
Fingers Pointing to the Moon

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NEITHER HOT NOR COLD

The moon is very symbolic. It symbolizes two things particularly. One is light and coolness. The sun is also light, but very hot. The sun is fire; it can burn, it can kill. The moon is very soothing; it can revive, it can rejuvenate, it can bring you back to life, to abundant life.

The sun represents passion. Passion is hot, feverish, fiery. The moon represents compassion. Compassion is cool, non-feverish, just a subtle well-being. And a sannyasin has to learn how to be cool without being cold.

It is easy to be cold. It is as easy to be cold as it is to be hot, so it is not difficult to move from hot to being cold. That's what your so-called monks and nuns have been doing down the ages: from being hot they became cold, from being one extreme they became the other extreme.

The cooler you become, the more graceful you are; the hotter you are, the uglier you become. Passion is hot, it makes people ugly. When a person is full of lust you can see that his eyes and his face are all distorted. They are no more human, they look animal. He has fallen below humanity. The greedy person -- look at his face, his eyes -- he is a disgrace.

But when there is no greed, no anger, no lust, and one is very cool... I don't mean cold, because the cold person is also ugly. Hate is cold, lust is hot.

One has to be neither hot nor cold; one has to be exactly in the middle, the golden mean has to be followed. That is the path of the sannyasin: to be cool in all circumstances. It is like walking on a tightrope: you should not lean too much towards the left not too much to the right, otherwise you will fall. Keep your balance and remain in the middle, and then there is great grace, great beauty.

That is the beauty of a Buddha, of a Lao Tzu, of a Jesus. It has nothing to do with their body; it comes from their innermost core, it radiates from there. Of course it affects their body -- their body also becomes luminous with it, bathed in it. But it comes from far deeper sources than the body. It comes from their inner balance, their inner coolness.

The second thing: the moon is a mirror. It simply reflects the rays of the sun. It not only reflects them but transforms them from hot to cool; it is a great transformer. But it is a mirror, it simply reflects.

And that also has to be the very being of a sannyasin. He is a mirror. He does not project, he simply reflects whatsoever is the case. He has no ideas, no opinions, no prejudices; he lives an un-prejudiced life. He lives without any ideology, without any dogma and creed. He simply reflects the reality moment to moment and responds to it accordingly. He does not carry the past, he does not answer out of the past; he responds to the present. He is always fresh, as fresh as the mirror. He never becomes contaminated, he never clings to any reflection, he never accumulates memories; hence he does not create a mind. Mind is memory.

A sannyasin lives in a state of no-mind. He functions from a state of not-knowing. And that has tremendous beauty because it is true reality and it is in tune with reality. One cannot commit any error, it is impossible; whatsoever happens is right. One never feels guilty, one never repents; one never looks backwards, not does one look forwards. One simply looks inwards.

The moon also represents the feminine. It is not masculine. The sun is masculine energy, aggressive, violent. The moon is receptive, the moon is like a womb.

A sannyasin also has to be feminine. Whether he is man or woman is irrelevant. The biological, the physiological, is not relevant. A psychological femininity is needed. One should not be aggressive, one should not be ambitious. One should learn to wait. One should be patient, one should be a womb to receive god.

To be a sannyasin is to be a child of the moon.

DRUNK WITH THE DIVINE

Our being is tremendously sweet, it is delicious, but we have not tasted of it at all. We are running from one object to another object, from one desire to another desire like crazy dogs, and we have completely forgotten where our home is. We are lost in our desires, we never come home. For the whole day we are fantasizing, thinking, and in the night we are dreaming. This is our whole life.

Meditation helps you to come back home. It is a journey towards the source of your being, it is a dropping of thoughts and desires and memories and all that keeps you away from yourself. The moment you enter your own being it is so sweet, it is nectar. And it is very intoxicating too!

So Madhu has two meanings; one is honey, the other is alcohol. Whenever one comes back to one's own source, one is full of sweetness and absolutely drunk, drunk with the

divine. Of course that state of drunkenness is so totally different from any kind of drunkenness that one may have experienced before that it is not right to call it drunkenness. But there is no other word; so it has to be expressed in a paradox: it is drunkenness plus awareness. One is absolutely drunk and fully aware. That is the state of the Buddha, the Christ.

Every sannyasin has to keep it as a goal deep down in his heart. Less than that is not going to suffice. One has to be a Buddha because that is one's total potential. And unless you achieve one hundred per cent of your potential you can never feel fulfillment.

SANNYAS MEANS ULTIMATE SANITY

Man either can be just a heap of flowers or he can become a garland. If one is just a heap of flowers then one is a crowd. Then there is no unity, then there is no togetherness, there is no center. One is only peripheral.

The whole art of religion is to create a garland out of the heap of flowers. Meditation becomes the thread that runs through the flowers. It is invisible, but it gives them a certain unity, a certain integrity. And once you know that you are integrated, life has a different flavor. You are no more insane; the crowd is gone. The noises have stopped; there is silence and there is sanity.

Sannyas means absolute sanity, ultimate sanity.

FALLING IN ACCORD WITH EXISTENCE IS PRAYER

Prayer is a state of being. It is not something that one can do. It is something that one can only be. If you do prayer that is going to be false. If you are prayer, then only is it true. And the difference is immense. In the mosque, in the temples, in the synagogues, people are doing prayer -- just repeating traditional words. They are beautiful words, but words are words. They are not the reality. The word 'fire' is not fire and the word 'god' is not 'god' either. So one can repeat beautiful words, hallowed by tradition, but they are empty unless one is prayer.

What do I mean when I say 'unless one is prayer?'

I mean when one's heart is absolutely silent, utterly still, then a harmony arises between you and existence. you fall in step with existence; a subtle dance starts happening between you and existence. You are dancing together. That dance is prayer, that harmony is prayer, that falling in accord with existence is prayer.

Then whether you say something or not is irrelevant. One can say something, one may keep absolutely silent, one may not say anything, but one thing is certain: if you say something in those moments, those words will not be from the memory. Those words will not be borrowed; they have to be authentic, they have to be spontaneous, they have to arise in that moment. They have to be part of your feeling, not part of your thinking.

Then whatsoever you say -- just any word will do, any gesture will do, even silence is perfect enough, more than enough... but one feels grateful, one feels surrendered and one feels in a great blissfulness. That's what I mean by being a prayer.

WITH MEDITATION LIFE IS PARADISE

There is nothing more valuable than meditation. The people who have not tasted meditation are the poorest in the world. They may have all the riches, but still they are beggars because they have not known the real treasure yet -- the treasure that cannot be

destroyed by death, the treasure that cannot be taken away from you, the treasure that you are.

We are carrying an inexhaustible treasure of diamonds but we are not exploring it. We have completely forgotten to explore our own inner world. We have become too obsessed with the outside. We have become so outwardly, so extrovert, that not only do we not explore the inside, we don't believe that there is any inside. That's what people say when they say there is no soul, no god. In fact they are saying there is no interiority to man. They are saying there is no interiority to existence. They are talking nonsense because the outer cannot exist without the inner, nor can the inner exist without the outer.

In the ancient days the so-called saints talked nonsense: they said the outer is false, the inner is true. Now the pendulum has moved to the other extreme. Now people say that the inner is false, only the outer is true. Both are wrong, both are lopsided, both are extremists.

My approach is that both the outer and the inner are true, and one has to be aware of both, then only is life really balanced, harmonious. Then life is a synthesis and a song.

Turn in, search inside. Our true reality is there. And the wonder of wonders is that the moment you know your own treasure, the whole existence becomes infinitely more beautiful because it starts reflecting your richness. Existence is like a mirror: it reflects you. If you are rich, fulfilled, contented, it reflects your richness, fulfillment, contentment. If you are poor, ugly, depressed, it reflects that. It simply goes on echoing you. The same existence becomes hell for a few people and becomes a paradise for a few other people. It all depends on you.

The whole magic is in the art of meditation. Without meditation the world is a hell, life is hell. With meditation it is paradise.

