strange thing for the mirror to do, doesn't it get tired of doing this nonsense?

R: The mirror is not really doing it. It appears to be doing it. Nothing is doing it. There is no doing going on. Nothing is done. When your mind is quiet, you find bliss.

S: I don't understand why he feels "I" in his chest, when before he felt nothingness.

R: That happens. Before you come to nothingness, you can feel it in your chest. We talk about nothingness, but are you experiencing nothingness? Talking about it and experiencing it are two different things.

S: There are different levels of that also? He had the feeling that there was nothing there, but at some level the sense of "I" was still there, because the I-sense is recurring.

R: To some people there appears to be levels.

S: That is another illusion. They certainly appear as if they are there.

R: This is why I say the sky is blue is an illusion. In reality, there is no sky and there is no blue. There is just space. We think the sky is blue. And the snake is the rope, the rope is the snake. We think in the dark the rope is a snake. But upon investigation we find it's a rope. Once we find it is a rope, we will never be tricked again.

Once you find your reality, you can never be fooled again. We see things, we see images, our senses tell us there are images all over, but upon investigation you will find there are

no images at all. They don't exist. There is only space. The images are superimposed in the space. The images do not exist of their own accord. If the Self did not exist, there would be no images.

S: So the Self is producing the images?

R: Apparently.

S: Apparently or actually?

R: Apparently. Because the Self really does not produce anything. It appears to. The Self is contained in itself. The Self is self-contained. It does absolutely nothing. But as long as we are an image, or we believe we are the body, the Self appears to project images. When you realize you are not the body, that all stops.

S: That is the Maya?

R: That is Maya, the Leela.

S: Too much Leela. (laughter)

R: Many people enjoy the play, because they wish to continue. They keep identifying with their conditions, situations, bank accounts, wives or husbands. As long as you are attached to anything, you cannot find freedom. I am not saying you shouldn't have anything. Possess all you want, but never be possessed by your possessions.

S: I was talking to a woman who came to hear you once. She said: "Robert is too advanced for me, I like the Maya, I just want it more comfortable."

R: That is the state of most people. That is why world is in the precarious condition it is in. Everybody is involved in their own game, so to speak.

S: It would be all right if no one interfered with my game, but it is in conflict with everybody else's game.

R: Exactly. That is the irony of it.

S: Are there some people who can have their cake and eat it too?

R: As long as you still call it cake, it is like there is something here for you. What is the cake? When you realize the truth, it is virtually impossible to enjoy the world. The world keeps changing, changing, changing...

(Interruption)

R: Ramana Maharshi said that the only problem you have, is that you believe that you were born.

S: That was your leading question today: "What were we before we were born?"

R: Prior to consciousness.

S: Which is at the time we are born, isn't it? Consciousness?

R: Yes, consciousness takes place at the time of birth. But prior to conscious there is nothing, space.

S: Not even the potential for consciousness.

R: Absolute zero.

S: But there is the concept of before.

R: As long as there is some thing, it is not that. There is no thing whatsoever. It is beyond words and thoughts.

S: But there is something.

R: What is it? What? What was the something?

S: I am asking you.

R: It is a mystery. Nobody knows.

S: We don't know what, but there was something.

R: There is nothing. Nothing is beyond the senses. So it sounds stupid. When your mind is quiet and peaceful, and you sit in the silence, then you become that you are referring to. And that's none other than yourself. But don't try to explain the Self, once you try to explain it, it is not it. Just be yourself, be yourself and you will be safe. Don't be this and don't be that. Be yourself. Don't be a woman, don't be a man. Don't be anything. Just be yourself.

S: The 'Self' then is just a word that is pointing at something wordless, indescribable and not possibly explained.

R: Yes.

S: It indicates like a finger pointing.

R: Like an arrow. (long silence)

As we sat in silence, what thoughts came into mind? Whatever thoughts they were, good or bad, they have got to go. Even if you were thinking, "What a wonderful Satsang", that's got to go. All thoughts got to go. Your wonderful Satsang will not bring you realization. Emptiness will. Nirvana. (long silence)

Many times I tell newcomers in the meeting: "Please do not believe anything I say." Why

should you? Experiment on yourself. See what happens. Don't accept what I say blindly. Find out for yourself. Do not let a day go by when you do not practice something on yourself, by questioning, by being the witness, by using "Who am I?" with the breath. Ask "Who am I?" with the inhalation. "I am Brahman" between breaths, and "I am not the body" with the exhalation.

If you practice these things, it should keep you busy from thinking. That is the only purpose. To make you one pointed, so you can stop thinking so much.

Many people tell me that "the direct path is very hard for me because I can't stop thinking, I'm always thinking about something, thoughts just come to me, and even when I ask to whom do they come, I can't stop them."

So I give them that mantra, and then they can substitute it for awhile. As they substitute it they become stronger and the mind becomes weaker. They become stronger and the mind becomes weaker until the mind stops thinking.

Of course, the other way is total surrender to God or to yourself. Even when I say total surrender to God, some people still believe that you have to surrender to some kind of outside deity, but there is no outside deity.

Total surrender to God means to surrender to yourself, to give up all your desires, all your needs, all your wants, all your questions and just say: "Thy will be done." That's it, and let yourself or God take care of everything. Have no anxious thought about anything. If you really totally surrender to God you will be O.K.. You'll be taken care of. Whatever method you use it will only lead you upward.

S: Sometimes I've found that the mind is quiet. Other times there's like a barrage of thoughts. It's like skeet shooting and it's like a machine gunning the thoughts that go by.

R: Yes.

S: Then sometimes I find when I have it quiet, all of a sudden there's a movement up above, not words, but it's like a big fish under the ocean.

R: First, observe it and don't act, and then ask: "To whom does it come?" So do both, observe and ask the question.

S: It's actually a fun game.

R: Yes, it is. (long silence)

Remember to love Yourself, to worship Yourself, to pray to Yourself, to find joy in Yourself, because God dwells in You as You. Peace. Thank you for coming, and I love you all. Have a good life.

Dialogue 9

Childhood Experiences and Present Awakening

I was taking a math test. I never studied for it. So I did not know anything. So I said, "God, God, God," and instead of the answers coming, the room became filled with light, a brilliant light, a thousand times more brilliant than the sun. It was like an atomic bomb, the light from the bomb. But it was not a burning light. It was beautiful, bright, shining warm glow. Just thinking of it now makes me stop and wonder.

Find out who you are. Discover yourself.

Jump within yourself. Be yourself.

Go within. Life is really simple. Why make it complicated?

When your mind becomes empty, everything happens by itself.

Reality shines forth.

Topics

On Childhood Manifestations

How Do You Awaken?

Your Real SELF is Ultimate Love

The Power of Observing Your Thoughts

Duality and Illusion

November 4, 1990

Robert: Good evening. I hope you can all hear me. If you can't, what can I do? Welcome. Ask yourself: "What am I doing here at this Satsang?" Why did you come? Ask yourself... Did you come to observe the speaker, to compare him with other speakers, or are you tired of playing games and you want to get on with it? What is the real reason you came tonight? You had nowhere else to go? You saw all the movies, all the TV. programs? Looking for a new face...? Ask yourself. Your life is very short. What are you doing with it? Unless you awaken in this life, you will come back again and again, and keep playing this game over and over until the day comes when you awaken. The only freedom you've got is to turn within and not react to conditions.

I usually do not talk about myself, but I received an interesting phone call today from a lady in Santa Cruz. She said: "Robert, if you don't say something about yourself, nobody will know where you're coming from. They will think you got this information from a book or from another teacher. They will not know that it comes directly from the Self."

So I thought about this and for a few minutes I will discuss my life up to the age of 14 years old. That should bore you enough.

I was born January 21st in Manhattan, New York. From the very beginning as far back as I can remember when I was in my crib, a little man with a gray beard and white hair used to appear before me at the other end of the crib, about 2 feet tall, and speak gibberish to me. I thought this was normal and everybody had that experience. Of course, being a child I didn't understand anything he said. It was only in my later years when I started to read books that I realized this person was Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. But nevertheless, he appeared before me until I was about 7 years old and then it stopped.

Then something very interesting happened to me. Whenever I wanted something, a candy bar or a toy, I would say God's name three or four times and it would appear from someplace. For instance, if I wanted a candy bar I would say: "God, God, God." Somebody would bring it to me or it would come from someplace.

When I went to school I never used to study. When we had a test I would say: "God, God, God," and the answers would come. Once I wanted to play the violin and my mother told me that it would be too hard for me to play, so she wouldn't buy me one. So I said: "God, God, God," and a few hours later my uncle appeared, who I hadn't seen in about 5 years and he brought me a violin. He thought I needed a violin. This went on and on while I was going to school.

When I was 14 years old, a strange phenomenon happened. I was in my junior high school class. There were about 35 children and the teacher. The teacher's name was Mrs. Riley. She weighed about 300 pounds and when she got angry she used to jump up and down. So, of course, we used to make her angry, to watch her jump. (laughs)

What I would do was borrow a bobby pin from a girl and there was a hinge in the back of the seat. I would stick the bobby pin in the hinge and twang it and she would go crazy. She didn't know where the noise was coming from and she'd jump up and down; a very interesting phenomenon. (laughs)

Anyway, it was the end of the term and we were taking our final test. This was a math test. I never studied for it, so I didn't know anything. So I said: "God, God, God," and instead of the answers coming, the room became filled with light, a brilliant bright light, a thousand times more brilliant than the sun. It was like an atomic bomb, the light from the bomb, but it was not a burning light. It was a beautiful, bright, shining, warm glow. Just thinking of it now makes me stop and wonder.

The whole room was immersed in light, everybody, everything. All of the children seemed to be myriads of light particles, and then I found myself melting into radiant being, into Consciousness. I merged into Consciousness. It was not an out of body experience. An out of body experience is when your soul leaves your body. This was completely different. I realized that I was not my body. What appeared to be my body was not real. And I went beyond the light into Pure Radiant Consciousness. I became omnipresent. My individuality had merged into Pure Absolute Bliss. I expanded. I became the Universe. The feeling is indescribable. It was total bliss, total joy. The next thing I remember is the teacher shaking me. All the students had gone. I was the only one left in the class. The teacher was shaking me and I returned to consciousness, human consciousness. That feeling has never left me.

Now what does this have to do with you? Everything. For when I say: "You are Absolute Reality, Absolute Bliss." When I say: "All this is the Self and I Am That," I AM encompasses everybody, everything. I Am That encompasses the whole universe. I Am That, pure intelligence, ultimate reality, Satchitananda, Para-Brahman. I am speaking from my experience. Death becomes a joke. There is no such thing. Your real nature is immortality. Your real nature is unalloyed happiness, ultimate oneness. This is what you really are. Awaken to it and be free.

How do you awaken? Well, in reality, you are already awake, but you're dreaming and you don't know it. It's like when you go to sleep and you have a dream and in your dream there's an earthquake. Everyone is dying all around you and I come to you and I say: "This is not real. You're having a dream, don't you know?" And you tell me: "You're crazy, Robert. This is not a dream, this is real. Can't you see the earthquake. Can't you see people dying all around you?" But I say: "No, it's a dream!" You refuse to believe me. Then, all of a sudden, you wake up you find yourself in this world. The only difference between this world and the dream world is this world is a little longer, but it's a dream. The world is not real by itself.

Ultimate reality, pure intelligence, emptiness, space, that is reality. It is like a gigantic screen that takes up the entire universe. That screen is Consciousness, and all the worlds, the planets, the suns, people, places, and things are all images on the screen. If the screen were not there, there could be no images.

Therefore, you cannot say that the images are real. They're only real as long as the screen persists. If the screen is taken away there's no place to show the images. In the same way, your true nature is Consciousness, Pure Consciousness. Your body is superimposed on Consciousness. You have made the mistake of identifying yourself with the body and mind. Therefore, the body and mind seem to control your life. But, as soon as you switch identities, as soon as you begin to identify with Consciousness, everything changes for you. You become happy, peaceful, joyous, blissful. It happens by itself. All you've got to do is switch identities. Identify with reality.

How do you do that? Every image that comes into your mind, you negate it. You realize that's not the truth and you ask the question: "To whom does this come?" (pause) "To me". You hold onto the 'me'. You find the source of 'me'. The source of 'me' is none other than your Self. Once you make the identity and you awaken to your Self, all your problems are over. Think of the problems you think you have right now. Think who has a problem? Your real Self can't have a problem, because it is bliss Consciousness. The problem comes to the ego. Only the ego has a problem, nothing else. Everything else is free, happy; no problems.

Find out who you are. Discover yourself. Jump within yourself. Be yourself. Become free. Nothing exists as it appears, nothing. Everything is Consciousness, and everything is an image superimposed on Consciousness. All of your thoughts, whatever is going through your mind, everything, it has no basis, no cause, no ego. Everything you see is a projection of your own mind. You can put a stop to it by finding the source of your thoughts. Where do your thoughts come from. Find out. Go within. Ask yourself.

