

Next Meeting
17 Sept 95



Issue No. 23
September 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.

Thank You

For your contributions which are becoming increasingly controversial; a wonderful broth of assumptions!

Change of Date

The October meeting will be on the **fourth Sunday, 22 October**. In November we revert to the third Sunday which is November 19.

August Meeting

The August meeting started by reviewing our reasons for starting the group and reminding ourselves that we first formed after the 1991 visit of Douglas Harding with the aim of continuing the enquiry through direct experience of what is happening rather than trying to see through the eyes of teachers, gurus and so on. We drifted away from this objective as I didn't have sufficient confidence in my ability to run workshops. We then adopted Dialogue which allowed us to draw on a wider circle of interest and to talk about it instead of or as well as doing it. There are now a number of pure Dialogue groups available as a result of Barry H and Peter's pioneering work so perhaps it is time for the Greville Streeters to revert to our roots. This seems to be indicated by recent signals such as the resurrection of the magazine "Share It", the establishment of the NoHead Conference which in turn revealed that Christopher McLean, who has already run a workshop, is living in Balmain.

My initial comments suggest that this would involve a movement away from Dialogue but, on reflection, I think the result would be quite

the opposite. If constant awareness of the assumptions which underlie our thinking and actions is the major objective of the Dialogue process then, to understand the assumptions about who or what we are, would appear to be the first thing we should do. I think we could claim the alternative name of "Primary Dialogue" for what is often referred to as the Headless Way.

Gladney is organising a one day seminar at Ourimbah on the 15th October (details below and this is the reason for the October meeting being moved to the 4th Sunday) which will include a session on 'Seeing' experiments. We tested a few of them at the August meeting and I have summarised the feed-back in the hope of improving the delivery on future occasions.

1 Different personalities seem to require different approaches and this is, presumably, the reason for the range of experiments. there are about 28. We need to make sure that our mixture is as broad as possible given the time limits. We will try some of them out at future meetings.

2 People sometimes find it hard to understand what we are talking about. This indicates a need for clarity in presenting the background and precision in carrying out the experiments.

3 The biggest obstacle seems to be the difficulty of removing knowledge from the equation of what is 'actually going on'; to put aside concept for the period of the experiment and rely solely on what can be apprehended. (I thought this would be an easy thing for Dialoguers to do. I also thought the use of Zen as explanatory background would be the best lead-in but this

might assume a wider understanding of Zen than is the case).

4 An expectation that the result will be extraordinary, in the peak experience sense, rather than extra ordinary.

5 The idea that it must be one or the other rather than both . That is, seeing includes the 'me as object' option. (See correspondence, etc., below.)

6 Rejection of the AS IF - AS IS paradigm.

7 Packaging of the whole business as 'headlessness' is a major hurdle. Capacity, openness even facelessness do not generate the resistance which 'headlessness' seems to arouse.

8 So what? "I already know I can't see my head - thanks for nothing.

Enlightenment?

Peter sent in a article on enlightenment which challenges the assumptions which appear to underlie the concept. I thought I would defer his full contribution to the next issue so that we could look at his questions at the next meeting without the benefit or pressure of his answers. He summarises his material as follows:

The Ten Demandments

- 1 What is enlightenment?
- 2 How do we know it even exists?
- 3 Why should we want it?
- 4 Do we really need it?
- 5 Why do we need it?
- 6 When should we seek it?
- 7 How should we seek it?
- 8 Where should we seek it?
- 9 How do we know if we've found it?
- 10 What do we do with it when we've got it?

A Supplementary Note to the 10 Demandments.

Nicoll (Psychological Commentaries, Vol.1, p.156) talks about 'levels of being' and 'objective consciousness'. Man's existence can be seen as a progression from level to level up a ladder of increasing understanding (consciousness), until man's highest possible level of development is attained, that of objective con or 'seeing things as they really are'. If we equate 'enlightenment' to reaching increasing levels of 'seeing things as they really are', perhaps we have a paradigm which can underpin our discussions.

Under Nicoll's (or rather, Gurdjieff's) system, those on a lower level simply cannot comprehend those on a higher level. Furthermore, those on a higher level can be considered relatively enlightened vis-a-vis those on lower levels. Again, those on lower levels seem to have an inbuilt yearning or instinct for the higher levels, i.e., we 'know' they exist in pretty much the same way as we know anything (concrete or not) - we 'feel' we do. (If this seems somewhat airy-fairy, this is still a pretty 'fair-y' description of how we 'know' anything at all!)

This might go a little way towards answering 'what is enlightenment?' (perhaps it is rising up the ladder of successive levels of consciousness) and 'why do we want it' (we may have a built in desire for it, even though - by definition - we cannot understand what we desire, because it is always on a higher level!) It doesn't, however, help us much with the aspect of 'how do we get it? or 'how do we know when we've got it?' (unless you assume we will just 'feel we know'. After all, we 'know' what we feel, no one else can possibly 'know' what we feel, and vice versa (I think).

Peter Marjot

I have persuaded Peter to lead what should be a very interesting DIALOGUE into his questions at the next meeting.

Ed.