BE COURAGEOUS AND FACE YOURSELF!

The treasure is within and we search outside, hence we are doomed to fail. Everybody fails. Those who fail, of course they fail; and those who succeed, they also fail.

We have a saying that nothing succeeds like success. I don't agree with it, I say nothing fails like success. You can ask Alexander the Great and all others Alexanders -- they have all failed because whatsoever they succeeded in was worthless. It was not in any way enhancing their being, it was not making them rich in their being. They remained as poor as ever. In fact a poor man never becomes aware of his inner poverty. Only a rich man has that privilege; he becomes aware of his inner poverty because he has the possibility to compare and contrast. On the outside he goes on heaping up treasures and inside he can see the emptiness, the absolute emptiness.

Sannyas means turning in... and suddenly you are the master. Nothing is lacking, nothing is missing. All that you need is already there within you. Just a little turning in and a transformation happens. It can happen in a single step. It need not be gradual, it can be sudden, like lightning. It all depends on how much courage you have to move in. Be courageous and face yourself.

IT IS TIME TO LOOK WITHIN!

That's the only difference between the religious person and the non-religious person: the non-religious person goes on seeking somewhere else, everywhere except in his own being. He seeks and searches everywhere. He has reached Everest, he has reached the moon; soon he will be reaching the stars. It is some vague search. He is not even clear about why he is doing it, why he is going to the moon.

We have not been able to make this earth happy yet. Half of humanity is dying, starving, and the other half which is not starving is not in any way happier. Maybe physically they are getting nourishment, but psychologically they are becoming so insane, imbalanced. The earth is in a chaos and we are putting so much money and so much intelligence and so much effort into reaching the moon. For what? What are you going to do on the moon?

Some vague desire.... We have not found it here, maybe it is somewhere else. Let us go to the moon and then to Mars and then on and on.... And there is no end to the universe.

The religious person is one who searches within in the first place. And that seems to be very logical: before you go searching anywhere else, at least have a look within. If it is not there, then go somewhere else. But anybody who has ever looked within has always found it there. There has never been an exception. This can be said to be one of the most fundamental laws of life, it is unexceptionally proved: whosoever has looked within has become rich, has found an inexhaustible treasure. He has found the pearl, he has found the divine, the eternal.

So now it is time for you to look within. Devote as much time and as much energy as possible so that in this very life you can find yourself. Blessed is the man who dies knowing who he is, because then there is no death. He only leaves the body, an old garment, and becomes free of all bondage. He moves into the universal soul. He is not only free, he becomes freedom. He not only achieves truth, he becomes truth.

TO RULE ONESELF IS DIVINE

To rule others is destructive, it is inhuman. To rule oneself is divine, it is creative. The people who rule others are only apparently rulers; deep down they are slaves of their own slaves, because their kingdom depends on others. Anything that depends on others is not much of a kingdom.

Alexander is not a real ruler, nor is Napoleon. Any day that the kingdom is lost they are beggars. And even if the kingdom is not lost, one day they die, and they go empty-handed. They cannot carry anything of that kingdom away with them.

A Jesus, a Buddha -- these are real masters. Nobody can take away their kingdom. Not even death can destroy it. These are the people who are full of joy, these are really rich people.

Become rich in the inner sense of the word, become a master.

THE DEEPER YOU GO THE MORE INTELLIGENCE IS REQUIRED.

Sannyas is only for the intelligent because it requires more and more intelligence each day. The deeper you go, the more intelligence is required. But this is the beauty of the whole process, that when you accept the challenge more intelligence is created in you. You have it potentially. It manifests only when the challenge is accepted.

Sannyas is a challenge to transform your potential intelligence into actuality, into a reality.

SANNYAS IS A GAMBLE

Bravery is one of the most neglected qualities as far as religion is concerned. And it is very surprising, because without courage nobody can ever be religious.

It is not dispensable, but it has been ignored, neglected. In fact cowardly people have been praised too much by the priests because the cowardly are ready to become slaves. They are ready to be exploited; not only ready, they are asking to be exploited, to be oppressed.

They are hankering for somebody to lead them. They are afraid to be themselves, they are not ready to take the responsibility. They want somebody else to take the responsibility.

And that's what the priests want and the politicians want, that people should not be their own leaders; they should always be in need of somebody else to lead them. Hence the churches and the temples and the synagogues are full of cowardly people. In fact the brave people avoid churches and temples; you will not find them there. But only they are the right people to be there, because religion is the greatest adventure in life. The cowardly person cannot go on such an adventure. He clings to the familiar, he is afraid of the unknown. And god is unknown, not only unknown, but unknowable.

Religion is rooted in courage because it is moving into the world of the unknown, it is entering into the mysterious and miraculous, it is getting into something where your intellect will not be of any use. It is going into the dark. But those who have entered into the darkness of the heart have come out of it luminous. They have come out of it enlightened.

But before one can be enlightened one has to pass through a very dark night of the soul -- and that is where courage is needed.

It needs guts to go into the uncharted sea without any map... because no map exists. In the very nature of things a map is not possible. Life is so vast, it cannot be contained in any map. And it is so changing, it is so dynamic, that any map is going to be wrong. By the time it is made, life changes; it never fits, it is always out of date.

So one has to go without maps and one has to go knowing perfectly well that one is risking, risking the safety of this shore for the unknown shore, which may exist, may not exist. But the courageous heart feels intrigued by the unknown, feels immensely attracted by the unknown. It is a challenge. And fortunate are those who accept the challenge, because in that very acceptance they become integrated. In that very acceptance their souls are born. They are no more empty bodies.

Life is not for cowards. Cowards only pretend to live. They go on moving in such a way, so cautiously, so afraid of committing any error, so scared of going astray that they cannot live. Life needs a little foolhardiness, a certain quality of totality, a certain madness to jump into things.

Unless one is a gambler one misses the whole joy of life. I teach you to be gamblers. Sannyas is a gamble. You are risking your life with a dangerous man: (laughter) You are trusting somebody who is not to be trusted at all! He can cut off your head... so be ready!

TRUST MEANS A READINESS TO ENQUIRE INTO THE UNPROVABLE

Rudi literally means the wolf, but symbolically it means courage and loyalty. In ancient times the wolf was thought to be the very incarnation of courage and loyalty. And those two words are worth remembering. Only the courageous one can be loyal -- the coward always betrays.

Judas must have been a coward; how can you betray a man like Jesus otherwise? And for only thirty silver coins! That must really be the ultimate in cowardliness. It is as if he was trying to find an excuse to betray -- thirty silver coins was enough.

He was the most educated disciple of Jesus, the most scholarly, the most clever, the most argumentative and logical. If he had not betrayed him he would have been the successor. He would have easily dominated the other disciples. They were simple people -- loyal, faithful, but simple. He was cunning and clever. But cowardliness always hides in cunningness and cleverness. Those are not the signs of a courageous person.

The courageous person is intelligent but not cunning. He is brilliant, sharp, he has

tremendous clarity to see things as they are; he need not be clever and cunning. Cleverness and cunningness are poor substitutes.

And to be loyal means trusting the invisible, trusting in love, trusting in god, trusting in the mysterious and the miraculous. There is no way to prove it; one can feel it but there is no way to argue about it. Nobody can prove it, nothing valuable has ever been proved. Whatsoever has been proved is mundane, ordinary. You can prove a stone but you cannot prove the beauty of a flower; that has to be experienced. And it depends on you: however much of a poet in heart you have, that much beauty you will be able to experience. It depends on how capable you are of seeing colors, how clear your eyes are. You need the eyes of a painter, then only will you be able to see the proportions, the color, the dance of colors. It depends on how sensitive you are, then only will you be able to feel the delicateness of its petals. The existence of a stone can be easily proved; anybody can hit you on your head with a stone and it is proved. You will have to accept that, 'Yes, the stone exists.'

