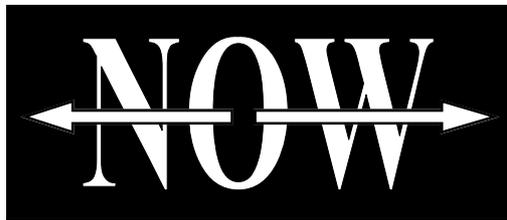


Meetings
16 March 97
20 April 97



Issue No. 33
March 97

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.

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Editor's Note

In this issue we have a letter from Robin and Julian, authors of 'The Enchiridion to the Totality' responding to Dennis Balson's 'Mystic Message'. I was also planning to include Dennis's reply to the questions raised by Erik in the last issue but I am in the middle of negotiations with Dennis for a shorter version than the eight page commentary he sent. I hope to include it in the next issue. It is almost impossible to capture the content of Dialogue meetings but a letter from Mishka allowed me to recover an issue raised at the December meeting. Other contributions include a poem from Donald, a piece from Peter and another Gothic manuscript from Terrigal.

Please keep the contributions coming in and let us have the personal angle wherever possible, why do you see it that way, what was the experience that opened it up, etc. As John Wren-Lewis puts it, 'the theory is all very well but what we need to know is 'what the cornflakes tasted like at breakfast this morning'.

As a move in this direction I include a recent letter on "my" problem which I posted as part of a recent email exchange.

The Sydney Dialogue meetings continue to be well attended. Terry is holding another weekend at Hyam's beach on 23rd of this month. Give him a ring if you can go, the last one was great. 'The 'Work of this Moment' gathering is getting close. Barry is taking the bookings but he needs a completed enrolment form from you (Phone numbers on back page)

The 'Work of this Moment Gathering is six weeks away. Session leaders are confirmed and this will be the first event of its kind in which Dialogue is used as the operating system. Have you registered? See Alan Mann for a gathering package and Barry Hora to register.

Reply to the Mystic Message from Julian Fortnum & Robin Bollard

Some notes on Dennis Balson's article 'A Mystic Message' Published in Issue No. 31 Although we agree with much of Dennis's comments there are many points we would like to pick up and put our slant on.

He says 'We know that the conscious mind looks into the past and contemplates what the future ought to be'. Do we? We suggest that the so called conscious mind creates the past, each to its own and constructs possible futures, there is no 'past' or 'future' to look into. I do not know about you but both past and future look like very shaky mirages to us

Dennis uses the word 'reality', easy word to use that but it's a code to cover our ignorance is it not? We cannot even discern the 'reality' of a grain of salt, to an absolute level, so let us be clear that 'reality' is but a passing interpretation, a 'now' understanding, a demonstration of our present unknowing. He also says 'Reality is what is' But it is not is it? Reality is always just gone, not apprehended, there is no present moment, that present moment is a reconstruct. In the non-duality mode there is no comment on reality, one is not even 'just is', all that has been transcended and as soon as we realise this, then we are no longer in the non-duality 'state' but back in the chattering duality or reactive state.

The term 'Human Brain' what does this mean when we are talking around the area of non-duality? That in some way the brain can be disentangled from its organ, yet still be 'mind'? We doubt it, the idea of separating bits of the body and treating them as if they are somehow self existent is a Western trait. Think about it, I am me, unfortunately, with all my flaws produced by years and years of ignorance and error and the lessons learnt through my survival. Each of us is a unique state of existence, a whole state of being. We should not consider ourselves to be an assemblage of bio-components. We give the Sciences too much credit, they have produced, in the end, nothing of much value towards transcendence of the human state and we say transcendence is the purpose of human existence.

The phrase 'moment to moment' comes up. What is a moment? Does this mean a 'mind moment' according to the Buddhist notions? Does a second or moment actually exist or have we arrived at a station whereby our human made constructs are now believed to be real?