You start in the morning when you first get out of bed. You watch your thoughts. Observe what you're thinking. Observe what you're doing. Whatever comes into your mind, ask yourself the question: "To whom does it come?" "I think this." Follow the I thought to the source. Hold onto the I, and wait. Do nothing. Do absolutely nothing. Keep still. When another thought comes, use the same procedure: To whom does this come? To me. Who am I? Follow the I thought to the source. Do nothing. Remain in the silence. Do not try to analyze anything. Do not try to come to any conclusion. If your mind becomes argumentative, ask yourself: "Who is argumentative...? I am." Everything belongs to the I. The whole universe is attached to I. When you find the source of I, everything else disappears. Find the source of the I and become free.

Life is really simple. Why make it complicated. Why allow all your thoughts to control you? To control you. To control you. Why do you give in to your thoughts? If you want to become free, you have to stop thinking completely, totally. When your thoughts come to you, no matter what they tell you, you have to ask yourself: "To whom do these thoughts come...? Who gave them birth...? I did... Well, who am I...?" Do not allow your thoughts to be your master. What you call realization is only empty mind. When your mind is empty everything happens by itself. Reality shines forth. When your mind is full of garbage, you become belligerent, arrogant, wild, and you have no peace.

So observe yourself. Watch your thoughts. See where they lead you. Take control of them and become free. I am not a lecturer. I do not give speeches. I do not give sermons. I'm only here and available to you. So, if there are any questions, I'll be happy

to answer if I can. Feel free to discuss anything you like about spiritual life. I'm not going to sit here for two hours talking cause I don't do that. (long silence)

S: Robert, if this is all a creation of the mind, what about the dissolution of the grand dissolution? Is there any point to that?

R: The grand dissolution is also of your mind. Everything that happens, everything, is a projection and manifestation of your mind. When you realize that you are not the body-mind phenomenon, everything stops. The whole game stops and you become free. For that person there is no such thing as birth or death. Everything remains still and quiet. Everything stops. There is no dissolution. There is no desecration, there is only peace.

But you have to stop your mind from thinking and the best and fastest way to do that is through Atman-Vichara, Self-Enquiry. That's the fastest way as far as I know. You simply ask yourself the question: "For whom is dissolution? Who experiences these things?" Find out, ask yourself and you'll find that you are ultimately free. You have always been free. You have always been the Self, free, blissful, and happy, that is your real nature.

Even as I talk to you, look at all these thoughts that are going through your mind. Why do you allow them to control you? Why? It only hurts you, nobody else. Only the thinker suffers. Of course, it's difficult to stop thinking, but by asking the question: "To whom do these thoughts come?" your mind begins to slow down and finally merges in your heart, and then you are no longer controlled by the mind. You are no longer controlled by anything. Your individuality will merge into the infinite and you will become free.

S: Robert, how is it that these little subtle thoughts have the power to obstruct...

R: They don't because your thoughts do not exist. How can they have power? Only what is Real has power and what is Real is Consciousness, Absolute Reality, Total Awareness. Thoughts have no power. They appear to have power. You have given them the power. You, yourself, have given your thoughts power by believing in them, by worshipping them, by doing what they command. Your thoughts tell you go kill and you go kill. They say: "go scream" and you go scream. "Go be belligerent," you go and become belligerent. You are controlled by your thoughts. But the wise person will stop and think and look within and ask: "To whom do these thoughts come? Where do they come from?" Find out, and you will realize that they never existed to begin with. It's all an optical illusion. Just like the rope and the snake you've all heard about. You think a rope is a snake because it's dark and you can't see, but once you find out the truth that it's only a rope, you will never be fooled again. You will never be afraid again. So the thoughts are like the rope and the snake. They have no power, but you fear your thoughts, therefore you give them power. Once you realize they are a non-entity, they are nothing, then you become yourself and you're free.

(long pause)

S: Robert, problems are only existent for the ego. Isn't it the ego that takes the spiritual path or practices?

R: The ego appears to practice and take the spiritual path, but there is something deeper than the ego. The Self is pushing you from itself. The ego tries to resist. You use the ego for one reason only, to destroy itself. Only when you destroy your ego, do you use your ego to do that. That's the only purpose it serves. Otherwise it controls you totally and completely. The ego and the mind are synonymous. The mind is only a conglomeration of thoughts about the past and worries about the future. That's all your mind is. The ego enhances the mind. They are both the same. The ego is like the light for the mind, but by Self-Enquiry the light is extinguished so the mind vanishes of its own accord and you become free.

Do not give your ego power by believing in it. Look at it like you do outside in the sky. When you say the sky is blue... everyone will agree with me that the sky is blue but when you investigate, you find that there is no sky and there's no blue. It's just space. In the same instance, everyone believes there is an ego, but upon investigation you will find out that it never existed. It doesn't exist. Only the Self exists, and you are That. So investigate. Find out for yourself. Do not believe a word I say. Check it out, experiment. Find out and see.

S: What I get confused about, if none of this is real, if I get detached from this and say none of this is real, then where's my compassion, where's my love? Will I lose that, knowing that that's not real, what I am seeing?

R: On the contrary. Your real Self is ultimate love. But you ask yourself: "Who sees the wars? Who sees man's inhumanity to man? Who sees mass destruction? To whom does it come?" It belongs to the world, not to you. You are omnipresent reality, and you are compassion, and you are ultimate love and joy and bliss. It is only when you know yourself that you can be an asset to others. For when you become the embodiment of love which is also Consciousness, everyone around you feels it and that's how you make this a better world in which to live. But, in the beginning you don't confuse yourself with that. If you want to help the world and help others, first find out the truth about yourself. If you don't, it's the blind leading the blind and everybody falls into the ditch. Now, again, when you find out the truth about yourself, yourself is not an individual, it is omnipresence, so you become the universe. Therefore, you can say: "All this is the Self and I Am That".

A good example of that again is when you're dreaming. Where does a dream come from? That entire panorama comes from your mind, doesn't it? You're sleeping and you're dreaming. It all emanates out of your mind and in that dream you're riding in a jet plane, you go from country to country, you take a boat, you get married, you have children, you grow old, and you die. All that is in the dream. But where is the dream really coming from? Your mind. And so it is in real life, so to speak.

We think this is real life, but it's only an extension of our minds. Change your mind and the world will change also. And you do that by asking yourself: "To whom does the dream come?" Who is dreaming about wars, about man's inhumanity to man? Who feels this, who sees this, who's afraid? Ask yourself, find out, investigate, and you will be amazed what you find. When you speak of love and compassion, do normal people really have love and compassion? They only have love when somebody gives them something. If a

person loves you, you say you love them. When they leave you for somebody else, you hate them. The love and hate are two sides of the same coin. But real love is beyond human love. Real love is the infinite. It cannot be described. It is consciousness. It's absolute reality. Real love is your real nature and you can never really know how to love until you know who you are.

(long pause)

S: If you look at your mind while it's disappearing and you're full of energy, and you feel peaceful, how do you go beyond that?

R: If you really looked at your mind and your mind really disappeared there would be no need for the question because you would feel ultimate peace. But what really happens to some of us is that we think we're going beyond the mind, we believe we're looking at the mind, but something is wrong because we don't. Once we really observe the mind and realize it's no thing, we are already beyond it, we're free and happy. But sometimes as I said, we think we're doing that and we're not. And you can tell.

Once you catch a glimpse of Self-Realization, you'll never go back again. There's no turning back. You've either got it or you haven't. There are no steps to it. It's like when you're in a room of darkness and you find the light switch. The darkness just dissipates. There are no gradual steps. It doesn't become lighter and lighter and lighter. The light just goes on and the darkness dissipates. When your mind is really empty, realization comes of its own accord.

S: When you say to look at the mind, what you're looking at is the thought.

R: The thought. Your mind is thoughts.

S: If you see the thoughts, then they disappear.

R: As you observe the thoughts, they disappear, but more come, and even when you're finished with those from this life, they'll come to you from a previous life. It never stops. So you have to keep asking the question: "To whom do they come? To whom do they come?" And keep observing and follow the I thought, doing nothing. One day it will all be gone, and you'll be free. But you have to have patience and persistence. Remember, it took us so many years to be the way we are, screwy, crazy, insane. So now it's going to take a long time, perhaps, to get over it.

But, don't worry about it, because we're all hell bent for heaven whether we like it or not. Everybody gets there sooner or later. Our job is to be relaxed and calm, peaceful, to observe ourselves, not to react to conditions. Remember, every condition that comes upon you is karmic in nature. It's no accident. By reacting to a condition, all you're doing is accruing more karma and it will never end. The secret is to just watch, to observe the situation and not react.

As an example, if you're driving home tonight and you have an accident, and you hit somebody's car because they passed a red light, even if it's their fault physically, in reality

it's nobody's fault. If you react to it by becoming angry, belligerent, all you're doing is accruing more karma and you'll have to go over that situation again and again and again, and confront situations similar to that until you give it up and stop reacting. Then you win the battle and you won't have to have a situation like that again in your life.

S: You said you'll never have that situation again in your life?

R: Never, if you confront it and you do not react to it. Then you finish with it. Whatever you do not react to is gone, it's finished. It's like when you have a friend, and your friend is talking to you. You do not react to your friend, you don't answer or say anything, what happens? Your friend leaves you. True? It's the same thing with a condition. If you do not react to a condition, the condition leaves you. It goes away. It never comes back.

S: Do you have to gradually eliminate the reactions to get to complete freedom?

R: You simply observe yourself. You watch the way you react to conditions. You do nothing, but watch. In the process of watching your mind will slow down. And again you watch the Ego, and you ask the question: "To whom does the ego come?" And the answer will come: "To me." Hold on to that 'me'. Find the source of 'me'. It has no source. Emptiness. Quietness. And you become free.

S: So you don't have to work out all the old karma then?

R: No you don't.

S: But doesn't the body still have to work it out?

R: No it doesn't.

S: Then could you talk about Pralabda Karma?

R: Pralabda Karma only exists as long as you believe you are the body-mind. When you realize that you are not the body-mind, Pralabda Karma stops. But I know what you mean. It's like when you turn off a fan the fan keeps spinning until it stops. So this is true with some Jnanis. When the Pralabda karma's completed they still have to work out parts of their karma that's coming to an end. Like the fan that's still spinning without the current until it comes to a standstill. And then it's gone. It's finished. So in that case you're right. But for one who knows that he is not the body or the mind, there is no Pralabda karma. For that one. But for the onlooker, it appears to be so. For the ajnani there appears to be Pralabdha Karma, not for the Jnani. In other words, the ajnani may see problems, and that's the Karma coming to its conclusion; but for the Jnani there are no problems. Do you follow...?

(musical interlude)

The world was going on for many years without you before you came, millions of years. It will go on after you leave. So while you live your so called existence here in your body, why do you worry, why do you fear? What are you afraid of? Be peaceful, be still. Learn

to love one another. Have compassion. Practice loving kindness. Be yourself. Always remember that your real nature is Absolute Intelligence, Ultimate Oneness, Divine Harmony, Bliss Consciousness, Satchitananda, Para-Brahman. That's who you really are. Identify with that and be free. So what do you think of that?

S: The ego position is just Consciousness temporarily playing at being that particular ego?

R: Not really.

S: Where else can it come from?

R: Consciousness is self-contained, therefore the ego is not really part of Consciousness. It is an optical illusion. It doesn't exist. It appears to exist. It doesn't come from anywhere. It comes from your imaginings, but Consciousness never gave it birth.

S: The identification of Consciousness with the body-mind produces the ego?

R: It appears that way, but it's not true. Consciousness does not really identify with anything because it is self-contained. Consciousness only knows Consciousness. Everything else is an optical illusion, it just doesn't exist. Even if the appearance is strong, it does not exist. And you can always think about these examples. When you're in the desert and you're dying of thirst, you see a mirage that's water, and you crawl to the water and you get sand. But the water appeared so real to you, didn't it? In the same instance, all the things of this world appear real, but they're like the optical illusion, like the mirage, like the sky is blue, like the sand that appears as water. It's false imagination, misidentification. Turn back, go within, dive deep within yourself, identify with the Self and become free forever. I think what some of us do is that we read too many books and we make it too technical, and we think we have to do things.

We have to do this and we have to do that, and we give everything names, and we say that Consciousness is the light of the mind that shines as the ego. We don't have to know about these things. All we have to know is that I am not the body-mind phenomenon. I am Absolute Reality, that's all you got to know, and follow the Absolute Reality, become it, do whatever you have to do to become it. Practice observation, mindfulness, watch your thoughts, Vipassana meditation, Self-Enquiry. Whatever you have to do, do it to quiet the mind, and then you will see something brand new. You will realize that you were never born, that you do not persist right now and you can never die. You are free.