That actually happened. Berkeley, one of the English philosophers, was proposing a philosophy that the world is illusory. He and Doctor Johnson were going for a morning walk together and he started talking about his philosophy. Doctor Johnson took a stone, a big stone, almost a rock, and hit him hard on the feel with it. Blood started oozing out of his feet and he screamed. Doctor Johnson said, 'Now what do you say? -- is this rock real or not?'

Yes, a rock can be proved to be real very easily; but beauty cannot be proved, love cannot be proved, prayer cannot be proved, meditation cannot be proved, god cannot be proved, bliss cannot be proved. Trust means a readiness to enquire into the unprovable, a readiness to go into the uncharted, a readiness to risk the familiar for the unfamiliar.

Both these qualities, courage and loyalty, are of tremendous significance for a sannyasin.

ONLY IN DEEP COURAGE IS ONE'S REAL SPIRIT BORN

Sannyas is only for the courageous. For cowards there are many temples, churches, mosques; the whole earth is full of cowards. It is the cowards who have become Christians and Buddhists and Hindus and Mohammedans.

The courageous person will never become a Christian, he will become a Christ. He will never become a Buddhist, he will become a Buddha. He will not become a Mohammedan, he will become a Mohammed. And when one can become a Christ or a Buddha, why bother about something third rate -- being a Christian or a Buddhist? And that is not going to satisfy. But then one needs courage -- to be a Christ is risky. One has to carry one's cross; visible or invisible, the cross is there.

By becoming my sannyasins you will be carrying a cross wherever you go. It is far more subtle than carrying a wooden cross. Your very presence will offend people, your very presence will create discomfort in them. You may not do anything to them -- just sitting silently with your closed eyes is enough to provoke them.

Jesus was not doing any harm to anybody. The poor fellow was just talking, and talking about beautiful things. He was not dangerous at all in that sense. Telling a few parables, explaining them... why did people become so antagonistic to him? His presence irritated them; somewhere deep down something happened to them. They could not tolerate him.

His presence proved to them that their lives were meaningless, his was the true way to live. That was the offence. His joy, his blissfulness, was a constant reminder to them that 'You have not lived the great opportunity that has been given to you to the full. You have not become grown up, you are still immature, you are still worried about toys. You have not done the real thing, you have been fooling around. And here is a man who has done it. This man

has to be removed, otherwise you will not be able to sleep peacefully again. His presence is a challenge.'

That's why it is dangerous to be a sannyasin: your presence will be a challenge everywhere. And you are taking a courageous step -- but only in deep courage is one's real spirit born. The greater the danger you enter into, the greater will be the birth. You will become integrated, you will become something solid, something substantial -- otherwise people are only shadows.

NOBODY EVER DIES

No one is new. No one can be new because nobody ever dies. We have all existed from eternity and we are going to exist to eternity; it is impossible to die.

One changes the body just like old garments, but one remains. And that which always remains, the ancient one, the abiding one which never changes, which is beyond time and beyond change, which is always now and here, is your reality.

It is like the ocean: the ocean remains, the waves go on changing. Our body changes, our mind changes, everything changes except one thing within you. And that one thing has to be discovered, because that is your reality. To know it is to know all. To know it is to live in bliss. To know it is to go beyond fear. To know it is to know god.

DIVINE MADNESS: A BRIDGE

Deva means divine; avril means april.

I don't know why april is associated with fools... because they go on being born all the time, all year round. But it is beautiful to be a divine fool. That's what Jesus is, that's what Francis is, what Buddha is, what I am!

It is better to be a divine fool than to be humanly clever and cunning, because that divine madness becomes a bridge. It is the ultimate in sanity.

THIS IS THE TRIBE WHERE YOU REALLY BELONG!

Sabine has no special meaning. It is the name of an old Italian tribe. It simply means a woman from the tribe of the Sabines. But it sounds beautiful... and that is far more important, because meanings are arbitrary, sounds are natural.

If man disappears from the earth there will be no meaning in any sound, but there will be sounds. The wind will still pass through the pine trees creating great music, and the waterfalls will go on falling on the rocks, creating great sound, and the clouds will come and the thunder, and the birds will sing. Everything will continue but nothing will have any meaning. Meaning is arbitrary; it is man's creation.

Sounds are natural. Hence music comes far closer to god than mathematics because mathematics is man's creation. Without man there would be no mathematics, but without man music would continue. Hence when you listen to music you don't bother about the meaning -- just the sound. If it rings bells in your heart it is enough. You don't ask, 'What is the meaning of this sound?' The question would be absurd.

A philosopher asked Picasso, 'What is the meaning of the painting that you are doing right now?' Picasso looked outside the window -- a beautiful rose flower was there -- and he said, 'What is the meaning of that rose flower? If the rose flower can exist without any meaning, why not my painting? If the rose flower has no obligation to be meaningful, what is the need for my painting to be meaningful?'

He is right.

Sabine sounds beautiful, it has some music. So your name -- if you want some meaning -- will mean divine music, divine sound, or a divine meaninglessness! (laughter)

How long will you be here?

-- I don't know... till the end of this month.

Mm mm. Then come back again, Sabine. This is the tribe where you really belong!

THIS VERY LIFE IS DIVINE

At the very center of our being is light. As we go away from the center towards the circumference, darkness deepens. The farther away we go from ourselves, the more we are in darkness; the closer we come to ourselves, the more we are in light. When we have gone very very far away, all is darkness. That's where people are living, in absolute darkness; hence the feeling of meaninglessness in life, hence so much desire to destroy oneself.

There is a deep desire in everyone to commit suicide for the simple reason, that life seems to be meaningless. People go on living, not because they love life, they go on living just because they are afraid to commit suicide. There is a desire to; and in many ways they do commit suicide. Monks and nuns have committed psychological suicide, they have renounced life. And these suicidal people have dominated humanity for centuries. They have condemned everything that is beautiful. They have praised something imaginary and they have condemned the real; the real is mundane and the imaginary is sacred.

My whole effort here is to help you see that the real is sacred, that this very world is sacred, that this very life is divine. But the way to see it is first to enquire within. Unless you start feeling the source of light within yourself, you will not be able to see that light anywhere else. First it has to be experienced within one's own being, then it is found everywhere. Then the whole existence becomes so full of light, so full of joy, so full of meaning and poetry, that each moment one feels grateful for all that god has given, for all that he goes on giving.

Sannyas is simply a decision to turn in, to look in. The most primary thing is to find your own center. Once it is found, once you are centered, once you are bathed in your own light you have a different vision, a different perspective, and the whole of life becomes golden. Then even dust is divine. Then life is so rich, so abundantly rich that one can only feel a tremendous gratitude towards existence. That gratitude becomes prayer. Before that, all prayer is false.

Prayer is possible only when you have experienced light. Then you know in deep gratitude just to say thank you -- thank you to the unknown, to the unknowable, thank you to the mysterious, the miraculous, thank you to the eternal.

EVEN DARKNESS IS ANOTHER FORM OF LIGHT

God is never experienced as a person because he is not a person. All ideas about god as a person are childish. They are only metaphors, parables; don't take them literally. When one enters into the world of god one simply experiences light within and without. All, everything, disappears into that light, everything melts into that light. Then rocks are light, condensed light, and trees are light and people are light and you are light. The whole world becomes a dance of lights and lights.

That's the experience of god. God is only a symbol. It is good to remember that, otherwise people start imagining; they imagine god in a Christian way or in a Hindu way -- but all those are just poetic metaphors. The reality is that when you enter the deepest core of

your being you explode in absolute light. The whole universe becomes simply light; hence the word 'enlightenment.' One who comes to know himself, comes to know himself as light. And the moment you know that you are light, you also know simultaneously that all is light. All darkness disappears. All death disappears because death is another form of darkness. All fear disappears because fear is rooted in darkness. Even darkness becomes luminous, even darkness is another form of light.

Keep it as a seed in your heart. One day it is going to become a reality. Is is a reality -- we just have to discover it.

MEDITATION: A WAY TO DISCOVER YOUR WAY BACK HOME

For god there is no darkness. For light there is no darkness. Darkness exists only when light is absent; hence they never meet. Light does not know that darkness exists at all. How can light know? -- because when light is present, darkness is not. Darkness is only an absence. God knows no darkness. And we know only darkness -- that's how we have become unbridged with god.