Again the phrase 'our universal consciousness' is used

ascribing a name to something that is incomprehensible and then thinking that it means something that its real, solid, is there, like a brick wall. The idea of universal consciousness is just a label we hang on something when we come back from it. But lets be sure of one thing, universal consciousness is everything, it is Mind Only, it is not separate from us even now, because the duality and our separation is all a delusion and that is what we are trying to break. We are all Buddhas right now, we do not need to attain a thing, we simply realise this and pass through those trans-human dimensions that humanity has been talking about for thousands of years, not just once or twice, but as often and, finally, as easily as is required to get maximum positiveness. This positiveness enables final dissolution into that, which we call, the infinitude or whatever label you want, knowing all the time that these are all constructs but constructs to destroy all constructs. This is the oldest medicine in the world, driving out one poison with another. Its a dangerous treatment, one can easily be poisoned with the medicine (get stuck in a theory or belief).

.Dennis says "universal consciousness functions according to the laws of nature", etc. Surely all things 'function' according to the 'laws' or constraints of nature, otherwise there would not be this state of existence we are living, indeed, we would not 'be'. The laws of nature seem to be identical to the laws of what the orient calls karma, yet those laws are, in the end, undefinable, as is manifest in the crude ideas of chaos theory, etc., at the moment in vogue. You and I, this letter and your reading it, all and everything are manifestations of those adamantine universal laws. Whether we like the outcome or not they are expressions of the universe and are all perfect, they could be no other way, those laws cannot be transgressed and their manifestations are proof of our essential Buddha nature.

In our opinion Dennis again assumes too much when says that time is related to the speed of light and to quantum mechanics. Our comment is that the proviso 'we think' is related to, etc., should be used, in case we really do believe we have arrived at some absolute with the concept of the speed of light. We agree it looks like we MAY have, as we MAY have with evolutionary theory etc. but Dennis also says we can never really know anything, so let's not be too definite about these things, lest we start to take them on as dogma.

We personally have found time to be a very wobbly phenomenon and not an exclusive domain of physics. From my own experience I know that 30 seconds being lost whilst cave diving was far more significant and lasted ages longer than 30 seconds in front of a

TV; however, I'm sure most people will say that it is a subjective appreciation, well what else is life dammit? We say science has got it wrong and only by working in ivory towers do scientists demand we take their line. We are tired of their never ending definition of their state of ignorance. Life is too short for their never ending game. You and I are dying. We want to find out what is going on before we die. Science has cost us millions of suffering deaths by extending the pre death stages of suffering, indeed the whole of western science seems to be devoted to death denial and the never ending and ever failing attempt to prove that materiality is all there is. This alchemic search has cost us billions of dollars, many of its devotees have been lauded as the modern day saints, but still no satisfactory answers to the nub of our dilemmas has come forth (What am I?).

Unlikely as it may seem, we say Transcendence is the only real hope for Humanity, not twiddling the knobs of our materialistic setting. But the way of transcendence seems to have been forgotten by the vast majority of humanity; so I guess a few will travel the way almost alone, a few more will spend their lives thinking, arguing talking and reading about it or playing with it sometimes as an amusement. The majority will continue to recreate this state (because they know of nothing else), filling in time between birth and death, until there are so many pointlessly swarming that they will eat the world they live on, and then there will be no chance of considering transcendence, because they will be too concerned with just surviving. Paradoxically, it seems that most have arrived at this state already, even though they are at a better material standard than they ever have been

We sometimes reach the point where maybe Dennis is at, and think what the hell's the point of all this talk, all these words? It is the travelling of the road that matters, not the structuring or building of it. We can continue to make improvements to the way, add to the passing landscape, analyse the route etc., for the whole of our lives. But the point is we will never know if the road goes in the right direction if we do not follow it to the end first and it is surely better to follow a rough track to the destination to be sure it goes there, rather than take a superhighway, with all the signs complete, valleys crossed, the mountains tunnelled through and plenty of traffic on it only to arrive at a place that is not quite the real thing but, as there are plenty of others there, we can 'make believe' it is the real thing, 'it will do'.

Unfortunately there is an unsigned turnoff on that superhighway that a lot of people miss, it is a rough track indeed, and for a long way it looks very uninviting, not like a highway at all, no comfort stops

here, no breakdown services, you are alone, usually cold and hungry in a howling wilderness of your own dark ignorance. Few are attracted to it. The superhighway is easy to sell, easy to take, plenty of people there, looks OK.