S: Nothing exists beyond Consciousness?

R: Nothing exists beyond Consciousness. We give it names like Pure Awareness.

S: If nothing exists beyond Consciousness, thoughts as well as mind have to be within Consciousness.

R: Not really because thoughts and mind do not exist. If they existed as an entity, they would be part of Consciousness.

S: They are illusion, and illusion, by definition, is nonexistent.

R: Exactly. So it never really existed, therefore they cannot be part of Consciousness. If they were part of Consciousness, it would mean that they existed, and Consciousness gave them birth and now we have to try to get rid of them. But, there's nothing to get rid of because it didn't exist. You're fighting nothing.

S: Illusion, by definition, would be something out of Consciousness.

R: It would be nothing, no-thing. It never existed and never will exist. It's part of your false imagination. Where did it come from? It came from nowhere because it just doesn't exist.

S: Then the awareness of this mirage also doesn't exist.

R: That's true. You're right. Consciousness doesn't exist either. It's all a concept. The finite can never know the infinite. There are no words to describe it. You have to dive within yourself and experience it for yourself to realize it. There are no definitions. Everything we say is a preconceived idea, a concept. Go beyond that, and you go beyond that by stopping your thoughts. Stop thinking. That's how you go beyond it, and you stop thinking through Self-Enquiry and through observation, through awareness, watching, becoming the witness.

S: Isn't it a possibility that a lot of us, maybe all of us, from the early times that we can remember as a kid always had a part of us set aside that was watching, and from time to time we have a feeling that our lives are unreal, that we are imprisoned in the body and yet we live our lives and have these very strong feelings that that's not all there is, the body is not all there is.

R: O.K., so what's the point?

S: The point is that if we do feel that, and a lot of us feel that way, and still we have a duality of living our lives especially when we're young we have strong desires, then as they fade we still are imprisoned in the body.

R: This is why you have to ask yourself: "Who is imprisoned? Who has these thoughts and feelings? To whom do they come? Go beyond everything you just said. Go beyond it. Forget about what you just said. And simply go beyond it. Ask yourself: "To whom do these thoughts come about imprisonment, about being young, about being old, about thoughts?" None of that exists. Go beyond everything by asking the question: "To whom do these thoughts come, to me? Who am I?" What is the source of the I? Follow the source and become free. Follow the source into the heart and do nothing but observe and watch. And you will find there is no source. It never happened. You've always been free. You've always been bright and shining. Everything else is nonsense.

S: You mean it's just a memory?

R: Of course, it's memory, it's concept, it's preconceived ideas. It's all those things, but don't think about those things. Forget about how you got there, about how they came. Realize who you are now: "I am not this body. I am not this mind. I am not these thoughts. I am not this condition or situation. Then who am I?" Then stop and ask again: "Then who am I?" As you keep asking like this you will notice that the space between the who am I's becomes larger and larger, and in that space you will find your freedom.

(Reading by Glen, "The Self" from the Ashtravakra Gita.)

R: There is nothing new under the sun.

S: I have a problem with some of this.

R: That's good!

S: What I have a problem with is this idea that this is illusory. In a relative sense I suppose it is, but I can't see that the physical universe is an illusion to the point that it has no existence.

R: O.K. let's imagine you're having a dream and we're talking just like this in your dream and you point to the chair and say: "I can't imagine that this is illusory." And you tell me the same thing you're telling me right now, and then you wake up. Do you understand what I'm saying? It's the same thing.

S: Yes. As a matter of fact, my wife and I were having a discussion about this business of the dream. Which is real?

R: They're both fake.

S: In a dream I perceive things, to put it more exactly, I see things. Obviously I'm not using my body eyes. In this situation, I see things and I am using my body eyes. The only thing I can conclude from those two things logically is that in each case I have a different modality of perception. In the dream, most of what I perceive can be attributed to creative imagination, but many things that I've dreamt, or so-called dreamt, subsequently manifested in this reality. They obviously weren't just haphazard concoctions of something that was lying in my mind like a bunch of straws or a tinker toy that I put together.

R: So what's the question?

S: The question is: I can't see how this duality can be resolved. There seems to be duality everywhere. Here we are, we're sitting in a room and it's apparently very solid. It is to me.

R: It cannot be resolved until you understand that you are not the body or the mind.

S: I'm aware of that, totally aware of that.

R: If you were totally aware there wouldn't be any problem. Then you wouldn't ask the question.

S: Well, it's not a problem. It's not something that troubles me.

R: Just by asking the question it shows that you're not aware of it. If you were aware of what you're saying there would be no question, you see?

S: O.K., that is your reality, it is not mine.

R: (Laughs) In other words, the dream and the waking state are both projections of your mind. We can be talking right now and you can have an awakening and wake up, and all this would be gone. You'd see a completely different universe. When you actually dream your mind projects the dream and you have all kinds of experiences. They're both the same. There's no difference, except this is a little longer, that's all.

S2: When you dream you think it's real.

S: The City of Troy was buried for many, many years, and there came a time when the whole idea of Troy was such that nobody knew whether it was real or not. Then someone got a shovel and started digging and they found it. So the existence of something doesn't depend on my recognition of it. The existence of something for me depends on my recognition of it; but its existence, in itself, doesn't appear to me to be dependent upon whether I recognize it, see it, or am aware of it at all.

R: The only existence it has is the words that are spoken to try to explain it. This is as far as its existence goes. But we could be having a dream and discussing the same subject and talking about Troy and talking about what you just said before. It can all be in your dream. It's the same thing. There's no difference. The thing to do is to forget about that and ask yourself: "Who's dreaming?" Ask yourself who's having this dream. Enquire within and find out. Find out what's a dream and what's not.

•Ask yourself. The answers are within you.

•I cannot give you the answer. It's within yourself.

•I don't want you to believe anything I say.

S: I'm obviously not doing that. I'm not disbelieving it.

R: Good. Find out for yourself.

S: I have to give some credence to the way I think, whether the thinking is an illusion or not.

R: Who does? Who has to do all this? Ask yourself who has to do this, and you'll find that there's nobody to do anything.

S2: Actually, when you ask yourself that question: "Who's unhappy?", it disappears.

R: It does, you're right. Exactly, only the Self remains. The Self is Emptiness, the Void, and it's total joy and peace, but you have to discover it by yourself.

Now, what I usually do at the end of a meeting is we have a meditation to help you and as you practice this meditation it will actually help. So make yourself comfortable.

Students practice the I AM meditation...

R: If you're having trouble with Self-Enquiry or witnessing, if you try this form of meditation when you're by yourself at home, it'll help a great deal. So thank you for coming, it's been great being with you again.

Remember to love yourself, to bow to yourself, to tell yourself the truth, because God dwells in You as You.

Peace!

And that's it!

Dialogue 10

Take Your Power Back. You Are Not What You Appear to Be.
Everything You Could Ever Want Is Within You.

"As long as you believe or feel the Body-Mind, problems seem real to most of us. Suffering will stop when you Awaken to the Truth of your own Being. You are all The saints and sages and the seers, you are everything..why not Awaken to this? Why do you want to play games with yourself for so long? Where is Peace? Peace is our Real Nature. It is within you. You will just feel good. You will feel good all over. And that will turn into pure happiness.

Can you imagine what it feels like just to be happy without interruption for no Reason? It has absolutely nothing to do with the world. You realize that you are the screen, which is Consciousness. And you realize that everything in the world, everything in the whole universe, Is superimposed on you. It is not reality..You realize it is not you. And the day will come when you will Awaken."

Topics

On the Cessation of Suffering
Satsang (*The Gathering of Students Together with the Sage*)
Thoughts/Mind
Take Your Power Back
The World of Duality-Ups and Downs
Awakening to Constant True Happiness

December 2, 1990

Robert: It's good to be with you again. As long as you believe that you are the body-mind phenomena, you're going to have problems. That's that. I don't care what kind of problems you may think you have, it makes no difference how severe. As long as you believe you are the body-mind phenomena, you're going to have problems.

You may feel justified in having problems. You may feel it's not your fault. You may feel it's karma. You may feel it's all kinds of things, but as long as you believe or you feel the body-mind, you will have problems, because this is the kind of world in which we live, the world that doesn't exist. Seems real to most of us. And if we believe we are the body-mind, then we believe the world is real and we believe we have to pray to God for solutions. We do all these things and we still suffer.

And suffering will only stop not when God answers your prayers, but when you awaken to the truth of your own Being. Then you are born again, so to speak, in a new reality and all is well. But you say to me: "But Robert, sometimes you appear to have problems too. Your karma evolved as it does all the time, or your physical body doesn't feel too good, or something is going on".

My question to you is this: "Who sees this?" There has to be a seer and an object. You're seeing yourself. When you catch on to your awakening, the world does not change. You just see it differently, that's all. You acquire a feeling of immortality. A feeling of divine bliss, so to speak, when things no longer have the power to affect you. In other words, in the state of enlightenment, cause and effect does not exist for you. But for those who are living in the world, are going through their karma, and they're beholding themselves everywhere they look. For the world, remember, is only a projection of your mind. Now what kind of a projection is it? It depends on your state, where you are coming from. We're all looking at the world and we see something different. All we are seeing is ourselves. There are no problems. None exist. None will ever exist. The only problem that exists is what? Who can tell me?

S: "Kuwait..."

R: You're close. What do I always say, why does a problem exist? It has to do with your nose. That's right. You're allowing your thoughts to go past your nose. That is the only reason you have a problem. If you catch yourself quick before it gets past your nose, where is the problem?

The problem is in your thought, only in your thought. When your mind slows down, when the thinking process slows down, where is the problem? It doesn't exist. But if you allow the thoughts to go past your nose, then there are all kinds of problems which you come up with. You believe this is wrong, and this is not right, and this is hurting me, and you become doubtful, suspicious and apprehensive and fearful and so forth. Because you're thinking. You may say, how can you exist without thinking: Quite well, thank you!

The trees do not have to think. The grass does not have to think. The world does not have to think of itself. Everything is taken care of. There is a power that knows how to take care of everything, and will also take care of your body, so called, if you stop thinking. But as long as you think, "I am the body", then you have to take care of your body, and watch it, and feed it aspirin and cold remedy and proper foods and do all kinds of strange things with your body. But your body and your mind are not your friend. They come under a law of their own.

Did your body ask you today this morning when it's time to get up...? It got up! Did it ask your permission? It does what it wants! You have nothing to do with the body or the mind. When you become depressed, does your mind ask you if it can become depressed? It does what it wants. When you become fearful, does your mind ask your permission? It does what it wants. When your body catches a cold, does it ask you if it can catch a cold? It does what it wants. But what have you got to do with those things?

A lady called me this morning from Santa Cruz, and she asked me: "How long do I have to come to Satsang before I become Self-Realized?"

So I told her: "Before I answer, let me ask you: What do you mean by I? And what do you mean by Satsang...?" And she hung up! I wonder why she did that...?

But it's something we can talk about, or I can talk about since I have nothing else to do. How long do 'I' have to come to Satsang? How long does 'I' have to come to Satsang? Does 'I' need to come to Satsang? What is this elusive I? What does it mean? How long does 'I' have to come to Satsang?

The reason you would call it 'I', is because you misinterpreted the 'I'.

You identify the 'I' with the body. So you're saying: How long do 'I' have to come to Satsang...? Then what is Satsang...?

Sat means Being, being with the Self. Therefore 'I' and Satsang are the same thing. What this means is, Satsang is your everyday experience. It's not a place you go to. It's how you live your life. 'I' makes the separation, but there is no separation. There is one whole, and you are That. But as long as you are separating 'I' from your Self, then you always question. I feel sick. I feel happy. I feel depressed. I feel out of sorts. Who is this I? Where did it come from? How does it originate? What is its Source? Find out. Dive deep within and find out where the 'I' came from. A good way to do this, is before you go to sleep say to yourself: "I'm going to find my 'I' when 'I' get up this morning."

Just before you wake up, before you start thinking, the 'I' presents itself as -I AM-, as pure Consciousness. Catch it then. That's the best time to catch it. As soon as you awaken in the morning, in that split second, before you wake up and start thinking. Before the thoughts come of the world, that is the time to catch the -I AM-, the Absolute Reality. For at that moment, this is exactly what you are, pure Awareness, and then the thought comes, it covers it up. So remember to ask yourself when you go to sleep: "Tomorrow morning as I open my eyes I am going to identify with my Source -I AM-" And you will. Even for a second, it will change your life.

