

Next Meeting
20 August 95



Issue No. 22
August 95

Meetings are held at 10am on the third Sunday of every month at 81, Greville Street, Chatswood and are open to anyone interested in the possibility of working out whether, through the process of DIALOGUE, transformation of consciousness, awakening to what we really are, or whatever we want to call it, can come about.

July Meeting

I was instructed by the meeting to record some key points but now cannot find the notes. All I can remember is that we found ourselves sacking the pre/trans fallacy. And this after putting it on the payroll following painstaking assessment and evaluation of its relevance and qualifications at several earlier meetings. It was agreed that those who find it a useful tool will continue to use it and those who don't will continue to look cross whenever it is mentioned. There has been a flood of letters and contributions this month for which I thank you all. The newsletter is only worthwhile if it is used by everybody to share views and experiences and thereby sustain the DIALOGUE. The latest crop of letters raises many interesting points and underlines what I see as a problem with present arrangements. That is, a lot of really interesting, important and sometimes controversial angles which pop up in the correspondence or at meetings are not followed through. Does this indicate the need for a bit more structure or more meetings, any ideas?

Mishka has a long and interesting article in the Autumn issue of 'Philosopher'. I have a copy here if anyone would like to read on the 20th. We again discussed the parting with Mishka and John and we found afterwards that 'The Celestine Prophecy' material which John Marjot provided was very relevant to the question. See Margot's commentary below.

Letters

Letter 1 - The reason for your Dialogue meetings, it seems to me, is for its participants to

enquire whether there is a possibility of a dissolution of the barrier to enlightenment, God, the eternal Now, a realm of non-duality, call it what you like.

If, instead, you were to enquire into the nature of the place from which this question arises, you may find that instead of an answer to that enquiry there will be a resolution of the tension from which it appears, and that the question itself then collapses and falls back into its own source, as it were.

The desire to know about the possibility of an end to a world of duality merely enhances who we think we are. Only in the absence of an enquirer can non-duality come into being.

Thus, instead of adding a something to ourselves, that is to say, knowledge of a way to achieve non-duality, we must lose something, namely, the need to enquire and to know, a demand nurtured by the questioner, the "me", the false ego. In the ensuing repose, rest or - perhaps more accurately put - death of ourselves lies the resolution of duality.

As another Dane once put it at his death: "The Rest IS Silence".

Mogens Holt

Letter 2

Re USA Quarterly, a suggestion: would it be possible to pay for a copy and postage on the USA Newsletter when you consider them to be of particular interest OR, otherwise, for each one regardless? If so, cost please. (Details for DQN direct subscription below)

As for seeing: Bravo for comments, "item 3 July letter - time is in the seeing not the other way round....." to take this further, seeing, listening

and learning can only ever be secondaries. They are never fundamentals for, without something to be seen, heard and learnt we are caught in a dream of illusion in which the ego is the dreamer and creator of time.

Donald's metaphor (item 2 July) of "awakening to life being like learning to swim" is the ego's perception within time, an observation from the perspective of separation, as is the term capacity, which also invokes time. It is probably nit-picking to single out Chris McLean's reference to a "Spiritual Ego" but the term worries me, though this could be a question of semantics since the self as Ego is undoubtedly "all outward display". From direct observation and experience I question that there is any "dynamic continuum...not self", but rather a shattering of "the container and the contained". When the ego sleeps, the not-self wakes: they cannot co-exist.

The urge to know through seeing, listening, learning is possibly a universal Ego Test like putting nuts inside a cage so the monkey puts his arm through the bars to reach them. The more nuts he collects the more he is caught unless he learns to open his fist and let go. The real monkey trick may be to not merely still the chattering of the brain, as they attempt to do in the East, but to halt the greed and the grasp of its long reach altogether. We need to kill the monkey (ego), no matter how it squirms and tries to escape.

P.S. The nuttiest part of all this is not very hard to grasp: in order to communicate this my ego needs to be invoked or, more specifically, communication-invocation-ego-time are elements in a circular movement. Participation in this particular dialogue is reincarnation right NOW!