So it is that when you come out of that wilderness and desolation of your ignorance to a place which is so magnificent it withers your ability to describe it, all you can do is point to this rough track leading into the desolation of one's ignorance. How can you convince others who have never even thought or heard of transcendence, that it is indeed the way?

There was a cave in Wales, known for many years, a small cave high on a hill. We experienced cavers rarely went there and when we did we had a quick look round it and left. Then one day a schoolboy entered it, poked around, pushed himself into a little crack we had ignored and found a cave system formed in the ice age by glaciers long gone, the cave was kilometres long and full of wonders. This is the way it was for Robin and I, we were ignorant of transcendence. We stumbled on this way and have been exploring it for 25 years now. We doubt if many would have the wholeness of commitment or motivation to follow our trail, but we left a map of it and that is the Enchiridion. We can do little more than that.

So to us, Dennis seems to 'believe' there is something called 'Universal Consciousness'. and that it 'belongs' to us. But this just is not so. Although when first arrived at, there does indeed appear to be a great and infinite sense of 'knowing' when we have totally lost ourselves in 'universal harmony', (which is complete universal non-duality,) but there is no consciousness involved. We are not 'unconscious' or 'blacked out' as it were; every trace of our conscious voice has been burnt away by the greater light of the pure perfection of universal flawlessness. It is only when we come back to our daily duality mode (which we are committed to do, unless we are prepared to let go and ready to die into it, just letting the biobody wither away) that we think of that experienceless experience in terms of Universal consciousness or some such labelling.

All our discussions are based in ignorance because ignorance, manifested as our separation from the absolute (duality in all its forms) is what we are, we are each of us, the manifestation of a unique state of ignorance, each of us perfect in every way, and all our interpretations are so based and can but reflect that state of ignorance, or un-knowing. When perfect non-duality occurs there is no commentary from the individual at that time, indeed there is no time, if there is then it is not non-duality, that is what, in the end,

non-duality is about, it is a major shift away from being. There would be no concern left for one's self survival or others well being.

Words fail, but compassion compels us to at least try to point the way beyond our 'being'.

Julian Fortnum & Robin Bollard

Suffering from Mishka Jambor

The December meeting concluded with a fairly spirited discussion which could be roughly summarised as 'what is appropriate action in the face of the suffering in the world'. It arose out of an anecdote describing a 50th birthday dinner in Sydney after which the bill was split evenly between all present. It came to \$40 per head. This was considered outrageous at the time by those who had eaten only entrees, or were driving or are naturally abstemious like myself. It was also thought to be outrageous, for other reasons, at the December meeting by Mishka

who was just about to leave for India. Mishka elaborated on the way to the airport and here is her letter:

Hi Margot and Alan,

I am writing to you in order to clarify what I wanted to say which did not come out very clearly in the meeting. This clarification will also be helpful for me, since I have not put this passion and this concern into an explicit message.

So I shall try:

1 At first my comment in the group was simply an expression of sadness and shock when the pattern of spending of so many Australians was raised. At that time I did not have any specific way that people

(Continued on page 5)

New Year's Eve

New Year's eve - the night of renewal
is not only a beginning but an end.
Here in the Southern Hemisphere
this night is not the occasion
for a rowdy winter celebration
of lengthening days as in the Northern world
but is the height of summer,
the pause at the very fulfillment of growth,
the space that completes the expired year,
that releases what has gone;
A quiet night in which reality is re-created.

For this immensity to be realized
the worn out, worn down practices
of the past have to be abandoned.
Life is not repaired,
Life is ever re-creating itself,
as is every baby born whole and completely new.
Last year's world has disappeared,
entirely disappeared.
For the maddening world chaos
to transform into harmonious cosmos
to allow reason to give way to reality
let this New Year's eve
be a spacious pause, a tranquil silence.

Donald Ingram Smith 31/12/97

should adopt instead (like: sending all of the restaurant money to India or going to live among the poor).