We also have to reach a point where darkness disappears and only light remains. That day -- when darkness disappears for you -- is of great celebration, is a day of great blessing. It is possible only when you realise that you are light.

Meditation is only a way, a method, a technique to discover your way back home. It is inside you. It has always been there and it will always be there. You can go on wandering everywhere, you will remain in darkness unless you come back to your own being, unless you turn in and see your own self. The moment you see yourself all is light.

And from that moment there is no darkness, no blindness. Everything is as clear as it can be. All problems disappear. Life becomes a sheer celebration.

Meditate more and more. Make it a point that whenever you have time, you give it to meditation. The first preference should be meditation.

THE STUFF CALLED GOD

People are ready to go anywhere except within. They are going to the moon...

In Japan a company is selling tickets for '85 to go to the moon -- and all their flights are fully booked. What are people going to do on the moon? There is nothing. They will only feel homesick, that's all. But people are ready to go anywhere -- they never think of going within.

Whenever you have time, forget the outer -- it is superficial -- and dive deep into the inner, and you will find the light, the light that is our very life, the light that is the stuff we are made of -- and of which the whole universe is also made.

In the old days that stuff was called god. Now that word has become a little dangerous. People don't like that word; it looks a little old fashioned. It smells of priesthood, churches, and the smell is not good.

So I don't say that you will encounter god within. But I can't help it: you will! That light is what god is. And unless one knows that one is something eternal which cannot be destroyed by anything, one remains on the circumference, accidental.

So make it a point now to give more and more emphasis to the inner, more and more time and space to the inner. And it is only a question of remembering; slowly slowly your consciousness takes a turn. And when you start facing yourself you are facing the greatest phenomenon, the most exquisite, the most beautiful experience of life, because you are

seeing life in its intrinsic grace and splendor.

About this same thing Jesus says: The kingdom of god is within you.

THE DARK NIGHT: THE WOMB FOR THE DAWN

Man is born with a very small flame of god within him; he is hidden behind layers and layers of darkness. So whenever one enters oneself, first one has to pass through a jungle of darkness -- and that's what scares many people. Many people try to go in but then they escape again, because that darkness makes them really afraid. It looks like death.

The Christian mystics have given it the right name: the dark night of the soul. But one has to pass through the dark night, otherwise there is no dawn. The dark night is the womb for the dawn. The master is really needed to help you while you are passing through the darkness. Once you have seen your own light you can say goodbye to the master. Once you have seen your own light there is no need for any help. You are grateful to the master, but you have come home, the journey is over.

While you are reaching towards that inner flame... it is really an arduous path with many pitfalls. Moving in darkness one stumbles, moving in darkness one gets hit, moving in darkness one falls and has to rise again. One needs constant encouragement, one needs constant support, one needs somebody to prevent one from running away and escaping.

That's the function of the master, to go on holding your hand, to go on telling to you, 'Don't be afraid -- the goal is not far away -- it is just around the corner.' It is never around the corner, remember (laughter)... but the master always says it is just around the corner. One day it is! (laughter) But one has to wait for that day, one has to be patient.

THE SMALL STAR WITHIN CAN EXPLODE...

Bliss is a small star within our being. It is so small... that's why we go on missing it. It is atomic. But just as the atom can explode and can create great energy, can release great energy, this small star can also explode and can create eternity, infinity, it can open up doors to god. But right now it is just like a small seed.

And we go on searching for it in the outside world. It cannot be found there because it is not there at all. You have not lost it there, it is lost within our own being. But it is so small and we are so full of garbage. That's what meditation is all about: digging into the garbage of the mind for something which is really precious and not part of mind, digging for something which is eternal, timeless, deathless.

It is there but it is a very tiny seed, a small star. I call it a star because it is luminous, and it can be found because it is luminous. We just have to dig deep. The garbage is very ancient, for lives and lives we have been piling it up; but howsoever ancient it is, it can be broken through. One can go beyond it, one can find the shining star. And once you have found it, it starts growing into something vast. Just your becoming aware of it is the beginning of its growth. Then it fills you, then it starts overflowing. Ultimately it fills the whole universe. You become the center. Everyone is the center of the whole universe. Everyone is the center and the circumference is nowhere.

Buddha says that when he became enlightened the whole universe became enlightened with him. Now this is a very strange statement. Buddhists have been arguing about it for centuries: what does he mean? -- because existence has not become enlightened, there are millions of people as unenlightened as ever. And he says that the whole existence, not only human beings but trees, rocks, animals, birds -- everyone became enlightened the moment

he became enlightened.

He is saying something about that experience when his inner light exploded and filled the whole universe. He has seen it happening, he is saying it truly. He is not wrong, he cannot be wrong. It is impossible for a Buddha to be wrong. Sometimes he may appear very wrong but then something must have been misunderstood by us.

He does not mean that the whole universe has become enlightened -- now there is no need for anybody else to become enlightened. He simply means that 'I am filling the whole universe. So much light is happening that I don't see any darkness anywhere. All is god.'

Right now bliss is just a small star, but it can become an unbounded source of light. And when it becomes that, life is fulfilled, one has arrived. Before that all is futile, meaningless.

AN UNENDING PROCESS...

Once your inner light is found your life is nothing but pure bliss. It is not only bliss for yourself, it becomes contagious, it starts affecting other people. Those who are receptive will start feeling something when they are close to you. Their hearts will respond, some bells will start ringing in their beings, a kind of synchronicity....

One man becoming blissful can trigger a process in thousands of people. Hence my interest is not in the society, but in individuals. If I can transform a few thousand people, that will do: they will ignite thousands more. And it is an unending process, it goes on and on. Jesus is dead but still the fire lives. Buddha is dead but the fire is being transferred from one hand to another hand. It goes on and on.

It is not in organized religion, it is not in the Christian church that you will find the flame of Christ. You will find it in a very different kind of people. In George Gurdjieff you will find it, or in J. Krishnamurti you will find it... people who have nothing to do with Christianity at all. You will not find Buddha's flame in the so-called Buddhists, you will find it in me -- and I have nothing to do with Buddhism. It is never found in the organized religions; organized religions are pseudo. But it goes on from one individual to another individual in very subtle ways.

Become blissful, become luminous. The flame is already there. You have not to do anything, you just have to discover it. It is within you so you have not to go anywhere else. Just be in silence, be still, looking in, searching.

You will have to pass through a big crowd of thoughts and desires, but it is not as big as it appears from the outside. Yes, you have to push and pull a little bit and you have to force yourself inwards a little bit. But it is a beautiful game, it is fun! To meditate is fun. And once you have been able to pass through the crowd into the open space of your inner being you will see the flame. That's your inner being. That flame is part of the great flame of god, part of the universal fire.

MAKE A GREAT DECISION...

Life is an opportunity, an opportunity to realize yourself. One can miss it -- many miss it. Only a few very rare people fulfill it. And those few people who fulfill it are the ones who enter into their inner world.

To go on remaining concerned about money, power and prestige is a sheer wastage. One's primary concern should be to know 'Who am I?' Don't feel contented till you have known it. Make a great decision at the innermost core of your being: 'I have to attain it' -- because that very decision becomes a seed.

EVERYONE IS A HIDDEN GOD OR GODDESS

Man ordinarily lives for name and fame. And that is a very futile kind of life, because both are false. Neither the name has any truth about it... You are born without a name -- nameless is your reality -- and you will die and you will go nameless again. But between these two namelessnesses you hanker for a name. One is ready to die for one's name; that is so stupid.

The name is a lie; it is utilitarian, but still, a lie is a lie. And so is fame. What does it matter how many people know you? If you don't know yourself how can anybody else know you? The whole world may know about you but if you are not acquainted with your inner being you are empty.

And this fame cannot become a substitute for self-knowledge. That's what people are trying to do: not knowing themselves, they create a substitute, they make every effort to be known by others. That is not a true substitute. You can be known by others but you will still remain ignorant.