As you keep on doing this every morning, every morning, every morning, the time between your awakening and the thought coming to you will become larger. And the space will expand and expand and expand, until you are able to stay in the Awareness. Of course, at that time, there will no longer be a you. There will only be the Awareness. Try it. You have to investigate. You have to intelligently dive deep within yourself and find the Source of your 'I'.

Do not accept your feeling. Do not accept your thoughts. Do not watch yourself feeling miserable, and you do nothing about it... Or you can become the witness to it. That will help too. But it's better to ask: "Why am I feeling miserable?" and realize that you said why am 'I' feeling miserable.

"I'm identifying with my body as I". Again a mistake. The 'I' in itself is pure harmony, joy, happiness. But when you identify the 'I' with your body-mind, it becomes the personal 'I' which doesn't even exist. But you're making it exist. You're identifying with it. Why do you want to identify with your personal 'I'? Your personal 'I' never existed. Why have you befriended it? Why do you keep giving it power? Why do you make it grow?

Take your power back. Expose yourself, the real YOU, and forget all this nonsense about a mind and a body and thoughts and the world and God and everything else that appears to be real. Compare yourself with no one. Be true to your Self. Never mind how much progress somebody else is making. Forget about Saints and Sages and other people. You are the only one that ever existed and there is no one but you.

You are all the Saints and the Sages and the Seers. You are everything. Everything is the Self, and you are That. Why not awaken to this? Why do you want to play games with yourself so long? By believing in reincarnation you just come back again and again and again, and hoping to have a better life next time. There is no better life.

As long as you are born of the flesh you have to suffer. This is the way of the flesh. Do not try to improve your life. You're making a big mistake. For there is no question about it, if you use positive thinking and use your mind, you may appear to improve your life.

But remember this world in which you live is a world of duality. For every up there is a down. For every forward there is a backward. For every good there is a bad. Therefore whatever improvement comes in your life, it will last for a while, then will subside, then you become miserable again. Then you will be happy again when you get what you want, and then that will last, and then you will be miserable again.

You'll start sticking up for your rights and fighting for your survival. Then as you get what you want, you'll be happy again. You're like a yo-yo. You go up and down, up and down. And no matter how much I talk to you about this, you're going to keep on doing this. So why am I talking? I don't know. I have no choice.

You know, I never asked to do this. Strange how things turn out.

S: "Too late now".

R: All I know is that all is well, and everything is unfolding as it should. All I know is that happiness is your true nature. That you are not what you appear to be, and things are not what they appear to be. Nothing can ever happen to you. Why do you worry so much...? What are you afraid of...? Your life...?

You have no life. What you call your life is nothing. It doesn't exist. It's no-thing. You worry about your hair falling out. Worried about needing a new pair of shoes. You're getting fat. What a waste of energy. Like feeding a dead horse. We're all going to wind up in the cemetery, so what difference does it make what you do.

Last week I was talking to a body builder. He was telling me about his muscles. And what he does for this muscle, and what he does for that muscle, and how well he eats. So I told him that's great, you'll be the healthiest man in the cemetery. And that's about the gist of it. Why not use your energy for constructive purposes? Now this does not have to mean that you ignore your body. Your body will always take care of itself.

As a matter of fact the more you practice your sadhana, or realizing your true identity, your body will be able to take better care of itself than you were ever able to take care of it, because it comes under a different law. It knows what to do. It will do whatever it came to this world to do, but it has absolutely nothing to do with you. When will you wake up to that fact?

Stop thinking about yourself so much. About getting a new job, losing a job, about working or not working. No one is ever happy. Those people who work are miserable because they have to work. Those people who don't work are miserable because they can't find a job. And when they find a job they join the miserable ones who can't stand the job.

Where is peace? Peace is your real nature. It's within you. It is YOU. Look for it and you'll find it. Seek and ye shall find. Whatever you identify with, that's what you become. Therefore stop identifying with worldly things. Identify with yourself.

Now how do you do this...?

It begins in the morning, as I told you before. That's the time when your mind has been free. Because you slept, you've had a semblance of peace. Being in deep sleep is an unconscious method of Self-Realization. You're realized when you are asleep, but you are unconscious. So you're not aware of it. You want to be consciously asleep. When you're consciously asleep, you're awake.

You're awake to your Self, to Reality, to what IS, to I AM.

When you get up in the morning, immediately before the thoughts come, identify with the Self. Now how do you do this...?

Simply say to yourself: "I-I". That's all you got to do: "I-I". You're doing this before your thoughts come. Maybe in the beginning, you can only do this for a couple of seconds, but that's good. Even those couple of seconds, will make your day fulfilled, and you'll feel happy during the day. As time passes, as I explained before, the space will widen and

you'll be able to remain longer periods in "I-I", "I-I".

Now when thoughts come, simply ask yourself: "To whom do these thoughts come? They come to me." And you hold on to the 'me'. You do not let go. But do not concentrate on the me. Just hold on to the me. You concentrate on the Source of me. It's like you're holding on to a rope, and you're going to its source and you let go. Letting go, is the Source. Total Awareness, Absolute Reality, I am that I am.

Do not try to analyze this. Just allow it to be. As you keep doing this every morning, either watching the I, or asking to whom do the thoughts come? You'll notice a subtle change is taking place in your life. The first change you will see, is you develop a semblance of peace that you never had before.

You'll just not be disturbed by anything, and you'll be surprised at yourself. You'll notice the things that used to make you angry, no longer have the power to do that. You'll notice that the things you feared, for instance: Depression, recession, (laughter) loss of memory, whatever, your wife ran away with the milkman. Maybe that's a good sign, but these things will no longer disturb you.

You'll just feel good. You'll feel good all over. And that will turn into pure happiness. You're just happy, for no reason. Can you imagine what it feels like just to be happy without interruption, for no reason. It has absolutely nothing to do with the world. It doesn't mean you'll go round laughing hysterically all the time. It means you just feel happy.

You hear about the war in Iraq, and you're happy. There's no war in Iraq, you're still happy. You work, you're happy. You don't work, you're happy. You have possessions, you're happy. You don't have possessions, you're happy. In other words it makes no difference what the world may seem to bring to you. You are no longer identifying with the world and its objects. You're seeing the world as yourself, or you're beginning to, slowly but surely.

Everything begins to take on a projection of yourself. And since you are beginning to discover that you are pure Consciousness, the world starts becoming pure Consciousness also. It's like going to a movie, and the screen is pure Consciousness, the images are the world. Prior to your awakening, you've been identifying with the images and you have no idea there's a screen. Oh you know it somewhere in your mind. You have a slight image of the screen, but you don't think of that, because the images are very entertaining.

You watch a love movie or a war movie, or this kind of movie or that kind of movie, and you get all wrapped up in the objects. But of course if you try to go up to the screen to grab any objects, you're going to grab the screen. This is what happens when you awaken.

You realize that you are the screen, which is Consciousness. And you realize that everything in the world, everything, the whole Universe including God, is superimposed on you. It's not Reality. It's a superimposition. But you identify with the screen which is Consciousness, and you tolerate the superimposition. Yet you realize it's not you.

You have nothing to do with it and you do not identify with it. So in the same instance your body goes through all kinds of experiences, good and bad and in between, but you are always aware that you are not the body and no body exists for you. You know in reality, there is no superimposition at all. It does not exist. It appears to exist, but it does not. It's like hypnosis. You're hypnotized to believe a white poodle is following you.

And sure enough when you wake up out of the hypnosis, you keep looking back, you will actually see a white poodle. Your mind will actually picture the white poodle, and you will believe it's real. Nobody else will see it, but you will, until the hypnosis wears off.

In the same way we see people, places, and things, and they appear so real to us. We identify with them, and we suffer accordingly. But as you practice every morning, catching yourself between waking up and thoughts coming, little by little, slowly but surely, you will begin to realize yourself more and more.

And the day will come when you awaken. Never mind how long it takes. Do not look at time. Think of how long it takes you to be what you are now. Be yourself. Identify with your reality. Try to be yourself at times. Be aware that the world is egoless. The world has no cause, so where is the effect?

If there is no effect, there is no cause. How could the world have a cause? Where would it come from? When you dream, you can say that your dream has a cause. You are the cause, because you are dreaming. But can you say that while you're dreaming? While you're dreaming and you're in the dream, you believe that the world has a cause, like everyone else does. And you get involved in everyday activities in the dream. You have good experiences and you have bad experiences.

And then I come along and I tell you you're dreaming, but you don't believe me. You say: "I'll show you if I'm dreaming, Robert", and you pinch me. And I say: "Ow!!" And you say: "See, is that a dream?" And I try to explain to you it's a dream pinch, but you don't believe it. You think it's real. Then you go across the street. You're walking down the street and a car hits you. You're bleeding all over the street. I run over and I tell you: "You're dreaming, don't be too upset, it's OK." Then you start cursing at me and shaking your fist at me. "How can you say that? Look I'm bleeding all over the place." Then something funny happens. You wake up! Where does the dream go? Where did the blood go? Where did the car that hit you go?

Think of your personal experiences that are upsetting you, right now. Think of the problems that you think you have even while I'm talking to you. Some of your minds are thinking of something else, problems, and you believe it's real. You're thinking of who you like or don't like. What you're going to eat for dinner tonight. All these thoughts come to you because you have not trained yourself how to deal with your thoughts.

You've got preconceived ideas. You have got concepts. As an example, you come and you look at me. You don't see me fresh and new like you see yourself. But you compare me with Krishnamurti or with this guy or the Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, or Nisargadatta or the garbage cleaner or with the janitor or whoever you wish to compare me with.

This is exactly what I'm talking about. Your mind becomes filled with preconceived ideas. I am really nobody. I am nothing special.

So what you see in me is not real. You're seeing your own projections. You're seeing your self in other words. And if you have not developed yourself and have awakened to pure Consciousness, then you're seeing something worldly. And you make comparisons.

You say I like, I don't like, it's good, it's bad, and so forth. You've got to take control of your mind. You've got to realize your mind and your body are not your friend. They feed you the wrong information. They appear right for a while, but then it becomes wrong again. Do not listen to your mind. Stop the thoughts before they get to the edge of your nose.

That's all I've got to say!!

Dialogue 11

ALL IS WELL

"A man called me yesterday telling me he had been practicing for two weeks, took a seminar and paid seven hundred dollars, and he still isn't realized. I get calls like this all the time. But there is a standard answer.

Think of the question.

"When will I, I, I, become Self realized, Self Realized, Self Realized.?"

When the I is gotten out of the way you become Omnipresence.

You become the I AM. Not I am this, or I am that. Just I Am.

The I Am of the Universe. My happiness does not leave."

Topics

The Monk and the Roshi-Transcending Anger

All is Well

When Will I Experience Self-Realization?

Maintaining the Peace of No "I"

Technique of "I AM" Meditation

When It Is Too Much Surrender It All to Me

I Am Total Joy

To Be a Devotee Above All Else

On the Combination of Bhakti and Jnana

December 13, 1990

Robert: There is one thing I can tell you for sure. That all is well, and everything is unfolding as it should. I can tell you truly nothing is wrong anywhere. Everything is happening just the way it is supposed to. If you think you have a problem, that's the mistake, thinking you have a problem. If only you'd stop thinking. As soon as you stop thinking, everything will go right.

S: Isn't everything going right while you are thinking?

R: Yes, but you don't know it. Some of us don't think it is, because some of us think, "I've got a problem" or "I'm involved in something I can't handle which is bigger than I am" or "Something hurts me" or "I feel anger" or "I feel fear" or "I feel something is wrong." But I can assure you, there is nothing wrong! Nothing has ever been wrong. Nothing is wrong now, and nothing will ever be wrong. (laughter)

All you have to do is watch yourself. As soon as your mind starts thinking past your nose, grab it, not your nose, but your thoughts. You can grab your nose too if you like. (laughter). But grab your thoughts with your mind, and put a stop to them any way you can, either by observing the thoughts or by practicing Self-Enquiry and asking: "To whom do they come?" Whatever you have to do, don't allow yourself to think. If your mind does not think, you will be exceedingly happy. You will have unalloyed happiness. I can assure you total happiness if you stop yourself from thinking.

I receive many phone calls. One of the calls that is most common is: "When will I experience Self-Realization...?" This is determined by the consciousness of the person. And I have a different answer for everybody, because I take you where you are at. This is why I may sound contradictory sometimes. If you ask me a personal question, I try to answer you from where you're coming from.

Some people tell me: "Robert, why don't you just speak the highest truth all the time?" And some people ask, "Robert, speak so that I can understand what you are talking about." (laughter) So that is the dilemma. So I do whatever I have to do. I plan nothing. Everything is extemporaneous. I have no rehearsals. I don't write anything down. I just say what comes out of me.