Last night, in regard to my earlier insight into where we are AT (body position - longitude, latitude and altitude) it occurred to me, en passant, when the latter is truly understood, the state could be regarded as be-attitude meaning supreme blessednessinteresting, eh?

(At this stage of being -obviously - beatitude does not refer to the ego's posturing or brain fixations we normally call 'attitude').

Rome Warren

Letter 3

For those belonging to the "just listening" school of thought (perhaps that should be of non-thought),

the following parable and/or relevance:

There is a convention of balloonists, who are seriously discussing the pros and cons of various designs and types of balloon, intending to fly as high and free as possible. The meetings, while very worthwhile, are naturally showing up design limitations. This is particularly disappointing to one gentleman, who finally loses patience with it all and shouts: "You are all wasting your time! Why don't you just LEVITATE".

Erik Harting

Letter 4

A couple of extracts from a letter from Enid after her return from a retreat at Sassana House in the Blue Mountains. "The discourses dwelt a lot on parallels between Christian and Buddhist teachings and I felt very at home in this area. It was also asserted that the Dialogue between Christians and Buddhists now was very valuable and enlightening. Quite a bit of time was given the Gnostic Gospels especially of St Thomas - the doubter - indicating that doubt was good, a pre-requisite to experiential (or existential knowledge).

And, I thought this would be of interest in view of July NOWletter, item 3 on 'time':

Jesus said "pray without ceasing", but you can't pray without ceasing. But you can pray now.

The Buddha said "be mindful all the time", but you can't be mindful all the time. But you can be mindful now."

Enid Jenkins

Why are we here?

At the Dialogue meeting on June 18 Enid posed the question which I know has been asked before, - why do we come here?

This set me pondering. When Alan first told me about the Dialogue group my husband, Vaughan, had recently died and weekends tended to have a more lonely feel to them than weekdays. Here was somewhere to go. I liked Margot and Alan and I guessed the members of the group would be interesting and intelligent people. I know a little about Krishnamurti but the other names mentioned were new to me. It was some time before I even discovered that some were still alive while one lived in the 17th century. Although Alan lent me a fair bit

of reading on what Dialogue is, I still don't really understand it and therefore feel I can't fully contribute. This is a dilemma as obviously the group can't be interrupted every time a new person comes, to explain what it is all about. Each month I pick up a few gleanings, either from the discussion or from the newsletter but I still feel in a fog at times. I sometimes sit and wonder whether other people have a clear idea of the goals and method of dialoguing. I thought it had a lot to do with listening and yet members, including me, frequently interrupt, which shows we are not truly listening but busy forming ideas in our own heads.

One of my private concerns has been that the discussion is too 'headlevel' and not enough 'gutlevel' but after reading the article by Don Factor in the June Newsletter I see that David Bohm's intention (at least) was "to make Dialogue a conversation among equals everyone's ideas, opinions, or theories would be taken seriously but also be vulnerable to challenge and enquiry".

Why do I continue going? Because I find it intellectually stimulating. It widens my horizons and introduces me to new ideas. I enjoy the company, the food and the feeling of being part of a gathering that is more than just social talk. I like the fact that, while it may be preferable to attend every meeting there is no compulsion about it.

In a haphazard sort of way I am looking for a more spiritual dimension to my life. Dialogue is certainly not the whole answer but it may be a part of it.

Halcyon Evans

Review & Comment

The *Celestine Prophecy* by James Redfield (Bantam Books, 1994) is described in the blurb as "a book that captures the spiritual moment". It is certainly flavour of the month. "Reading like a story of high adventure", Redfield promises the reader the "in depth effect of a spiritual parable". The high adventure is the vehicle for the message. The writing is often tedious and clichéd: the unnamed narrator repeatedly suffers chills along the spine, knotted stomach, and freezing ("I froze").

However amongst the pulp fiction presentation there are some ideas, which if not new, are offered in a different way and which may have some relevance for the group discussions we have been having about the nature of dialogue and the way male and female energy interacts within the group. (Refer Alan's comments in a recent NOWletter.) Also in the context of energy, there are other points of interest in a discussion on the way groups function.