And if you yourself don't know who you are, what can others know, how can others know? Whatsoever they know is going to be superficial.

The first thing is to drop the very desire for name and fame, then one starts turning in. Name and fame keep you hanging outside. When both are dropped there is nothing outside left to hang onto. One has to turn in, one has to explore inside.

Sannyas is inner exploration. It is the greatest adventure there is because it brings you to the truth of your being, it reveals your reality to you -- and that is tremendously beautiful, that is divine.

Everyone is a hidden god or goddess.

ONLY BUDDHAS ARE VICTORIOUS

The only possible victory in life is inner. Those who struggle on the outside are doomed to fail. Outer victory has never happened, it cannot happen. All the Alexanders are failures; only Buddhas are victorious.

Let sannyas be the beginning of an inner journey. Turn inwards more and more. Enjoy the outside world -- but the outside world is not all. It is only the circumference of our life, not its center. And unless you know the center you will be able to know even the circumference.

Once you know the center of your being even your circumference becomes luminous.

A PEACE WHICH SINGS, DANCES AND CELEBRATES...

Man only thinks that he dies; death is a fallacy. No one has ever died and no one has ever been born. Birth and death are both episodes in eternal life. Birth is not the beginning and death is not the end. You were before birth and you will be after death. To remember it, to realize it is the whole purpose of religion.

To experience immortality is the only way to get rid of all fears and anxieties, because they are all rooted in the fear of death. Once you know there is no death and no birth you are free from fear, you are free from hell. You are free from all kinds of nightmares. A great peace settles in, and that peace is not the peace of a cemetery, it is a peace which sings and dances and celebrates. It is a peace full of life.

A SANNYASIN IS ALWAYS YOUNG

Life is a journey, a pilgrimage. It is not static, it is dynamic; it is always moving towards the unknown. But because of our fear, we cling to the known and do not allow life to move, do not give it enough freedom to go rushing towards the unknown, to go dancing towards the ocean. It is like a river, but we make it a pond. And to become a pond is a death; to remain a river is to remain alive.

Ponds never reach anywhere. They only dry up; they become muddier and dirtier, and they stink because they are stagnant. They can't remain fresh, they can't remain pure. The river remains pure, fresh, flowing. And there is joy because there is always a surprise awaiting you, there is wonder -- what is going to happen next? Every moment life is a surprise, a non-ending surprise, a non-ending suspense -- a mystery which knows no beginning and no end. But one should remain without any fear, without any clinging.

That's what sannyas is all about: remaining flowing, never allowing yourself to become stagnant -- remaining dynamic, young. The body is bound to become old one day but the spirit need not be old. It becomes old only if we allow it to become old.

A sannyasin is always young. Even in death he is on a pilgrimage, he is ready to explore even death. Death does not come to him as an end but only as a new beginning -- a new door opens up.

ONLY WHEN YOU ARE ORIGINAL DO YOU REJOICE

Wisdom is our nature. It is not a question of becoming more informed, more knowledgeable. On the contrary, the less knowledgeable you are, the better. The less informed you are, the better, the more innocent you are, the better, because then you have that much less of a burden.

Those who are knowledgeable will have to put their knowledge aside if they really want to be wise. It is not ignorance that hinders wisdom, it is knowledge that hinders wisdom; hence knowledge is real ignorance.

The first thing you have to learn as a sannyasin is that all that you know is not real knowing; it is not your knowing, hence it is not real knowing. Put it aside -- it is all garbage -- so that you can know.

You are looking through others' eyes -- how can you see? You cannot see through my eyes -- that is impossible. You have to have your own eyes to see. And it is true not only for the outer eyes, it is also true for the inner eyes.

You cannot live in a borrowed way -- and that's what people are doing. That's why their life is just an imitation, a carbon copy. It has no beauty, no joy. You can't see any dance in it, any celebration in it. Only the original dances, sings, because only when you are original do you rejoice.

Clean yourself of all borrowed information and knowledge, unburden yourself, and then your own nature will start surfacing and a totally new kind of wisdom happens: a great clarity and insight into things, into problems, into life. And one is so clear about everything and so absolutely certain, so unconfused about everything that life is no more a problem. There is no problem any more. Everything is absolutely clear, nothing is a riddle, nothing has to be solved. There is no question left.

When all questions have disappeared and you are simply living out of your own natural wisdom, your own authentic wisdom, life is a joy. Before that life is hell.

My whole effort here is to destroy knowledge so that your wisdom is freed from the burden of knowledge, from the burden of words. Your silence has to be freed from the burden of words, your being has to be freed from the burden of mind, your wisdom has to be

freed from the burden of knowledge.

And the day it happens is the greatest day of your life; you are really born.
So start working towards it.

MEDITATION IS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Knowledge is not reliable. Howsoever knowledgeable one becomes, the doubt continues like an undercurrent. Knowledge cannot destroy doubt. Who knows? -- maybe Jesus was right, maybe he was not. Just by believing in him how can you be absolutely certain? Certainty is not possible. One can shout, 'I am absolutely convinced,' but the more one shouts, the more one shows that something is wrong somewhere. By shouting loudly the fanatic is simply trying to convince himself that he believes, that there is no doubt in him. In denying his doubt he is simply indicating that doubt is there.

Knowledge cannot destroy doubt. Doubt disappears only when wisdom arises in you.

Meditation is the technique to get rid of knowledge on the one hand and to help your nature start growing on the other hand. Meditation is a double-edged sword, it works in two ways. On the one hand it helps you to get rid of all the nonsense that others have taught you, and on the other hand it helps your inner nature to assert itself.

And when your nature takes possession of you, you are free and there is no doubt left. It is simple because you know; from where can the doubt come now? Only when you know do you know, otherwise not.

Trust only your own knowing. Be a light unto yourself.

WISDOM IS THE EXPRESSION OF YOUR SELF-BEING

Wisdom is absolutely individual. You cannot get it from anywhere else -- from the scriptures, from other people, from other peoples' experiences. If you gather all that, it will be knowledge, not wisdom. Wisdom is possible only if you go deeper into your own being. Wisdom is the experience of your own nature, it is the expression of your self-being. It is the flowering of your own consciousness. It is not information, it is transformation.

And that is the whole effort here: not to make you more informed -- about god, about truth, about love -- but to make you more aware of your own potential. My approach is to help you to be yourself. Anything else is a distraction.

And you are not to search anywhere else, you have to seek within, because all that one needs is already there. It has not to be invented, achieved, it has only to be discovered. Even while you are not aware of it, it is there, it is yours. The moment you become aware you start using it, otherwise it remains unused.

Everybody is born wise but everybody is behaving as if there is no wisdom in their own being. Everybody is gathering knowledge in order to become wise. That is the most stupid thing one can do. Knowledge will keep you unaware of your wisdom. Knowledge has to be dropped, unlearned, so that you can become purified of all information, so that your nature can express itself in its true form, in its authenticity.

That truth liberates, that truth becomes your freedom, your bliss.

If you really want to find greatly stupid people, you will have to go to the universities: Ph.Ds and D.Lits. There you will find really stupid people, so burdened with knowledge that they have completely forgotten who they are. They are carrying so much rubbish, all borrowed, nothing of their own. And this is one of the fundamental laws of life, that truth cannot be borrowed. You cannot say to somebody 'Can I borrow your truth?' That is

impossible; it is untransferrable. There is no way to give it to anybody. You have to unburden yourself of all borrowed knowledge. When all that rubbish is dropped and burned, utterly burned, then your nature starts asserting itself -- and that brings wisdom, insight.

INTELLIGENCE GROWS ONLY IN DANGER

Sannyas is not for the mediocre, sannyas is only for the intelligent. The mediocre lives according to others; the intelligent person is one who lives according to his own light. Whatsoever the risk, he is capable of taking it, because he relies on his own intelligence. He knows that the greater the challenge, the greater will be his intelligence; hence he accepts challenges, he is never afraid of challenges. He lives in danger because intelligence grows only in danger, in insecurity.