So, when we have a phone call: "When am I going to become Self-Realized" or somebody tells me, "I have been practicing all week now, and nothing is happening." (laughter) A man called me yesterday telling me he had been practicing for two weeks, took a seminar and paid seven hundred dollars, and he still isn't realized. (laughter) I get calls like this all the time. So it depends on what you ask. The question determines the answer I give you. But there is a standard answer. Think of the question:

"When will I, I, I, I, become Self-Realized, Self-Realized, Self-Realized, Self-Realized?"

I usually say this: "Before I answer your question, may I ask you a question? Please tell me what do you mean by 'I'? And what do you mean by 'Self-Realization'?" They usually keep silent. So I continue and I say: "Who do you think is the 'I' who wants to become 'Self-Realized'?"

You are speaking about the personal 'I', and the personal 'I' can never be 'Self-Realized'. The personal 'I' is finite. The finite can never know the infinite. That is why the personal 'I' can never become 'Self-Realized'. And as long as you think you are the personal 'I' who needs to be 'Self-Realized', there never will be a time when you can become 'Self-Realized'.

The word, 'Self-Realized' What does it mean? It simply means your natural state. It is not something you become. It is something you are. You wish to experience your natural state. What you want to do therefore is to awaken to your natural state. That's what you are now, but you've covered it up with the personal 'I'. As long as you keep talking about, "I am this and I am that and I need to be Self-Realized" or "I need to awaken" or "I need to do anything" it will never happen.

This is also true of your problems. When you think, "I have to solve a problem. I have to take responsibility," you are referring to your personal 'I', and you will come up with relative ideas that will pull you further into problems. They will never be solved that way. Look back at your experience and you will see that what I am saying is true. When you try to use your personal 'I' to solve a problem, you may appear to solve it for awhile.

But another one will pop up now and again and you go through your life trying to solve problem after problem after problem. You have to understand and realize and see that intelligently. You have to look at that intelligently and realize that everytime you speak about yourself or any situation in the world, you are referring to your personal 'I'. Now if you can bypass the personal 'I', then you wouldn't have the question. For if you realize you're not the personal 'I', then who is left to become Self-Realized? No one.

When the 'I' is gotten out of the way you become omnipresence. You become I AM, not I am this or I am that, just I AM. Now your I AM is the I AM of the universe. Consciousness, Absolute Awareness, I AM is your real nature. You have to awaken to that. Do not talk about it. Do not try to convince somebody else, but simply awaken yourself to the fact that you are I AM and you have always been I AM. If you can just reason that way, you wouldn't have anything to say after that.

Just say to yourself right now: "I AM". As soon as you say "I AM", all of your so-called problems are resolved. Your life is resolved. Everything is resolved and you're happy. Just by saying "I AM". Feel it: "I AM". Doesn't it feel beautiful? There is nothing that comes after "I AM". "I AM" is it. There is nothing else.

Even if you have difficulty with this, some people say: "I feel great as long as I'm at Satsang, but as soon as I get home the world grabs hold of me and I get involved in problems. I get involved in worldly things." Again you're talking about your personal 'I'. That's what you've got to look at intelligently.

When you tell me: "I get involved in the world", who is the 'I'? You would never say: "I AM gets involved in the world" because as soon as you say: "I AM", you feel good, don't you? But when you say: "I get involved in the world" you are thinking of your body, your mind and your affairs. When you say: "I AM", it all goes away and you become free.

When you come to Satsang something happens. You're not creating anything new, because there's nothing to create. An awakening process takes place just like when you are dreaming. And the dream is so interesting and nice and you awaken and you find yourself in this world. So it is when you begin to awaken in this world. You awaken to the fourth state of consciousness and you appear to be in this world to others but you're no longer of this world.

The body may appear to be real to others, but you realize and you understand that you have no body. I can assure you, I can swear to you, I can promise you that I have no body. Yet you look at me and say: "I see the body. I see you as a body." So I ask you: "Who sees? Who sees the body?" "I do." "Who am I?" "Who am I that sees the body?" Then there is silence.

It is difficult for some of us to understand this... that I have no body. Now what appears to happen is that when you're in my company at Satsang, your body consciousness begins to dissolve. Simply because I understand that I am not the body. When I use the words 'in my company' or 'me' or 'I', try to remember always that I am not referring to Robert. Robert is a horse's ass. (laughter)

So when I say that you're in my company, I am not referring to me, because I am nothing as Robert. Whenever I use the terms 'I' or 'me' or 'my', I always refer to Consciousness, to omnipresence. So what I mean is this: When 'You're in my company', you are in the company of Consciousness. There is no differentiation between 'My Consciousness' and 'Your Consciousness'. I see you as Consciousness. All I see is Consciousness.

Again, it is a little difficult to understand. How do I see Consciousness? People ask me: "Don't you see the body?" Yes, I see the body, but I see it as Consciousness. I guess the only way to explain this is if you take a gigantic screen and on this screen there are pictures of bodies, of places, of mountains, of hills. The screen is aware of itself as the screen and knows that the objects are superimposed on itself. So the screen is constantly aware of being the screen, yet it knows there are pictures and objects superimposed on the screen.

So it is, "I realize myself as Consciousness". But I also know that the whole world, the whole universe, is also Consciousness or the Self. Everything is the Self and I Am That. That's what it means. Therefore, from now on whenever you hear me declare my confession: "I am Absolute Consciousness and I am Pure Reality, I am Satchitananda, I am Ultimate Oneness, I Am That I AM, Nirvana, Emptiness," this is what I am referring to. All this is the Self, and I Am That. The Self is like a gigantic screen, where there are images superimposed on the screen. But I am aware of the Consciousness and of the images. I realize the images are false, but I see them. But my feelings, my thoughts, (if there are any thoughts), my awareness, is always on Consciousness.

Now what does this mean? It means I can be watching a movie, I can be watching TV, I can go to an opera, I can be involved in all kinds of things, but I am not involved in anything. I am free of them. Yet to others it appears as if I'm involved.

This is why I am no fun to be around. (laughter) People can't understand how I can stay home by myself. They want to take me somewhere, be with me or feel sorry for me. Thinking "Robert is always by himself." (laughter) "He should go out more often."

Where would I go? (laughter) It really makes no difference where I am. Every once in a while Dana used to pick me up and take me to a movie. And I would make out that I'm enjoying myself. (laughter) After the movie, she liked to discuss it. And I don't know what happened, I had no idea what was going on. (laughter)

People tell me about their videos, and about this person and that. About actors and actresses. About Iraq and everything else. But what have I to do with that? I realize it is probably going on somewhere, but it is very dim. It's like a dream. I am totally aware of Consciousness. Everything else is like a little dream; far away someplace.

So I can be anyplace. As an example: I was picked up by three people tonight. Three people arrived at my house to take me to Satsang. And while they were there, they saw people working on my carpet. The hot water heater leaked, and the carpet was flooded. But all day I was watching these goings on sitting on the chair and I was totally happy. The happiness does not leave.

People can be living or dying, working or whatever they're doing. How can they be unhappy? Nobody dies. Nothing is wrong. All is well. So how can I possibly be unhappy? It is impossible.

So, when we're at Satsang, something happens to you to cause you to begin to feel this way also. Now, people have asked me: "Why should I want to be this way?" (laughter) Because you do nothing, you're good for nothing. You are no fun at a party and you are no fun to be around." (laughter) Because there is nothing for me to do. So why should you want to be this way? The main reason is this: Don't you want to be God? Don't you want to be totally happy and blissful? Be universal, so to speak, where you just feel and realize I AM is the universe, I AM is everything that exists? I AM That. And I AM at peace. I AM totally happy, total joy.

Everybody's running around with their problems trying to resolve them and solve them. I just look. I just watch. And I wonder how can you believe you have a problem? Why do you think someone is trying to hurt you? Why do you think someone's trying to take advantage of you? Why are you hurtable? And you don't know why. The answer is simple. Because you are identified with the personal I. That's the only reason. Remember, you cannot solve any problem by solving the problem itself. You've tried and it doesn't work. As I have said before, when one problem is solved, another pops up somewhere else. It never ends.

But, when you annihilate the 'I', when the mind becomes quiescent, and rests in the heart, your natural state, (which is called the Fourth State), after waking, dreaming, and sleeping, ensues by itself. It comes by itself. Just like the sun that has been covered by clouds. Only a fool would say the sun doesn't exist because they can't see it. The clouds dissipate and the sun shines once again in all its glory and splendor. So it is with us. We're covered with clouds of ignorance that make us believe that "I am hurtable", "I've been raped", "Someone is trying to do something to me." (I don't mean raped literally, I mean in your mind.) "Someone is taking advantage of me", "Someone is trying to do this and that to me".

Those are all lies. You're doing it to yourself because you're thinking past your nose. You are allowing your thoughts to run rampant with you. Your thoughts are taking you over continuously, leading you astray. You're not putting a stop to this, you're allowing it to happen. Is it any wonder you feel anger, frustration, out of sorts? Because you will not put a stop to these thoughts when they begin. This is also true with thoughts of dying, or sickness, or whatever. There is no such thing. Nothing exists but I AM.

You should practice that form of meditation. When you inhale, you say: "I". When you exhale, you say: "Am". If you have to meditate, meditate on that with your breathing. The day will come when you awaken and you will not have to do anything. But in the meanwhile, you do the best you can. But as you're doing the best you can, realize that consciousness is what you are, and consciousness loves you. For you are its own. It will never leave you nor forsake you.

If you can't do anything else, surrender to Consciousness. What I mean about surrender, surrender your ego, your problems, your emotions, your fears, your frustrations, your hurts, your anger. Give it all up. Say: "Take it Consciousness."

If that's too abstract to you, give it all to me. I will take it, chew it up for you, and spit it out. So when you wake up in the morning and feel out of sorts, you feel angry, or you feel frustrated say: "O.K. Robert, take this from me. I'm giving it to you." And I am happy to take it off your shoulders so you can carry a lighter load. If that's what you have to do, do that.

But, by all means, do not get carried away with your emotions. Stop in the middle, and watch. Watch your emotions ruling you. Watch your fears controlling you. Watch your anger popping up. Do not try to stop it, just watch, observe. Look intelligently and realize who it is who is getting angry or frustrated. It's not you. It's not even your ego, because there is no ego. It is not your body, because there is no body. It's not your mind, because there is no mind. Therefore, what is making you angry? Nothing.

It's like the story I've told of the Zen monk who was in his quarters and he got angry every now and again. He'd start arguments with his fellow monks, always looking for something wrong, always complaining, whining, always telling others his troubles. And he'd get really angry. So his fellow monk said: "Why don't you go see the Roshi, the head of the monks, and tell him to help you?" So he said: "O.K."

And the Roshi lived about two miles down the road. So he went down there and he explained his position to the Roshi. So the Roshi said: "O.K., here's what I'll do, take my staff, and hold on to it. Whenever you get angry, my staff will remind you to come to me and that will get rid of your anger for you."

So he went back to his quarters, and that night he really got angry at some other monks. He looked at the staff and remembered Roshi. So he started to run to the Roshi, and he finally got there. He was jogging all the way. So the Roshi said: "What's wrong?" And the monk said: "I got angry." The Roshi said: "Show me your anger!" Well in the jogging, the anger went away. He had nothing to show, and he said: "I am not angry right now." The Roshi said: "Go back to your quarters, and when you get angry again, come and tell me about it." The next day, he got angry again, he ran to the Roshi, and the same thing happened, in the running to the Roshi his anger disappeared. And the Roshi said: "Where's your anger?" And he said: "It's gone now." This went on about twenty-five times.

Finally, the last time, the Roshi said: "I'll tell you what to do now. When you get back to your quarters, take my staff I gave you. When you get angry, beat the living hell out of your anger with my staff." And this was so funny to the monk, that he became realized. He became enlightened. Because he realized he would take the staff and beat himself, and his real Self could never get angry. But it was his body that appeared to be angry. But just that running back and forth twenty-five times, and the answer the Roshi gave him made him open his eyes and become enlightened.

So it is with us. Do not look at your problem as a problem. Look at it as a no-thing. It doesn't exist. Again if your ego does not exist, if your body does not exist, if your mind does not exist, how can you be angry? Where would it come from? Who gave it birth? And this is true of any other problem you believe you have. Just by watching it like I just pointed out, it will disappear, and you will awaken to your true Self.

Now we'll go on to questions. Feel free to ask anything you like. Do not be embarrassed. Ask a question about what we discussed, or about what's going on in your life. We are all one happy family, so do not feel embarrassed to ask anything. Who's first?

Long silence...

R: Well, I'll talk about something else.

I was talking about all the phone calls I get in the beginning. People are still asking me: "What do you think about this Swami?" "What do you think about this person?" "What's your opinion about this person or that person?" "Why shouldn't I go see other teachers as well?" And I really do not know what to say.

You have to do what your heart tells you to do. But I can tell you, the more people you see, the more confused you'll become. Now I don't care if you never come back here again, because I am not looking for anything.