Redfield (in the persona of Karla Deez) suggests that "we're all stuck at the stage when we are still looking for our opposite-sex energy outside of ourselves". This most clearly manifests when we "fall in love" with someone of the opposite sex; we get a burst of euphoria and energy and thus begins a "classical co-dependent relationship" of two people looking for their other halves to make a whole, and such an illusion of completeness always breaks down into a power struggle. This struggle is part of Redfield's wider thesis that energy is something human beings spend their lives trying to steal from others in order to become whole, or at least feel better. He maintains that this phenomenon is the source of all wars and conflicts. I'm not sure how the energy balance achieved by falling in love with someone of the opposite sex applies to lesbians and gays: maybe we are all capable of becoming addicted (Redfield's term) to a sexual partner who balances our male/female energies. But it is a dangerous practice because the relationship becomes controlling as the energy runs out. "Getting rid of this habit [of stealing energy] isn't easy", Redfield says, (or more correctly Father Sanchez says) "because it's always unconscious at first. The key to letting it go is to bring it fully into consciousness, and we do that by seeing that our particular style of controlling others is one we learned in childhood to get attention, to get the energy moving our way, and we're stuck there. This style is something we repeat over and over again. I call it our unconscious control drama." There is further explication by Sanchez, who points out that everyone manipulates for energy either aggressively, directly forcing people to pay attention to them, or passively, playing on people's sympathy or curiosity to gain attention.

The order of dramas is: intimidator, interrogator, aloof and poor me, and although some people use more than one in different circumstances, most of us have one dominant control drama that we tend to repeat, depending on which one worked well on the members of our early family. Once we see our drama, Sanchez assures us, we can begin to get clear about who we really are.

Once we get clear about who we really are, we will be able to learn to interact consciously when in a group. Julia says: "Some people get inflated when in a group. They feel the power of an idea and express it, then because that burst of energy feels so good, they keep on talking, long after the energy should have shifted to someone else. They try to monopolise the group. Others are pulled back and even when they feel the power of an idea, they won't risk saying it. When this happens, the group fragments and the members don't get the benefit of all the messages. The same thing happens when some members of the group are not accepted by some of the others. The rejected individuals are prevented from receiving the energy and so the group misses the benefit of their ideas."

This last sentence is intriguingly at odds with our discussion at the last meeting, when we were talking about the possibility of group members who are rejected, either overtly or covertly, actually gaining energy in such a situation, because the need to be rejected is one of their control dramas.

More wisdom from the good Father Sanchez: "In a truly functional group ... the idea is for every member's energy and vibration to increase because of the energy sent by all of the others. When this occurs, everyone's individual energy field merges with everyone else's and makes one pool of energy. It is as if the group is just one body, but one with many heads. Sometimes one head speaks for the body, sometimes another. But in a group functioning this way, each individual knows when to speak and what to say because s/he truly sees life more clearly."

Margot Mann

Acknowledgments to Peter Marjot, who gave Alan a summary of Redfield's energy thesis, which inspired me to read the book.

(Editorial intrusion. The final paragraph is a good description of what I think effective DIALOGUE is about -Bohm's 'free flowing meaning'. AWM)

Making Something of No-thing

This is an extract of a contribution to the NoHead conference by Richard Lang and was prompted by the piece by Chris McLean which appeared in the July NOWletter and which he had earlier sent to the conference.

RE: recent postings about "the little man," the ego's pernicious attempts to "possess" "the void," etc.: Isn't something like an infinite regression operating here - in the sense that any thought about the ego is already the ego's doing, regardless of whether it's a "bad" obsessive kind of thought or a "good" I-shouldn't-be-thinking-this kind of thought.....

Chris - I've thought somewhat about the theme you were discussing a couple of days ago - the danger of making this nothingness into a very great Nothingness - a subtle kind of something. I think that every so often I realise I have done just that! Not really, deep down, because of course nothing can make this nothing into something. But I get involved with an image, an idea, a concept, and then stuck with it. The idea of the void for example, which effectively separates me from the world! Finally I look again, and see nothing here, not even the idea of an idea. But for a while I have fooled myself.