Go easy on the ego

In two of last months contributions the ego came in for its usual pasting. Mogens referred to false ego without explaining the difference between true and false ego and Rome said that ego and seeing could not co-exist.

The ego it seems to me is a perfectly respectable and true aspect of being with a very important part to play in our survival and relationships. Why do we think happiness depends on its extinction?

The falseness which I think Mogens is referring to arises from my identification with ego and consequent failure to see myself for what I truly am. The ego isn't false, it is just out of place. Mogens suggests we look at where the question arises. In my case, it arises in consciousness when ego becomes aware of this mistaken identity and begins to understand its own limits. It seems inevitable that it

should then ask 'what is really going on?' Until the question is put or unless an ego-threatening crisis arises, nothing happens. I remain in my semi-coma. The awareness that I am half asleep allows the possibility of an awakening.

There is also an implication that awakening to the actual involves the destruction of ego. Why should this be so? The wider awakensure surely includes the narrower. If I really see as I am, what is going on will undoubtedly include ego activity of one sort or another. After her original dismissal of co-existence Rome acknowledges the paradoxical need for it. We still need to communicate, catch the train, etc. Only I don't think its paradoxical they are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, Rome has strong support from Gladney in his contribution below.

"Sitting quietly, doing nothing....." is, I agree, often the intelligent action but not always and not in all circumstances. Am I correct in sensing an element of 'spiritual correctness' in this constant ego-bashing.
Alan Mann

The Humble Moment

I heard someone say the other day "Buddhism doesn't distinguish between a lower self and a Higher Self, between a lesser and a Greater Self" and I found myself mentally adding (politely) "this far have your studies been useful, and as yet no farther". *The Book of the Golden Precepts*, one of the most sacred books in the sanctuaries of Buddhist students, was known to, some say compiled by, Aryasanga. In various passages in it distinctions are sketched between lower and Higher, lesser & Greater 1) power, 2) self, 3) life, 4) light, 5) soul, 6) sense, 7)memory, 8) journey, 9) paths, 10), vehicles.

Perhaps a quote or two will illustrate: "56. The self of matter and the Self of Spirit can never meet." ..."90. And now thy self is lost in Self, thyself unto Thyself, merged in that Self, from which thou first didst radiate."

I haven't been able to find any traditional Buddhist material which speaks of a lesser & a Greater Time. But one contemporary Tibetan Buddhist, whose meditational efforts seem to have been

successful, has written (since 1977) of different kinds of "time". Here are some extracts*:

Techniques -- attempts to force the issue, to improve, control, or achieve -- cannot arrive at the insight. ... the whole idea of a technique is to give the ego, the self-image, a *sequence* of lower time moments that it can set into motion -- what people properly call a 'course of action'. This is rather self-defeating if our goal is to open to the immediate *presence* of higher time.

Is there no way to prepare for being 'within'? There is no one *to* prepare, & nothing to do, yet in a way preparation is important. What has to be prepared is precisely the insight, initially the attitude, that there's no continuous self who has to do something.

If we fix ourselves in time -- time moves, eroding those positions to show that they are intrinsically artificial. Time is not like a machine, with internal structures constraining it toward a preferred mode of operation. It is utterly boundless, open, & flexible. Nothing is forbidden to it; its lucency permits all varieties of expression.

(Great Time says 'I see no lesser time', having incorporated lesser time comfortably in a fraction of itself. Lesser time says 'I see no Great Time', having separated itself off from Great Time.)

Each point in time offers the same possibility of contact with Great Time ... There is no fundamental taint or characteristic which marks some points as lacking this Great Time dimension, or prohibiting contact with it, while marking other points as having this dimension.

If everything is seen to be unoriginated ... then what time is this?

*(from the writings of Tarthang Tulku)

Gladney Oakley

Puzzle of the Month

Who said this:

"It is all here; everything is here and we simply acknowledge that it is here - the essence and the substance of all there is. What we call spirit and what we call matter are one, and the All. I don't like to talk about "spiritual" and "material" as if they were different or opposed....."

SEMINARS

THE ANCIENT WISDOM October 15th ... Starts 10am - Finishes 4-30pm.

A one day collection of theosophical workshops on the Ancient Wisdom at the University of Newcastle campus at Ourimbah. Enquiries to Ms Ruth Dickson (043) 234-620.

There will be eight or nine workshops running in parallel over three sessions including an experimental Seeing workshop run by Alan Mann, Chris McLean & Graeme Taylor. Dialogue sessions with Barry Hora. Other sessions include: Anthony Raymond on "Living the Presence"; Lazar Novak "An Introduction to Meditation"; Les Waddington "People, Conflict and War"; Phillip Carter "Gender in History"; Shirley Morley "Sharing our Understanding of Theosophy".

DIALOGUE SEMINAR

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



MEETINGS

Regular Dialogue Meetings

Monthly:

First Saturday - 12.30pm Swedenborg Centre, 1, Avon Road, North Ryde.

Second Saturday - 12.30pm Theosophy House, 484 Kent St., City

Third Sunday - 10.30am 81, Greville St., Chatswood (off Fullers Road)