But if you do find a teacher that you seem to have an affinity with, you should stick around that teacher for a while. Because if you run from teacher to teacher, from meeting to meeting, you're going to become totally confused. Every teacher has his place. And you will be attracted to the person you have to be with for the time being. It all depends on where your consciousness is.

Again I will discuss something that a couple people have asked me about. I've done this before, but it's good to bring it up again and again every once and awhile. There are three types of people who go on the spiritual path. One type is called the seeker, another is called the disciple, and the third is called the devotee.

1) The seekers are the worst ones because they never stop seeking. While they're at class, they're thinking about who they're going to see tomorrow. (laughs) They never stop. They run from pillar to post. They go to India to seek a teacher. They go to Hawaii to see another teacher. They go to St. Louis when they hear about another teacher. They're seekers. And this is good to an extent, because they are better off than the people who do nothing and think they are human. But you can be a seeker for a thousand lifetimes and it will never end. If you are a seeker who is really sincere, and in your heart you truly wish to awaken, the time will come when you stop being a seeker and you become a disciple.

2) A disciple finds a teacher and tries to learn all they can from that teacher. But yet, they're still not sure, they still have doubts. They still are interested in me, me, me. "What am I getting out of this?" "What's in it for me?" And once in a while they'll go to other teachers also, but they're still staying around one particular teacher. And they become a disciple of that teacher, but they are not that close. For if they still hear about another teacher coming to town, they go see that teacher also. And of course there's confusion in their consciousness. But they're getting closer. If a disciple is really sincere in their heart, if they really have love and compassion and goodness and kind feelings towards all, they will eventually become a devotee.

3) A devotee becomes the Consciousness of the teacher. A devotee forgets all about him or herself. They could be in class when everyone is going wild, throwing spit balls at each other, but the devotee sees nothing but the teacher. The devotee is oblivious to everything that's going on in Satsang, but only has love and good feelings towards all. And is interested in the teacher's welfare, and ultimately becomes enlightened. So it is the devotees who awaken faster than anybody else.

Think to yourself, in what category are you? To be truthful to you, I would rather have five devotees around me, than ten thousand people who are seekers.

Now we'll go back to questions? Feel free to make comments. If you think: "I'm a dirty dog" just say so.

S: Robert, it sounds like you were describing devotees like the Bhaktas. Where does that leave the Jnanis?

R: Bhaktas and devotees and Jnanis are all the same. A real Jnani is a devotee of the Self, and the Self is everywhere. So they are really a Bhakta and they're a Jnani. They're both the same. There is no differentiation, really.

S: So, you're saying the Jnani has a lot of love.

R: Yes, they are supposed to, or they wouldn't be a Jnani.

S: I mean an aspiring.

R: They should be full of love and kindness, joy and peace towards everything.

S: Then it is not too useful to make the distinction?

R: No, you make a distinction... who makes the distinction? The ajnani. The person who is not the Bhakta or the Jnani who makes the distinction. But if a devotee even knows about these things, then they're aspiring for Jnana. They're aspiring for Bhakti, and they ultimately reach their goal because they learn to keep quiet. Not to talk too much, not to think too much. Not to judge at all. But just to be quiet and watch. They've got their eyes fixed on the teacher, like a lion has its eyes fixed on a rabbit. It sees nothing but the rabbit. Everything may be going on around the lion, but it only sees the rabbit, until it catches its prey. So a real devotee identifies totally with the teacher, and finally becomes like the teacher.

S: Robert, can all of these phases be passed through in one lifetime?

R: Yes, definitely. They can all be passed through instantaneously. Like right now, this minute. You just have to wake up. There is no time. Time is an illusion.

S: Robert, there are distinctions made between a gradual path and instantaneous enlightenment throughout the spiritual literature. A lot of this stuff about passing through stages, I can't relate to it. It just doesn't make any sense to me.

R: What can't you relate to?

S: Just the idea that you pass through one stage to the next stage.

R: This is for the ajnani. This is for the person who is striving. Of course, in truth there is nothing to pass through. But it appears that people need to understand these things so that they can search in themselves. And be able to see where they are coming from and this will help them tremendously. Perhaps you don't need it. But it is there.

S: That's not really the same as what you were talking about. Your state, which is really... I wouldn't call it happiness in a sense, cause it seems like it's so far above the happiness that's opposite sadness.

R: You're right.

S: Sadness could even come into that state that you are in and it would just be some other thing sort of passing through in a sense, with no identification.

R: You are right. As an example, I can cry at a funeral, but I realize who's crying. I can have all kinds of sadness if I want to, but I'm never really sad. You hit it right when you said that. It appears to be like that.

S: It's like the state of 'non-abiding mind', that's really the closest thing to it, isn't it?

R: You're right. That's true. I am looking for words to describe this. But there's always total happiness. But it is not human happiness. There are no things involved. For most people to be happy, there has to be a person, place, or thing involved in their happiness. But in true happiness, there are no things involved to make you happy. It's a natural state. And you abide in that state forever.

S: From the standpoint of practice, I have noticed that no matter what state comes up am I willing to ask myself: "Can I let this go?". Do you know what I mean? Do I feel stuck in it, or is it that important to me that I stay in this sort of emotional state? And the real answer to that is, that there is nothing you can do anyway cause it comes and goes and it's no use to do that.

R: Yet act as if there is something you can do, even though there is nothing you can do. Act as if there's something that you can do. As an example, if you were passing a starving man on the road, don't think there is nothing you can do and leave him alone. Give him a piece of bread. Act as if there is something that you can do.

S: But, say in regards to that state of the mind arising, emotions arising, perceptions arising, there is nothing you can do.

R: Except watch. Just observe, and watch.

S: Even that, if you turn it into something you think you are doing, it is not what you are talking about. In Vipassana retreats, you try to cultivate the mind that watches, but that couldn't be it.

R: No it's not. It's beyond that. But you are that in the beginning. As a procedure, a process, because that's where you are at the time, that's what you do; so you can't say that's wrong or right. It's just where you're at now.

Another thing to consider is this: If I were here as a visitor, and you attended one class with me, and you would never see me again, I would expound the highest truth to you, and take off. And you would say how great that is. But when I see you twice a week or more, I begin to know you quite well and everything I say is to help you grow because that is what is needed to be said to you at that time, since I'm going to be with you. To people who were with Ramana as devotees, he didn't expound absolute truth to them all the time. He would talk to them like a normal person. He would inquire about their welfare, about their health, about their problems, and he would give them practical advice.

He wouldn't say: "Nothing matters because nothing exists." (laughter) They know already but they can't help it, they've got the problems. So he would talk to them in a practical manner.

S: Last night, Robert, my partner, who is pregnant...

R: Your partner is pregnant? Who's responsible? (laughter)

S: The child's coming in July, at least that's what we think. Last night, living with a pregnant woman is a great practice of not taking anything personally. Her mood changes within five minutes, and last night she got really anxious about taking care of the child, insurance, and where's the money going to come from. Working at the Bodhitree doesn't exactly bring in much money, and I remember getting caught up in the emotions. But while I was doing that I was asking: "Who's getting caught up in the emotions?" but yet this body and emotions are getting caught up in it. And it seems there is the part that just kind of watches it and there's a part that's kind of retreating or not wanting to look at what she's dragging me into.

R: Since you're living with her, help her to the best of your ability. But be impersonal. Do not become attached to it. Practice non-attachment. Yet help her all you can. Be kind, gentle, and do the best you can.

S: It seemed like the most loving thing to do at the time would be to get insurance to help her fears and...

R: Well, if that's what you feel like doing, but just by being kind to her, it will help. Being gentle and peaceful and realize what she's going through. That alone will take care of it. But as far as you're concerned you realize where all this is coming from. She is involved in the personal I, and she's worried about her body and her affairs. Maybe you can help her in that way, telling her not to worry because God loves her and will take care of her and watch her. Everything will turn out all right. That kind of advice can be helpful.

S: A lot of the time she doesn't take that too well.

R: Then just keep silent, and say it to yourself. But if you can become calm and peaceful something within you will tell you what to do. You will be advised by the powers that be. The more calm you can make yourself, the more peaceful you can make yourself, the more you can control your mind, the greater the answer will be. You will know what to do and you'll do it for the good of all concerned.

S: Robert, I have something to say. I don't know if it's a question though. I don't know if it's a statement either, but it seems to me sometimes that this is all very intellectual in spite of what you say. There's a lot of talking about the process, the asking about the 'I' and all that kind of thing, and of course I've done a lot of reading like everybody else, and although I'm very critical of Gurdjeff, I was very interested in the idea of the dancing, of the work that was done, I mean physical work.

As we know, there's dancing in other systems, and sometimes I feel that it's almost more important to give attention to the body as it moves through life and as it moves through the day in certain ways, and that this is this unconscious knowledge that we're looking for, the approach to what we're looking for. The body itself undergoes experiences that enlighten us, and this is in a different realm than our intellectual speculations. I know for example that when I dance, there's a place in Santa Monica called Dance Home, and sometimes at night you have 50 people dancing alone by themselves in a dark room with colored lights. To me this is a spiritual experience because there seems to be almost an integration of body-mind-spirit.

R: Of course, the average person cannot sit home alone and think cause they go crazy. So you dance and become active, and it keeps you from going crazy from thinking. So what you're saying is true as far as that's concerned, but that's on a relative plane and you have to remember what body you're talking about. The body is transient, and you're not the same body you were 25 years ago. You're not the same body you were when you were five years old. You're a completely different body, so what body are you referring to? Pretty soon your body will become old and crippled. So are you referring to that body that cannot dance any longer, that has no energy and that has no power, that has to sit in bed all day when you get to be 90 years old? So what body are you referring to? Why keep your mind on your body when you can keep your mind on your Self that never changes, that is imperishable, that was never born and can never die. That is permanent and that is your real nature. If you identify with that you will find eternal happiness and eternal peace. But, if you identify with the body like you're doing, it will grow old and what will you do then? It will be time to die and you will be disappointed.

S: I don't think dance is identification with the body. If anything it is a removal from the body.

R: You're working with the body, so you have to think about your dance steps and you have to think about your dancing and having fun. It's all body work.

S2: Is it also that one shouldn't mistake release of endorphins in the brain to be a spiritual experience? (laughter)

R: That's true. Of course not. Endorphins in the brain have nothing to do with the Self. The Self is the Self. It is Self-contained, it is happy, it is peaceful, and it's knowledge. Everything else is transitory. It comes and goes. The free choice we have is with whom shall we identify. With the body or with the Self? That's your choice. If you choose the body, then you come back, life after life after life with other bodies, because if you identify with the body, there is not only one body, there are many bodies. It never ends. You are creating your own body, lifetime after lifetime until the time comes when you become disgusted with the body, and then true spirituality begins.

Another example: Say you love to go dancing, and you're coming home one day from a dance and you cross the street and a truck hits you and they have to amputate your legs. What do you think of that body? You have no legs and you can't dance. Now you have to stay in bed and you only think of the way you used to dance. You've wasted your time.

S: Yes, but couldn't everything you've said about the body be applied to the mind also, because the mind as you have said yourself is just a tool to move beyond the mind.

R: Yes.

S: So, if that can be said of the mind and if these attitudes can be had towards the mind they can also be had towards the body-mind. They are both illusory.

R: Of course. But you're using the body to realize that you're not the body. You're not using it to get further involved in relative things. You use the mind and the body to get rid of the mind and the body, not to get more involved. That's why you watch yourself and you see yourself and you ask yourself: "Who loves to dance...? Who loves to do all these things...?" "I do...." "Who is this I...?"

You're talking about your personal 'I' again. Everything is attached to the personal 'I'. When you remove the idea that there's a personal 'I', true happiness automatically ensues and there's no question about it.

Just like with me. I do not have to consider if dancing is more fun than being the Self. There is no comparison. There is no comparison. I know it's the same. Dancing is for the time only. Just like you're an artist and a writer. That's great. But it's for a time only. The time will come when you won't be able to do this anymore. You will be too old. Then what? You'll look back and you'll say: "Ah, I used to be a great artist, I used to be a great writer, I used to be a great dancer, but look at me now, I'm nothing." Then you commit suicide perhaps, because you cannot do anymore what you used to do. For you've been totally involved in the body consciousness. That's why I say find release now, find freedom now, so you don't have to go through this again and again and again.

S: How does all of this stack up with your ideas about pursuing the life that is wonderful as it is, and being involved in all activities with detachment?

R: You have no choice. The activities you are involved in, you were meant to be involved in. And your mind will do what it has to do to make you fully involved. The freedom you've got is simply to question: "Who am I...?" What is the source of I...? As you question, your involvement in life, so to speak, will become less and less, and you will become happier and happier. But if you do not question, then you will get deeper involved and deeper involved, and pretty soon you'll think that's your life. But again, as I said, you will grow older and older and then you'll just drop dead one day. And you will pick up another body and repeat the whole thing over again. There is no end to it, until you give up that concept.