I like what you say about the paradox of practice, and your eachers' encouragement to live This, to embody the Void. I remember a phrase of D.T. Suzuki's from one of his Essays on Zen: 'the long maturing of the sacred womb'. And yet there is nothing to do, nowhere to go, and no-one doing or even not doing!

Actually, I will take the liberty of quoting myself here, since you asked if any one of us had meditated over the issue of 'thinging' the void. I put together and published a 'kit' which contains a booklet, audio tape, paper bag and card-with-mirror, and in one section of the booklet on 'Staying Awake To Who You Really Are', I raised

some of the difficulties we may come across. One of these difficulties was "Making a 'Thing' of the Void". Here is what I wrote.

The Void is nothing, but when we talk about it and give it a name, particularly names like Awareness, True Identity, Self, God, then we are in danger of making nothing into Something. This is as illusory as seeing your head or anything else on your shoulders, and probably more dangerous. The Self becomes

a subtle way of inflating the self. I become attached to the name, the image. The idea that I am headless, clear like space, becomes a subtle barrier between me and the world. I

withdraw into my 'nothingness', my divinity, away from the world. But my True Nature is not a 'thing' separate from the world. If your head is replaced by anything, it is not replaced by 'nothingness' but by the world. There is nothing here separate from the world, no barrier dividing you from it, behind which 'you' exist. The way to deal with subtle

Spirituality

One of the matters raised at the last two meetings is the question of what we mean when we use the word spiritual. I came across this 'definition' which is from the final chapter of William James' Varieties of Religious Experience".

Summing up the in the broadest possible way the characteristics of the religious life, as we have found them, it includes the following beliefs:

1 That the visible world is part of a more spiritual universe from which it draws its chief significance;

2 That union or harmonious relation with that higher universe is our true end;

3 That prayer or inner communion with the spirit thereof - be that spirit 'God' or 'law' - is a process wherein work is really done, and spiritual energy flows in and produces effects, psychological or material, within the phenomenal world.

4 A new zest which adds itself like a gift to life, and takes the form either of lyrical enchantment or of appeal to earnestness and heroism.

5 An assurance of safety and a temper of peace, and, in relation to others, a preponderance of loving affections.

I take it to mean that a spiritual view of life might include all or some of the above.

Experiments

We plan to devote 90 minutes after lunch, at the August 20 meeting, to experiments designed to demonstrate beyond question what you really are. Not as Father Sanchez would have you but as you really, really are.

WEEKEND DIALOGUE SEMINAR

“THE FUTURE IS NOW”

A two day seminar is planned for the weekend of Saturday 28th and Sunday the 29th of October at Kuranda the home of Geoff and Shirley Miller. Single room accommodation is available with limited twin rooms at the Resource Centre and the cost per person for the weekend only including food is appx \$70 per person . Kuranda is located in the hills about a half hour drive from Mudgerabah on the Gold Coast. Some of us will be staying a few days before and after the seminar which will be introduced by Donald Ingram Smith on his return from overseas where he is currently dialoguing his way around Europe and the USA.

BOOKINGS DIRECT TO GEOFF OR SHIRLEY (07) 5533 5178



DIALOG MEETINGS

These are more truly DIALOGUE meetings There is no agenda, explicit or implicit For more information Ring Barry Hora (043) 622 843

RYDE MEETING

12-30 pm on the first Saturday of every month at 1, Avon Road, North Ryde.
Next meeting ...Saturday 2nd September

CITY MEETING

2-30 pm on the second Saturday of every month at Theosophy House, 484 Kent St
Next meeting ...Saturday 9th September

SUBSCRIPTIONS

- * The NOWletter monthly, \$10 p.a. to Alan Mann, 81 Greville Street, Chatswood 2067 (02) 4197394
- * The USA quarterly newsletter -DQN- is \$US14 p.a. plus airmail @ \$1.50X4 = \$US20 = \$A30
Suggest you send \$US20 in US notes to Joe Zorskie, Box 1422 Ojai, CA, 93024-1442 USA

notions that seem to make a 'thing' of yourself at centre, however great or small, is not to attempt to repress them. That only re-enforces them. Attend to them, and see that it is idea there to no idea here. You are free of them at centre. They do not 'thing' you.

Richard Lang