When there is no danger, no insecurity, intelligence dies. That's what I mean by a mediocre person: one who has allowed his intelligence to die, who has allowed his intelligence to gather rust.

Meditation is the way to sharpen your intelligence more and more. And the more intelligence you have, the closer you are to god.

SANNYAS: RENUNCIATION OF STUPIDITY

One needs to be more intelligent to go inwards than to succeed in the outside world. In the outside world not much intelligence is needed. In fact to be more intelligent may be a hindrance there because it is a very stupid world. To compete with these stupid people you have to be stupid, you have to be mediocre. But for the inner journey great intelligence is needed.

Only the intelligent ones reach the ultimate peak of life. And intelligence is not something which is any one person's possession; everybody is born intelligent. But to compete in the outside world everybody becomes unintelligent, has to out of necessity, because the more stupid you are, the more successful you become.

This is a learned thing, this stupidity that prevails in the world. It is not natural, it can be dropped.

Sannyas has to be renunciation of all kinds of stupidities, superstitions, beliefs. One then starts becoming more and more sharp. And only when you are totally sharp can you cut the Gordian knot in a single blow and you can be free from all bondage.

MAN: AN UNOPENED SCRIPTURE

Man is an unopened scripture. We go on reading the Vedas, the Bibles, the Korans, but we never read our own inner being. And all that is contained in the Vedas, in the Bibles, in the Korans, is contained within you, and is contained within you in absolute purity. Vedas are contaminated; Bibles, Korans are all contaminated. It is the nature of things: the moment you speak a truth it becomes a lie, utter it and you have already made it false. It remains true only when it lives in deep silence within you.

My effort here is to help you to read your inner being, because only there will you find the virgin truth, unpolluted, uncorrupted by words, language, scholars, priests, interpreters, commentators. It is only within your own being that you will find the still, small voice of god. Just one condition has to be fulfilled: you have to become silent, noiseless, so that you can hear it, so that you can read it.

SUDDENLY YOU HEAR A CELESTIAL MUSIC...

When the mind ceases completely and all its noise disappears, then suddenly you hear a celestial music that you have never heard before within yourself. It has always been there but because of the noisy head it was impossible to hear it. That sound, the sound of silence, is called aum.

The word 'aum' is made of three syllables: a, u, m. And these are the seed sounds. All other sounds are by-products of these three sounds: a, u, m. Aum is the basic sound; it divides into three: a, u, m -- the first trinity. And then out of a, u, m, all sounds go on growing, then the whole world of sounds.

In the Bible it is said: In the beginning was the word and the word was with god and the word was god. They are talking about aum -- that is the word. It is a wordless word, it is a soundless sound, but it is the most mystical experience of life, the most liberating experience of life. Once you have heard it you have known all that is worth knowing.

DON'T FORGET ON THE WAY...

Every being brings a message from god, but forgets it on the way. The distance is so great that by the time he reaches earth he forgets the reason why he has come and for what, what he has to do. Not only that: he forgets who he is and he forgets all about from where he has come. And he starts creating arbitrary purposes, just to keep himself occupied somehow.

Unless we find our true purpose life remains futile. One has to remember the true purpose, the true meaning. And people are like unopened letters: they have not opened themselves, they have not read the message that they contain within themselves.

We are making every effort here to help you to read your own heart, because it is there that the real Bible, the real Koran, the real Gita, exists.

Meditation is only a way to help you look into your own heart. It is a device. Once you have learned how to look into your own heart meditation is no more needed. Through your heart you are directly connected with god. Then you can dial him -- g, o, d -- any moment. Your heart is always in connection with the divine. But we live in the head, and the head has no connection with god.

Move from the head to the heart. Feel more, think less, so that one day you can feel totally without thinking at all. That day is the day of arriving home.

How long will you be here?

-- This is my last day.

Come back again for a longer period....

(to her retreating back) And don't forget on the way!

START LIVING IN YOUR OWN LIGHT

Every being is unique. God never creates carbon copies, he always creates originals. He only believes in the original. He is truly a creator, he never repeats. But man goes on living in imitation. We are trying to be somebody else -- which is impossible. Whatsoever you do you are going to fail. You can only be yourself; there is no other possibility. But we are all trying to be somebody else. That is the whole story of our failure, the tragedy of life.

My work consists in helping you to respect yourself, to love yourself, to accept yourself and to be yourself, because that's the only possibility; you cannot be otherwise. And there is no need to be otherwise -- god has created you unique.

I am not giving you a certain character or a certain style of life, but only an insight, an

awareness, so that you can decide your lifestyle, so that you can live in your own light. And the moment you start living in your own light, bliss is yours.

LOVE YOURSELF AS YOU ARE

Priests down the ages have condemned man so much that everybody feels rejected, everybody feels that 'I am just junk.' Slowly slowly the priests have destroyed all self-respect. They have created a division in every person: the condemned part and the condemner.

The condemner they call your conscience and the condemned part they call your instincts. This division keeps you constantly in a quarrel with yourself, in a disharmony. You are at daggers with yourself -- and that is no way to know god.

The first lesson is to love yourself as you are, because god loves you as you are. That does not mean that you have to remain the same forever. In fact this is the first step of transformation: if you love yourself you will be able to grow quicker, faster.

Now scientists have discovered that if you love a plant it grows faster than other plants which are given the same water, the same soil, the same fertilizers, but which have one thing missing: love is not given. The gardener never says hello to them, that's all. Their growth is prevented. They feel unloved, uncared for, not needed. And that's what has happened to humanity.

My effort here is to remind you that god loves you, that you are a beloved. If god loves you, you have to love yourself. If even god can love you... You can't have better standards than god, you can't have more perfectionistic ideas than god.

Love yourself -- and that does not mean to just fall asleep. When you love yourself the journey begins. Because you love yourself you would like to make yourself more and more precious, more and more joyous, more and more conscious, more and more worthy of god.

ONLY THROUGH LOVE TRANSFORMATION HAPPENS

Manfred means man of peace. That's precisely the definition of a sannyasin: one who is at peace with the world -- and not only with the world but with himself too.

The old concept of sannyas was only half... sannyasins were at peace with the world but not at peace with themselves. They were taught for centuries: renounce the world -- so there is no conflict obviously -- and to fight with yourself because there is something in you which is wrong, it has to be destroyed; something which is evil, it has to be killed; something which is animal, which has to be controlled, repressed. So the old concept of sannyas all over the world -- Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan -- was rooted in self-condemnation.

It has created a civil war within you, between the lower and the higher. But the division is arbitrary because man is one, there is nothing lower and nothing higher. But for centuries that stupid idea has dominated the world and has created a schizophrenic humanity. It has entered the very bloodstream of humanity. Science has polluted the outer atmosphere, and religion has done far bigger harm: it has polluted the inner being of man.

My effort is to change the whole idea, to bring a new idea of sannyas to the world. You have to love yourself, you have to be very friendly to yourself because it is only through love that transformation happens. It is only through love that understanding grows. Nothing has to be killed, everything has to be transformed. There is nothing evil in you. There is no devil anywhere. You are only raw material. If skill is used you can be transformed into a god.

DROP ALL GUILT AND DIVISION: ACCEPT YOURSELF.

The whole purpose of all religious endeavor is to create a state of peace within you. Ordinarily man is constantly in a turmoil, in inner conflict, in a kind of civil war, and the war goes on and on. It destroys your whole life because it dissipates your energy. This war has to be stopped.

The so-called organized religions have not been helpful; on the contrary, they have created this inner conflict more and more. They have made it more acute, more chronic, more canceric, because they create guilt. They divide every human being into the lower and the higher, into the good and the bad. And once you are divided you are bound to be in struggle, a struggle with yourself. You cannot win, you cannot be defeated either. You remain in a limbo, fighting and fighting: no defeat, no victory. Nothing comes out of it -- simply a frustration, a boredom.

That's what has happened to the whole humanity.