S: Robert, I have a question in response to two things that were already asked. One is, as you said, when we come to Satsang, we tend to pick up the feeling that is present, and at the same time, when in the company of someone having intense emotions, we become that. Also, there is the question of gradual awakening or sudden awakening. My question is, if we are subject to these emotions, is it necessary for us to work on ourselves and gradually not identify with this, or is it something that just happens suddenly?

In other words, should we not be upset at ourselves for identifying with emotions and realize that it happened all of a sudden, or should we work on ourselves?

R: To work on yourself is simply to know, "I am not the body or these emotions". And as you identify with your source, everything will take care of itself. You do not work on the emotions, because they will pop up somewhere else as I've said before. But if you work on the source of your emotions, and realize that in reality there are no emotions to begin with, because there is only the Self, and the more you awaken to the fact that the Self alone exists and everything else is false, then you will begin to mellow out.

S: So it is gradual?

R: It depends. No. As you keep working on yourself, you can awaken instantaneously, and be free of it, or it can be gradual. It's up to you. It depends what you put into it. Everybody is different.

S: Isn't there always a preliminary growth before the jumping takes place?

R: For some people. Some people just wake up. When you have a dream, is there a preliminary before you wake up? Or, do you just wake up? Everybody just wakes up. So it is with this. As you keep abiding in the Self, one day you will just awaken and be done with it, and you'll be free. So don't think of preliminaries. Focus on the Self and everything will take care of itself.

S: What I'm saying is; if we don't see progress within ourselves, and see we are continually getting upset, we shouldn't let that bother us?

R: Keep observing. Keep watching and keep focusing on the Self, and there will be nobody to ask who is bothered or who is not bothered. You only ask a question like that when your attention is more on the bothering than it is on the Self. But if you change your attention, and you put all your energy on the Self, then you'll see what happens.

S: The question is: Is that gradual?

R: For some people. It depends on how much time you give to it.

S: We can't just turn our emotions off. Sometimes when I go to the office, there's such an intensity there. People are snapping at each other, and I get caught up in it. Of course I'm aware, usually after the fact, and then I say to myself: "Is this something that I'm aware of and that by abiding in myself gradually won't identify with this, or will I someday suddenly awaken?"

R: That's why I say in the morning, when you first open your eyes, that's the time to work on yourself. Ask yourself: "Who am I...? How did I get here...?" And reconcile yourself with yourself. If you do that first thing upon waking up, then the whole day will be good, and you won't have these problems. Just don't get up and run out to work. Get up an hour early if you have to. And see yourself for what you are, and realize the truth.

Focus on the Self. Ask yourself: "Who am I?" and wait. Think of your source. Concentrate on the source of 'I Am', or just say to yourself: "I Am, I Am," and then go to work. And you will see changes. Miraculous changes. If you're in the company of yourself, you will build up a power that you will carry with yourself all day long.

S: It's the whole thing of losing a center.

R: That's why before you go to sleep and when you wake up, that's the time to work on yourself. If you do it correctly it will take over your life and all will go well with you.

S: I am still confused about abiding in the Self and you wake up. I don't think abidance in the Self implies knowing the Self or already being the Self. Does it mean a gesture, such as deep Self-Enquiry leads to an abiding in the Self?

R: Abiding in the Self is knowing I AM, is being I AM. When you say I AM, you are abiding in the Self.

S: To follow it to its source, to find the 'I' by Self-Enquiry and to abide in that, to me seems to mean non-existence, statelessness. And so to follow it... what do you mean, follow 'it'? Because 'it' already seems like non-existence.

R: Don't worry about being non-existent. Simply observe the I, observe the I and watch it going into the heart.

S: It is not so much a following, but that it happens by itself?

R: It happens by itself.

S: When I contemplate I AM, it means that already I am the Self?

R: Yes it does. That's the same thing.

S: Is the personal self, which is saying: "I Am", different from the state I Am? Is there duality?

R: When you say: "I Am" you are transcending the personal 'I', and you are opening yourself up to your own reality.

S: So abidance in Self is taking place then?

R: Yes, it takes place right then and there.

S: Robert, it is because we have the concept we are not the Self, that we miss the fact that we are abiding in the Self all the time. As Ramesh said: "We only have the doubt we are not the Self, but the truth is we have always been it."

R: Exactly. That's why we have to go through all these troubles and play all these games, until we realize I Am the Self. And that's it. But if we can't see this, then we have to play all these games I guess. It's fun! (laughter)

S: If we don't have the Self, and we are saying I Am It, what is to keep that from becoming a parrot-like repetition?

R: It doesn't become a parrot-like repetition if you do it with your breath. If you inhale, you say "I." If you exhale, you say "Am." "I" "Am" A subtle change of energy takes place within the Self, and you'll find you are becoming more peaceful, and more calm, Pretty soon you will lose all identification with your body-mind. You will remain as I Am. It helps. Try it.

S: So in what you were saying earlier about identifying with the Self or the Source, in my state of ignorance... doing something as simple as saying "I Am" coordinated with the breath is the best I can do to identify with what you are talking about.

R: Well, that's one way. Do that. But you should also ask yourself: "Who thinks they are ignorant? Who believes they're not the Self?" "I do." "Who Am I?" And you go right back to it again. Use the method that helps you the most. For some people, just saying, "I Am" does the trick. Other people have to work with their own I continuously. Self-Enquiry is the fastest way to wake up.

S: Contemplating I Am is Self-Enquiry?

R: Of course it is. Definitely.

S: Of course Ramana used to say we are the Self but we don't remember. So we need to work on it. One way is Self-Enquiry which takes several forms, which you have explained and particularly I love "I Am" because I can feel some movement of energy when I contemplate I Am. So I thank you for it.

R: I am glad it is working for you, but be careful of these things. Don't be like the Santa Cruz lady who called me. She's a doctor. She was operating in the emergency room and she stopped everything and called me and said: "Should I concentrate on I Am while I'm operating? (laughter) Or should I just forget about I Am for now?" (laughter) I wonder what happened to the patient? (laughter)

S: Robert, when we do Self-Enquiry, actually that is the beginning step to find the I. When we develop a sense of abiding in the 'I', there's not too much need of enquiry because we go straight to the abidance.

R: Self-Enquiry has no beginning. If you do "Who Am I?," it is very powerful. It sounds simple, but it is very powerful. All you've got to say is: "Who Am I?," take a pause, say it again: "Who Am I?" Never answer. But keep saying "Who Am I?" "Who am I?" Eventually, something will happen.

S: I'm saying if you develop a sense of Self abidance, then you can almost watch yourself go in and out of those states. Watch identification with the ego. What I'm saying is Self-Enquiry is to get you to that state. But once you have a feel for that, you go directly to that state.

R: If you are abiding in the Self, there is no ego to watch, because there is only the Self. You watch the ego with the mind, not with the Self. So if you abide in the Self, there is nothing else. You are finished. You're cooked. Everything else is of the mind. So when I say abide in the Self, I mean forget everything and be yourself. There is nothing else to know at that point. Just be yourself.

S: Robert, I was unable to understand the use of the breath in connection with I Am.

R: You inhale, you say 'I'; you exhale, you say 'Am' with your breath. You will notice after a while that your breath begins to slow down, and the periods between I Am become longer and longer. And soon you will lose body consciousness and get lost in I AM itself. And you become Consciousness, -I AM-.

S: Rather frequently now, I become unaware of the body, and the heart seems to stop. I am aware of not breathing. Then I get shot back into the body.

R: That is all of the mind. It all comes out of the mind. Go beyond all that stuff. Do not pay attention to that. Enquire to whom does that come and go beyond it. And abide in the Self. See, we shouldn't get lost in procedures and methods. Remember, in reality, procedures and methods do not exist. Only the Self exists. Use the methods and procedures with a grain of salt. Try to stay at the source of 'I', and be free. I know that the more we talk about it, the more we talk about procedures, you can get lost in procedures. Be still, and know that I AM is God. So by keeping the mind still, you become God faster. So don't contemplate procedures, do the procedures if you have to but go beyond it fast. Leave it behind. And abide in the I AM.

S: I think it was Nisargadatta who said that the Sage gives a description of reality, not a prescription. He doesn't give you something to do, you go to a doctor for that. He tells you where it's at, for your own recognition.

R: What you are saying is true, but it's interesting to note that all these words of Nisargadatta and Ramana were given to new students everytime they came. Then they would go away. And then new ones would come. And the new ones would ask the same questions and he would give the same answers. That is how all the books were written. But what did he do with his direct disciples and devotees? He was human to them. Do you know what I am saying?

S: I can only take your word, I wasn't there. And there's no way of knowing that. But it makes total sense.

R: Sure, this is why as I said before, if I were a guest here for one time I would fill you with the absolute, totally and completely, because I'm not going to see you for another

couple years. But when I have to see you all the time, you tell me about your practices and what's going on and we have to have a dialogue, which is normal. There's nothing wrong with that.

S: From what I'm reading about Ramana, the people around him were not practicing Self-Enquiry so much as devotion. And probably they were getting more out of it than he was teaching.

R: You're right! You are right. That is why I tell you every once in a while the story about the devotee who used to pull his fan. He used to stand by Ramana and pull his fan for forty years. Then one day he dropped dead. And Ramana looked at him and told the devotees: "He's all cooked. He is not coming back again."

S: It seems that they were all contemplating him, tremendously.

R: You're right. That's why it's a combination of Bhakta and Jnana.

S: The contemplation of the master in his physical form, being close to him. I think that is all part of a Jnani and his disciples and devotees. I think that's as valid as questioning the Jnani.

R: You are right. It is a combination of Bhakti and Jnana. That is why I said I would rather have five devotees with me than 5,000 lookers and seekers and searchers and disciples. Because the five devotees would become realized in this life. The rest are only searching, looking. So you're right, absolutely. It's hard for a westerner to understand that because a westerner's ego is very big, no matter what you say.

Long silence

R: Om, Shanti, Shanti, Shanti...!

Silence is the greatest teacher. Remember to love yourself, to bow to yourself, to pray to yourself, and to worship yourself, because God dwells in you as you. I love you. Peace!

Well, Go home!



Be as a Flower

by Robert

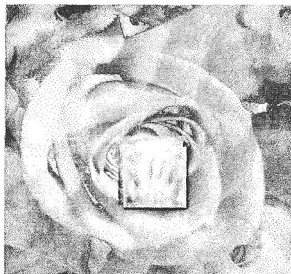
Truth is very simple
A flower does not try to be beautiful.
Its True Nature is Beauty.
It Exudes Fragrance, Beauty, Perfection.
Just by its Very Being.
In the same way, when you Awaken
to your true nature,
You will naturally exude Love,
Compassion , Beauty.
It is all you.
For it is your True Self.

The Sage

You come to sit with me to realize

That there is no teacher,
There's no truth,
There's no teaching.
There is only the One,
And you are That.
I am not your teacher.
There is no teacher.

I AM.
I AM THE UNIVERSAL.
I AM THAT I AM.



Maya

Everything that you feel, hear touch, smell and taste is maya.

Everything is maya, the grand illusion.

Most of us really do not understand what maya really is.

My trying to explain maya is maya.

Everything that your eyes behold,
that you believe is so important, is maya.

Everything that you hear

Everything that you read,

Everything that you try to do to better yourself,

It's all maya.

The water in the mirage, that is maya,

Something that appears to be real,

but upon investigation you find it's not.

The whole world is like that.

The whole universe is like that.

Do not be fooled again.

Do not take anything seriously.

Turn within, do not react.

The turmoil, the chaos that appears to be in this world,

is not the truth. It is not Reality.

It is something that comes and goes.

This too shall pass.

But your center is God,

Consciousness, Absolute Reality, Brahman.

Those are all synonymous.

That is the Peace that exists.

Renunciation

You have absolutely nothing to give up.
Nothing to surrender, nothing to let go of
You are already liberated.

How can you believe that you have to let go of something
that never existed.

You believe that you have to let go of your attachments.

How can the Self have attachments?

You think you have to surrender all of your fears,
all of your depressions,
all of the things that have been bothering you.
Surrender to whom? Those things are not yours.
They do not belong to you.

You are Pure Reality. You are the Imperishable Self
Never were you born, never did you prevail,
and never will you leave.

You are the One. The All-Pervading One.
Consequently, you have absolutely nothing to give up.
For you had never anything to begin with.

It's really egotistical to believe you've got something to give up.
There's nothing you have to surrender.

It's only the ego that believes that something has to be
surrendered,
something has to be given up, you have to let go of something.
Who is the one who had something to begin with?