2 It is sufficient that I or someone else simply states (or suggests or asks others about) that a certain lifestyle is wrong or irresponsible or unloving. A good solution - on individual and collective level - is usually a long process.

3 Without being explicit however I was calling then for one thing: to adopt as a priority the abolition of poverty in the world.

Almost everybody in Australia is privileged, having so much more materially and in terms of rights (speech, of travel) and simply as a citizen of a First World country.

One probably does not realise these privileges unless one compares with situation of a citizen in the Third World (it is possible to get that knowledge in Australia - listening and questioning various refugees and immigrants from the Third World).

4 I rely on "where there is a will there is a way". Given the fact that there is still an enormous gap between the rich and the poor (and perhaps the gap is ever widening) - there must have been insufficient will.

So the problem is not technical ("we do not know how to distribute aid effectively or how to distribute wealth so that the poor get above poverty line") but rather there has been insufficient will in most citizens in rich countries to have the gap lessened and gone. Am I correct in this conclusion?

5 What I am calling people to do is to be concerned. The proper action - individual or collective - will not be immediately obvious - it will take time, then effort. And yet, where there is the will, there is a way.

6 Alan, you mentioned that there should be a mental shift or a consciousness shift, for such a general shift of priorities in the general population.

You are right. Simply calling for such a change of priorities may not be enough.

A Melbourne philosopher - Peter Singer - has been calling for such a change. He calls it "ethical living". He believes that if 10% of the population engaged in ethical living (details spelled out in his book "How are we to Live?" - published in '93) the rest would be somehow transformed as well.

7 His vision seems to me much better - for the world population and for individuals - than any spiritual visions I am aware of - Andrew Cohen's, 'Course in Miracles', etc., etc.

8 I have noticed, in general, in Australia and in India that the New Age people are hardly concerned with

those less fortunate. It is visibly so even in ashrams in India when Western people go in and out and beggars stay at the gate and get some scraps and coins.

Anyway, we are on the airport already, leaving in 15 min. see you back in Sydney in June. Mishka.

(The issue carried through to the January meeting to which I read this letter. Coincidentally, the subject was also current on the NoHead email conference at about the same time.)

Shock Treatment by Peter Marjot

Shocked by schlock! If we are to be awakened (DO we need to? DO we want to?) then what better way than to be jarred - by whatever means - out of our wits, derailed, blown up, terrified, electrified? It is not enough to gently shunt the torpid train of life to yet another track, however inveigling, but to blow up the rails and send it crashing into a ravine. Then only (if we survive) may we realise that there is a whole other world out there, besides the parsimonious strip of line that chugs from one vapid town to another and yet another. Vive le shock! (But not me please - I'm aged, English and hooked on chugging.)

"To know ourselves we need sensitivity and vitality enough to enter into every experience at its most extreme or spontaneous, so that we become that experience and move, as it were, in a single vibration. Penetration to the real is by means of paroxysm, intensity, and the confusion of boundaries. We penetrate to it in the paroxysm of love, the paroxysm of sneezing, and the paroxysm of terror. The shudder at the edge of the precipice, the pang of anxiety or of hunger, the stir of curiosity, the shock of recognition, the stagger of exhaustion, all cause the sudden influx of virility that unifies our consciousness. Even seeing something new may cause it, or hearing good or bad news. It comes at the moment of freedom, when the sperm is ejaculated or speech is released. It can come too in uninterrupted concentration, as when we fix our eyes intently on something, such as the cloudless sky. Memory can bring it, as when one recalls intensely the pleasure aroused by sexual activity. It can be born of art, as when one is identified completely with a musical performance. Confusion of a sort may help. For example, if one recites a poem too quickly for the thought to follow the words, one remains momentarily suspended between concept and intuition, and this suspension may bring on the mystic experience. Likewise the moment of falling asleep, that confuses (without effacing) the difference between self and the world, may bring it on". [From 'Mystical Experience' by Ben-Ami Scharfstein, p.22, adapted]

Peter Marjot

The Trance of Ordinary Life by Alan Mann

This title is lifted from Chapter 9 of book which Peter lent me. "The Observing Self - Mysticism and Psychotherapy" by A. J. Deikman.