This is not the way of the Buddhas. The Buddha may be Gautam Siddhartha or Jesus Christ or Zarathustra or Lao Tzu -- it doesn't matter who the awakened one is, but this is the way of all the awakened ones: not to create conflict in you. But the priest lives on it, his whole business depends on it. The more you are in conflict, the more he flourishes, the more clients he has. This is his trade secret: to create guilt in people and through guilt to create division in people, make them schizophrenic. Once they are in inner turmoil and fight they are bound to come to the priests.

Now the same people are going to the psychoanalyst; the psychoanalyst is the modern priest. And the priests have understood it; they are studying psychoanalysis, they are becoming psychoanalysts. Now every religion is trying to exploit psychoanalysis, because they are seeing that their clients are moving towards psychoanalysis. The business is the same, the secret is the same.

My effort here is to destroy this whole business. I want you to love yourself because only through that love does peace descend. I want you to accept yourself in toto, as you are. Not that that means there will be no growth: in fact once you accept yourself as you are a great explosion happens, because the energy that gets involved in conflict is released and that energy is available for you. That makes you strong, that makes you more intelligent, that makes you more alert, that makes you more alive, that creates a soul in you.

So this has to be your first lesson in sannyas: accept yourself, love yourself, drop all guilt, don't divide yourself. There is nothing higher, nothing lower; all of you is divine. The lowest is as divine as the highest. Matter is as divine as consciousness. Matter is one aspect of god; consciousness, another aspect. There is no question of lower and higher, there is no question of hierarchy.

Just by understanding it you suddenly see great peace settling inside. And with that peace is the beginning of a radical change, of a revolution, of a new birth.

YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS SHOULD BE THE ONLY DECIDING FACTOR

Never be worried about what other people say about you, never take any note of it. Always think of only one thing, that 'God is my judge. Am I able to face my god?' Let that be the criterion of your whole life and you will not go amiss.

But people don't think of god at all. They think of other people, what others are thinking about them. If they think you are good they feel puffed up, your ego feels like a balloon becoming bigger and bigger. If somebody says something against you, criticizes you... just a pinprick is enough and your balloon starts disappearing, because there is nothing but hot air in the ego; it is utterly empty.

So people have to constantly be satisfying other people, their demands have to be fulfilled. You have to do what they say is moral whether you feel it is moral or not. You have to follow what they say is good. You have to be simply a sheep, not a man.

By becoming a sannyasin one declares to oneself that 'I am no more concerned about what others say about me. My whole concern now will be: "Am I able to stand before god?"' Then do only that which will enable you to look into the eyes of god. And you will not need to hide and escape and pretend and deceive.

This single criterion can become the center of your whole change. Your whole life will be lived in a totally different light. You will have a real perspective. You will not be confined by societies and their changing mores and moralities. Morality changes like fashion: something is good today and tomorrow it becomes bad.

For centuries war was good, now it is bad. For vegetarians, non-vegetarian food is the greatest sin. For the non-vegetarians no problem arises at all. They look at vegetarians as a little bit eccentric, crazy, crackpots, nuts!

If you look around the earth there are thousands of moralities and thousands of ideas which conflict with each other. For Hindus the cow is the mother. Everybody laughs about the idea but no Hindu will laugh about it; it is the sacred animal. And the situation is the same everywhere. The Chinese eat snakes, and it is thought in China that that is one of the most delicious foods. It may be, who knows? -- because I have not tasted it! (laughter) And they think the whole world is simply foolish missing such a pleasure, such a great opportunity. There are tribes that eat cockroaches (squeals of horror)... and very religiously. Now people are here who, if they come across a cockroach, escape. They only stop in Goa, they don't stop here at all!

These opinions are irrelevant to the real problems of life. One has to be on one's own feet and the only consideration should be: Whatsoever I am doing should be according to my light, my inner light. My consciousness should be the only deciding factor. Then god is your judge!

SANNYAS IS A BRIDGE TO GOD

You are divine and you are formless.

God is not something quantitative, god is only a quality. God is not something material, it is only a presence. It is not like a flower, it is more like fragrance. One can feel it but one cannot catch hold of it. One can enjoy it, one can love it, one can dance with it, but one cannot possess it. One cannot put it into a bank, one cannot treasure it, because god is not one's property. That's the meaning of formlessness.

Never think of god as a person. Think of him only as a presence surrounding the whole existence. And then there is no need to go to any temple, to any statue; wherever you are you can bow down in deep love and gratitude, and your prayer is accepted. Wherever you are in gratitude you are connected with god. Whenever your heart is full of thankfulness and surrender you are bridged with god.

Sannyas is a bridge to god.

We have become unbridged. God is not far away, but we are disconnected. We are no more plugged in. The socket is there, the plug is there, both are available -- you are there and god is there -- somebody just has to give you a few hints about how to put the plug back into the socket. You need an electrician, a Haridas (the main ashram electrician). That's my function.

MEDITATION BRINGS GREAT UPSURGE OF INNER HEALTH

Meditation brings a tremendous well-being, a great upsurge of inner health. Without meditation a man is ill. Something is missing in him; he is not whole. Without meditation a man is insane because there is no inner harmony in him. He is a crowd of thought but he has no center. And well-being arises only when you are centered, grounded, rooted.

Man without meditation is like a tree which has been uprooted from the soil. As you move into meditation you become rooted in god again. God is our soil, god is our nourishment. Meditation is only a way of getting rooted in god. And once you are in tune with god there is great joy, there is great peace, great health, great well-being. You start feeling a beautiful music happening within you. A melody, a meaning, arises in your life.

WHENEVER LIFE IS SPONTANEOUS YOU ARE ALWAYS IN TUNE

We can live our life in two ways. One is the way of reaction and the other is the way of spontaneity. Reaction means we never look at the situation, which is constantly changing. We go on responding with our old ready-made patterns, answers. Of course they never fit; we always go on lagging behind. That's what gives people a feeling of failure, otherwise there is no need to feel a failure. Nobody is a failure. Only this pattern -- that we act out of memory, not out of consciousness -- creates an illusion of failure.

Spontaneity means acting out of consciousness, not allowing memory to interfere, being just like a mirror, reflecting that which is. One has to be very very silent, simple, innocent, unknowledgeable, to be spontaneous.

I don't teach knowledge. I teach methods of becoming ignorant again, of becoming children again, how to attain to childlike innocence. Then your life is spontaneous, and whenever life is spontaneous you are always in tune. There is great fulfillment and such contentment arises out of that tuning with existence, such joy and such music and such poetry is felt at the deepest core of your being, that one cannot imagine it unless one has experienced it.

That music is what god is all about. But it is possible only if one is spontaneous; it is not possible for people who live out of memory, who go on reacting.

Don't react; respond, reflect, and be in tune with that which is. Never carry ready-made answers. Let the situation be there, and you be there: be conscious of it and let the answer arise out of your consciousness, out of the present.

When one lives moment to moment and goes on dying to the past and goes on throwing the past away and keeps oneself fresh... that is the way of true spirituality.

RELIGIOUSNESS IS ALWAYS MOVEMENT

Two things have to be remembered. One is that faith does not mean belief. Belief is of the mind and faith is of the heart. Faith is a love affair and belief is only an intellectual conviction. Belief can be easily destroyed by arguments; faith can never be destroyed. No argument can destroy faith because it is not based on arguments in the first place. But belief is based in arguments.

Belief is philosophical; faith is religious. Belief is a false coin. It looks like faith but it is fake. Somebody believes in god -- that is not faith. Jesus has faith in god, not belief. The pope believes in god -- it is not faith. He has not experienced it himself. That is the first thing to be noted.

I am all in favor of faith but absolutely against all belief systems.

The second thing is that faith is never static.

Belief is always static. Faith is like a river: moving, dynamic, alive, increasing -- like a tree growing, new foliage coming, new buds opening, new flowers. It is always a movement from one peak to another peak, from one perfection to another perfection, from one joy to another joy, from one mystery to another mystery. It is a non-ending pilgrimage.