There is no one.
There is only the One Reality, and you are That.

Self Realization

There is nothing you can think of in this Universe
that can tell you what you are.

It is beyond words and thoughts.

You can never with your finite mind understand who you are.

So do not try to do this.

It works in reverse.

It is when you actually stop thinking about who you are,
or wanting to know who you are,

And you stop analyzing, and you stop trying to figure it out,
that the truth about you is revealed.

It is beyond all of the thoughts and feelings that you ever had.

It has absolutely nothing to do with you as you are now.

It is the substratum of all existence.

You may call it God if you will.

Do not think of yourself as an anthropomorphic deity,
apart from God.

Because God is, you are.

Therefore, what God is, you are.

There is no separation.

Awaken to this truth.

The "I Am" Meditation

One of the methods we use to make our minds one-pointed so that we may ultimately annihilate the mind is the "I Am" meditation. This meditation has helped virtually thousands of people throughout the world. If you practice this diligently, sitting together in the silence, you will see amazing results ensue.

Close your eyes Feel your Self relax
Nothing is bothering you
Right now feel all your negative emotions leaving you
Feel them going away
Feel your Self very calm
Feel your Reality "I Am"
With your breath,
Inhale and say "I" Exhale and say "Am"
Inhale and say "I" Exhale and say "Am"

This is what you can do when you are alone
or when you walk in the street.

As you breathe you say, "I" "Am"
Close your eyes
Inhale and say "I" Exhale and say "Am"

You just are not, I am this ... or that "I Am."

Inhale "I" — Exhale "Am"
Inhale "I" — Exhale "Am"
Inhale "I" — Exhale "Am"

Confessions of The Jnani

By: Robert Adams

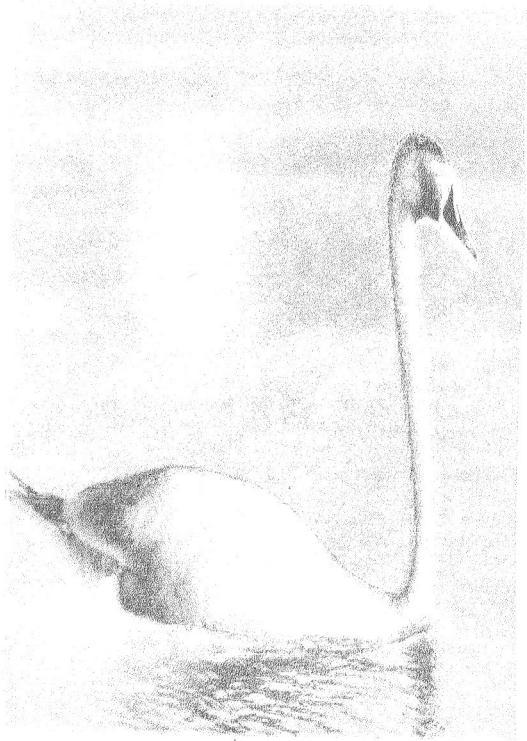
For the Jnani who has realized the identity
of his inner being
with the infinite Brahman,
there is no rebirth, no migration and no liberation.
He is beyond all this.
He is firmly established in his own Absolute,
Existence-Knowledge-Bliss true nature.

The further existence of his body and the world
appears to the Jnani as an illusion,
which he cannot remove,
but which no longer deceives him.
After the death of this body, as in life,
He remains where and what he eternally is,
The first principle of all beings and things:
Formless, nameless, unsoiled, timeless, dimensionless
And utterly free.
Death cannot touch him, cravings cannot torture him,
Sins do not stain him; he is free from all
Desire and suffering.
He sees the Infinite Self in all, and all in the Infinite Self,
Which is his Being.

The Jnani confesses his experience thus:

I am infinite, imperishable, self-luminous, self-existent.
I am without beginning or end.
I am birthless, deathless, without change or decay.
I permeate and interpenetrate all things.
In the myriad universes of thought and creation,

I ALONE AM



*“If the end result of Awakening is Love, Compassion and Humility,
What if we were to develop those qualities Now?”*

Robert

Silence Of The Heart

Everything that you can ever imagine,
that you want to be,
you already are.

You are the Imperishable Self
that has always been,
that you will always be.
Beyond birth, beyond death, beyond experiences,
beyond doubts, beyond opinions.
Beyond whatever it is your body is going through,
whatever thoughts your mind thinks.

You are beyond that.
You are the Silence.
The Silence of the Heart.

Glossary of Key Words in Sanskrit

- Advaita-Vedanta:** A subdivision of Vedanta. The non-duality approach.
- Ahimsa:** [Nonharming]. Abstention from harmful actions, thoughts, and words. An important moral discipline [yama] in Yoga, Buddhism, and Jainism.
- Ajnani:** One who has not realized the Self.
- Ananda:** [Bliss]. In Vedanta, the mind-transcending blissfulness of the Ultimate Reality or Self. This is not considered to be a quality but the very essence of Reality.
- Arunachala:** The holy mountain in India where Shri Ramana spent all his adult life.
- Atman:** [Self]. The transcendental Self according to the nondualist [Vedanta] schools of thought, which is identical to Brahman.
- Avadhuta:** [Cast off]. A radical type of renouncer who abandons all conventions; a crazy adept.
- Avatara:** [Descent]. An incarnation of the Divine, such as Krishna and Rama.
- Avidya:** [Ignorance]. Spiritual nescience, which is the root of all human suffering and the cause of one's bondage to egoic states of consciousness.
- Bhagavad-Gita:** [Lord's Song]. The earliest and most popular scripture of Yoga, containing the teachings of Lord Krishna to Arjuna.
- Bhakta:** [Devotee]. A follower of Bhakti-Yoga.
- Bhakti:** [Love, devotion]. The spiritual sentiment of loving participation in the Divine.
- Bodhisattva:** [Enlightenment being]. In Mahayana Buddhism, the spiritual practitioner who has vowed to commit himself or herself to the liberation of all beings, postponing his or her own ultimate realization.
- Brahma:** The Creator-God of the famous medieval Hindu triad of gods. The other two are Vishnu [as Preserver] and Shiva [as Destroyer]. Brahma must be carefully distinguished from the Brahman, which is the eternal foundation of existence.
- Brahmacarya:** [Brahmic Conduct]. The practice of chastity in thought, word, and deed, which is regarded as one of the fundamental disciplines [yama] of Yoga.
- Brahman:** The impersonal absolute according to Vedanta; the transcendental Ground of the world.
- Buddha:** [Awakened]. Title of Gautama, founder of Buddhism.
- Chit:** [Consciousness]. Pure Awareness, or the Transcendental Consciousness beyond all thought; the eternal Witness. See also atman, purusha.
- Dharma:** The cosmic law or order. Teaching-doctrine.
- Dhyana:** Meditation.
- Diksha:** Initiation by the guru.
- Gopi:** Female shepherd. In Vaishnavism, these terms refer to the devotees of Lord Krishna.
- Guna:** [Quality]. One of three primary constituents of Nature [prakrity]: Sattva [principle of lucidity], Rajas [principle of activity], and Tamas [principle of inertia]. The interaction between these three types creates the entire manifest and unmanifest cosmos, including all psychomental phenomena.
- Guru:** [Heavy]. Spiritual Teacher.
- Hinayana:** [Small Vehicle]. The minority school of Buddhism, which has arhatship or arhantship as its leading ideal.

Ishvara: [Ruler]. Personal God.

Janaka: An Indian king: An account of his Self-Realization can be found in The Ashtavakra Gita.

Japa: [Recitation]. Meditative recitation of mantras.

Jiva: [Living Being]. The psyche, or finite conscious human personality, which experiences itself as different from others and does not know the transcendental Self.

Jivan-Mukti: [Living Liberation]. The Self-Realized adept who is fully liberated while still embodied.

Jnana: Knowledge of the Self.

Jnani: One who has realized the Self

Kali-Yuga: [Dark Age]. The modern age of spiritual decline, which requires a new approach to Self-Realization. It is thought to have started in 3,012 B.C.

Karma: [Action]. Activity in general of the unenlightened individual, which activates the law of cause and effect.

Krishna: An incarnation [avatara] of Vishnu.

Kundalini: [Serpent Power]. The power that lies dormant in the lowest psychic center of the human body. The ascent of the kundalini to the highest psychic center, at the crown of the head, brings about a temporary state of ecstatic identification with the Self. [In Nirvikalpa Samadhi].

Leela: Tha play of God.

Linga: [Mark]. The phallus as the symbol of creativity, which is specifically associated with God Shiva.

Mahatma: Great soul, great man or saint.

Mahayana: [Great Vehicle]. The majority branch of Buddhism, which has the bodhisattva as its great ideal.

Mantra: Sound that empowers the mind for concentration and the transcendence of the ordinary states of consciousness. Usually the sacred words are given to a disciple by the guru.

Maya: Illusion

Moksha: [Release]. The highest of possible human pursuits: Liberation. Synonymous with Self-Realization.

Mouna: Silence.

Muktas: Liberated ones.

Nadi: [Conduit]. Channels in the body where the prana or energy travels through.

Nirvana: [Extinction]. The transcendence of the ego, a condition that is untouched by space and time.

Nirvikalpa-Samadhi: [Transconceptual Ecstasy]. Samadhi in which no differences are perceived. It is characterised by an absence of body-consciousness. Although one has a temporary awareness of the Self in this state, one is not able to perceive sensory information or function in the world. When body consciousness returns, the ego reappears, so the ego has not been finally eliminated.

Om: The key mantra of Hinduism, symbolizing the Absolute.

Para-Brahman: The Supreme Brahman.

Prana: [Life]. The life-force sustaining the body which has 5 principals forms.

Pranayama: [Breath Control]. The careful regulation of the breath. This is the most important practice of Hatha-Yoga.

Puja: [Worship]. Ritual veneration of one's teacher as an embodiment of the Divine.

Rama: The main hero of the Ramayana, deified as an incarnation of God Vishnu.

Rishi: A type of Vedic seer, who sees the hymns of Veda.

Sadhana: [Realizing]. The spiritual practice toward Self-Realization.

Sadhaka: A spiritual seeker.

Sadhu: A noble person or a spiritual seeker. However, Shri Ramana frequently used this term as a title for someone who has realised the Self.

Sahaja-Samadhi: [Natural Ecstasy]. The effortless ecstasy. This is the state of the Jnani who has finally and irrevocably eliminated his ego. A Jnani in this state is able to function naturally in the world, just as any ordinary person does. Knowing that he is the Self, the Jnani sees no difference between himself and others or the world. For a Jnani, everything is a manifestation of the indivisible Self.

Samsara: [Confluence]. The finite world of change and illusion.

Samskara: [Activator]. Innate tendencies.

Sat-Chit-Ananda: Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

Satsang: [Relationship to the True]. The spiritual practice of being in the presence of someone who has realised the Self. Association with 'being'.

Savikalpa-Samadhi: [Ecstasy with form-ideation]. In this state Self-Awareness is maintained by constant effort. The continuity of the Samadhi is wholly dependent on the effort put in to maintain it. When Self attention wavers, Self-Awareness is obscured by thoughts and imagery.

Shakti: [Power]. The feminine power aspect of the Divine, which is fundamental to the metaphysics and spirituality of Tantrism.

Shanti: [Peace]. Ultimate peace. Quality which coincides with Self-Realization.

Siddha: [Accomplished, perfect]. A Self-Realized adept. One who has reached perfection.

Siddhi: [Accomplishment]. Paranormal power, that comes as a result of spiritual practice.

Swarupa: Real form or Real Nature.

Tamil: A South Indian language: Shri Ramana's mother tongue.

Tapas: [Glow, heat]. Ascetism, religious austerity, penance, heat.

Tiruvannamalai: A town about a mile from Shri Ramana's Ashram.

Turiya: The Fourth State of Consciousness.

Vajrayana: [Adamantine Vehicle]. The tantric branch of Buddhism, especially of Tibet, which evolved out of the Mahayana.

Vasana: [Trait]. The concatenation of subliminal activators [samskaras], deposited in the depth of consciousness. Mental tendencies.

Vedanta: [Veda's End]. The dominant Hindu tradition, which teaches that Reality is singular and One.

Vedas: Four collections of scriptures dating from 2,000 B.C. to 500 B.C. which are the ultimate source of authority for most Hindus.

Vichara: Self-Enquiry.

Vishnu: One of the three principal deities of Hinduism. Vishnu periodically reincarnates in a human body.

Yoga: [Union]. Spiritual practice in general.

Yoga-Vasishtha: A massive advaitic text attributed to Valmiki in which the Sage Vasishtha answers questions put by Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu. Composed sometime in the tenth century A.D.

Yuga: [Age]. According to Hindu mythology, there are 4 yugas, each of several thousand year's duration. The present age is kali-yuga.