Many of you will be aware of my ongoing wrestle with the question of why awareness seems to automatically adopt the objective rather than the subjective viewpoint in our everyday living. My persistence with this issue has resulted in a flow of advice in recent years including contributions from readers of this newsletter. In spite of your excellent advice the problem persists and, as you will see from the following, I am now carrying this crusade internationally via the internet.

I found in chapter 9 in Deikman's book the most lucid expression of what I have come to regard as "my" problem. In the opening paragraphs of chapter 9 he captures the essence of it.

"Although as adults we seem to deal with the world in concrete practical terms, fully occupied with the business at hand, introspection demonstrates that much of the time we dwell on abstract, tangential thoughts and fantasies. When we suddenly shift from such preoccupations to a full vivid awareness of the world, the contrast is so great we may describe ourselves as "coming to " or "waking up." Correspondingly, someone deeply absorbed in thoughts and fantasies is said to be in a trance." It is precisely the trance aspect of normal waking consciousness that I wish to discuss.

One immediate benefit of adopting the perspective of the observing self is that we can begin to detect and understand the problem posed by this state of human consciousness, which usually goes unnoticed. The predilection of people to be preoccupied with imaginings, to confine their attention to narrow segments of reality, is a tendency with which mystical science is much concerned but which psychotherapy deals with only indirectly. I call it the trance of ordinary life."

I must have raised this question several times on the Nohead email conference and back came what has become for me a typical response. This is from a member of the NoHead conference in Pennsylvania:

"I always - not just in your current letter - get the feeling that you have some sense of "doing it wrong" - that there's something else to do that you aren't doing, or that you have the wrong end of the stick or something. I wonder what would be the sign for you that you were "doing it right"--whatever "right" is. Do I detect some Catholic or other intensive similar

conditioning here?

and my reply:

No, there is no residual Catholicism. The conditioning was very mild Methodism which I subsequently abandoned for the usual reasons. However, I gained a different perspective on Christianity when I came upon Traherne.

To answer the question of what is it like - this condition which leads me to complain although I think it is enquiry rather than complaint. What do I mean by the 'trance of ordinary life' (courtesy A J Deikman)? Well, it is simply that I am often cut off from life by a conceptual fog of fantasy; daydreaming.

I don't have a sense of "doing it wrong" although I know it comes across like that when I try to explain it. When I sleep at night I am asleep, dreaming and not dreaming with no sense of doing it wrong, I am sleeping 'right'. When I am up and about during the day I am sometimes alert to what is actually going on, I call that 'awake'. The content of awareness is what is actually happening and that is what I am. So, in this state I would say, in the absence of approaching danger or other matters requiring imaginative action, I am 'doing it 'right'.

At other times there is strong identification with memory, the re-membered me. This non entity lives a life of imagination creating a context of time and starring in endless dramas both past and future; this is dreaming by day - the trance state. Consequently, awareness is denuded of almost everything else that is actually happening. This is the 'as if' scenario of the object self for which the 'as is' is abandoned.

As you point out, imagination is a wonderful gift and to be enjoyed and employed to the full. To the extent that it is so used I would say that is also 'doing it right'. The problem is that it persists beyond need and unless its antics are brought into awareness then it becomes the standard mode of consciousness. It monopolises awareness and leads to the living of a virtual reality.

You said, "I can't find ANYTHING wrong with the imagination and its use". Well, I think this unnecessary activity of imagination is 'wrong'. I don't like the word wrong, maybe a waste of energy or missing the point would be better.

So my problem is not so much that I am "doing it wrong" but why, having seen all this to be the case do I, more often than not, dwell in the 'as if'? Many people respond to this question by saying well, if the 'as if' is what is going on in you, that is your reality so

stop making a nuisance of yourself. In other words, 'go back to sleep!' What I say to myself is, 'for God's sake - wake up!'

You then said, "But in terms of what Douglas (Harding) is talking about, there seems to me no difference between the content of the imagination and the actual traffic in the road - it's all phenomena". Yes, but my point is that, in the trance state, the self is not understood as appearance but as reality - the objective self and, double trouble, that 'reality' is understood to be what I really am; what I identify as.

I am interested in why, when there is no need for the imagination to be at work, do I default to the 'as if' rather than the 'as is'?

Am I the only person with this 'problem' or simply the only person who thinks of it as a problem?

Alan Mann

APOLLOSTA

After reading Issue 32, January~97 of the newsletter it is now manifest that the editor and contributors are members of a verbal and oral discussion group involved in intellectual pursuits rather than ~ as was this writer's understanding ~ having the single aim of so training their minds that all thought processes based on dualism were transcended and their place taken by intuitive knowledge (Gnosis).

Please accept my sincere apology for this misapprehension and allow me to assure one and all that there will be more than enough subjects for discussion, esoteric or otherwise, to keep the group happily occupied well into the next millennium.

Mogens Woy

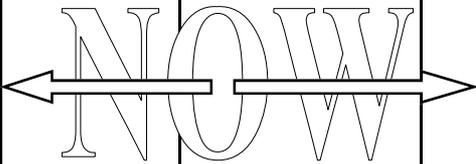
13th January ~97.

Editor's reply: This is not an unusual response to our meetings and newsletter and there is enough fact about it to make us stop and look at ourselves. However, the criticism overlooks the underlying principle of Dialogue - that the whole activity is primarily about process not content and that the main motivation is fellowship and a fellowship which might lead to communion. It is, in my view a drawing together of like minds; in the words of Traherne, 'The Fellowship of the Mystery'.

Socrates' reply:

Perhaps someone may say, 'But surely, Socrates, after you have left us you can spend the rest of your life in quietly minding your own business.' This is the hardest thing of all to make some of you understand. If I say that this would be disobedience to God, and that is why I cannot 'mind my own business', you will not believe me - you'll think I'm pulling your leg. If on the other hand I tell you that to let no day pass without discussing goodness and all the other subjects about which you hear me talking and examining both myself and others is really the very best thing that a man can do, and that life without this sort of examination is not worth living, you will be even less inclined to believe me. Nevertheless that is how it is, gentlemen, as I maintain; though it is not easy to convince you of it.

Plato, -The Apology

LOCATION	DAY OF MONTH	SYDNEY DIALOGUE MEETINGS	TIME & CONTACT	Phone Nos.
North Ryde	First Saturday	Swedenborg Centre , Avon Road	12.30pm Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
McMahons Point	First Wednesday	Community Centre 165 Blues Point Rd	7.30pm Terry O'Brien	044 438 353
				
City	Second Saturday	Theosophical Society 484 Kent St	2.30pm Barry Hora	043 622 843 Wk.9997 4412
Chatswood	Second Sunday	Telefriend- Cnr Albert Ave & Albert Lane- Near Pacific Highway	2.30pm Terry O'Brien	044 438 353
Chatswood	Third Sunday	81 Greville St. (off Fullers Rd)	10.30 am Alan Mann	By Arrangement Ring 9419 7394
'THE WORK OF THIS MOMENT' GATHERING Diamond Beach (Near Forster) NSW on 3rd, 4th & 5th May 1997				

The aim of the Gathering is to provide a venue for people who are aware of Krishnamurti and interested in the questions he raises. The theme of the three days will be an enquiry into what action and understanding of ourselves has flowed on from what Krishnamurti is pointing to.

It will not be an exclusively Krishnamurti affair and will include a range of complementary or parallel areas of interest. Many of us see the Dialogue movement as an example of what follows from the teachings and there will be opportunities to join Dialogue groups in action during the Gathering.

We have adopted an active, participative, workshop approach rather than a passive, lecture style. The days will start with a combined session, typically a talk by a guest speaker followed by a Q&A period. The gathering will then split up into groups for Dialogue and/or special interest meetings. In the evenings, we will come together hear contributions from participants and discuss anything of particular interest which has come up during the day.

For those able to stay on for a few days after 5th May there is the opportunity of continuing on as an informal retreat.