Belief is dead, it is like a corpse. It never moves. It is like a pond, stagnant, it stinks. And the world is full of believers; that's why there is so much misery, so much ignorance, so much superstition. The whole earth is stinking for the simple reason that people have lost all contact with real religiousness.

Religiousness is always movement. Buddha used to say that the religious person lives in verbs, not in nouns. In fact nouns don't exist in reality, only verbs. Nouns exist only in dictionaries and human languages. They are our inventions. For example a tree: it is a noun, it is only part of our language. If you look at a real tree, it is not a tree, it is a treeing, because it is constantly moving. When you are looking at it a few old leaves are falling, new leaves are coming out. It is treeing, it is not a tree.

We say river -- that is a noun -- but no river is a river, all rivers are rivering, moving, going towards the ocean.

Faith is always increasing, and the person who lives in faith grows, grows to ultimate heights. And the person who lives in beliefs is a dead person. He trusts in something which is dead, and the ultimate result is that he becomes dead himself. Avoid beliefs and risk everything for faith.

THE WHOLE SKY IS YOURS

God is oceanic, infinite, unbounded. We have fallen apart because we have become identified with boundaries, with the boundaries of the body and the boundaries of the mind. These boundaries are keeping us away.

Just get rid of these boundaries. I'm not saying to get rid of your body. The body is perfectly good, use it; it is your house, live in it. But don't think that you are the body. You are in the body but you are not the body. You are in the mind but you are not the mind. And the moment you become disidentified with these boundaries, suddenly the gestalt changes, you start feeling unbounded. And that's what god is.

You start becoming oceanic, vast. Then there is no need to seek and search for god anywhere -- you become it. And that is the only way to know god. The only way to know god is to become god. There is no other way. One cannot know god without becoming god. That will all be mere information, about and about, around and around...

My approach is not that of a philosopher. I am utterly existential. I want you to become the experience itself, because only the experience is going to liberate you. All theories and all philosophies and all ideologies only become new boundaries. You become more and more confined. You become a Christian; now you are smaller than the whole humanity. Then you become a Protestant; you are even smaller than the whole Christianity. Then there are sects and sub-sects, and people go on dividing. People seem to be so interested in being small. They are afraid of being vast. They are afraid to cope with vastness so they go on limiting themselves.

The smaller the unit, the better they feel. And that is sheer stupidity. We are not small. It is going against nature, and anything that goes against nature creates suffering, creates hell. Go beyond all the boundaries. The whole sky is yours.

DON'T LEAVE THIS LIFE WITHOUT EXPERIENCING THAT YOU ARE GOD!

In the East we have many names for god. Because god has no name you can give it any name; any name is as valid as any other. God is a nameless experience, but we have to call it something -- x y z, just to communicate.

Govindo is one of those names. It will remind you that in your true reality you are a god. You may have fallen asleep and you may be dreaming that you are a beggar, that you are a man or a woman, that you are white or black, that you are this and that, that you are poor or rich -- but all those are just dreams. When the mind stops dreaming only one thing remains, and that is "I am god."

To die without knowing this is to have lived in a futile way. One is fulfilled only when one knows "I am god". And it is not a question of believing. The priests have been saying for centuries that the kingdom of god is within you -- but that doesn't help. You need to experience it on your own. Being Christian does not help, only being Christ can help. Buddhism is not going to give you the inner kingdom; it can be attained only when you become a buddha.

My effort here is not to create Christians and Buddhists and followers, but to create buddhas, awakened people, who are not following anybody but are simply living their true nature with authenticity, with responsibility, with joy.

Belief is easy; you can start believing that you are a god. That will simply be megalomania, that will simply be madness. It is a question of experiencing.

When you believe that you are a god, when you believe that "I am god", the "I" is very important and god is just a shadow. When you experience that "I am a god", the "I" is just a word, a utilitarian word; only god is real. "I" has to be used just for the purpose of communication, otherwise there is no I. That's the difference between the madman and the mystic. The madman can also declare "I am god", but he is simply declaring "I am". And this is the ultimate ego, to declare that "I am god." The mystic also declares "I am god," but he says "I am not, hence I am god."

So I am not saying to believe it. I am saying that the name will remind you that you have to experience it. Don't leave this life without experiencing it. This is an opportunity to experience your reality.

SANNYAS MEANS USING EVERY POSSIBLE METHOD TO GROW

To be a man is a great gift, but very few people realize it. You could have been anything in this vast universe -- a rock, a cabbage, a potato (laughter)... anything! And there is no court of appeal! Whatsoever one is, one is; nothing can be done about it. What can the poor potato do about it? (laughter) But very few people realize that they are human beings and that they have tremendous potential to grow.

The beauty and the grandeur of being human is that it is only through being human that one can reach to god. It is a first basic requirement. No other animal has any approach towards god, only man -- and not even all men. Only people who are really alert and aware -- those very few people create a bridge between themselves and god. Without that bridge life is meaningless and a great opportunity can be lost very easily.

Becoming a sannyasin means recognizing that life is a great opportunity and that to be human is a great gift. And we are not going to lose the opportunity; we are going to make the best out of it.

Unless one realizes one's godhood nothing is achieved, life has been a failure. And one

can realize it, it is every man's birthright, but one has to claim it, one has to work for it, one has to be very creative about it. That's what sannyas is all about: becoming alert about the great opportunity and using every possible method to grow: to grow beyond humanity, to surpass humanity, to become divine -- because that is our reality.

MEDITATION TRANSFORMS THE ANIMAL INTO THE HUMAN AND THE HUMAN INTO THE DIVINE

Man ordinarily is not even human. He is just like other animals. It is only through meditation that he first becomes human. That is the beginning of meditation. And when the meditation has become total, when you have achieved meditation so entirely that there is no need to meditate anymore, when you have become meditative -- it is there like breathing or your heartbeat, always surrounding you within and without -- then you become divine.

Meditation has two steps. One is the beginning, it transforms the animal into human. And the second, the ultimate, the crescendo, the climax of meditation, the peak, is when it transforms the human into the divine.

Unless one meditates one has no proof of god. One has not even any proof of humanity. As far as ordinary human beings are concerned, they are not human beings. They are so cruel, so ugly, that in fact they are far worse than animals.

Now, no animal can compete with Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin. No animal has done anything wrong like Genghis Khan or Tamerlane. No animal has killed its own species; it is only man who kills other human beings. No animal kills its own brothers and sisters -- impossible. Only man is a cannibal. He can eat human beings, either really or metaphorically -- and that's what people have been doing down the centuries.

Just the other day there was a question, a very beautiful question -- I forgot to answer. Somebody asked, 'What do you think, Osho, is a blow job vegetarian or non-vegetarian?' I simply forgot about it! (laughter) Talking to you about cannibalism, I remembered.

It depends: if it is being done by a cannibal it is non-vegetarian (uproarious laughter). (chuckling) Go deep into meditation. Good, Michel!

Fingers Pointing to the Moon

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Doing

3 March 1980 pm in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

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SANNYAS IS A CONCENTRATED EFFORT TO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE

We are all strangers on this earth. Our real home is on the other shore. We are here only to be ready to grow, to experience, to mature, so that we can be accepted on the other shore. We come into this life just as children are sent to school. It is a learning place, it is not our home. Learn as much as you can, experience as deeply as possible. Let your life be multi-dimensional, but remember one thing, that this is not our home. So don't get attached, don't become possessive, don't start clinging, otherwise who will go to the other shore?

When the evening comes the child returns to his home. For the whole day he is in the school, in the evening he comes back. The school is a necessity. Our life is a necessity; without it we cannot grow. With all its pleasures and pains, with all its foolishnesses and wisdoms, with all the joys and miseries we slowly slowly learn balancing, centering. Passing through many many agonies and ecstasies, something inside us matures, integrates. And when we are ready the boat arrives from the other shore to take us back home, but only when we are ready. Otherwise we are sent again and again, until we learn the lesson.

I have heard a story about a great musician. He was singing a song, and the people who were listening to him were great lovers of music. He finished one song and the whole crowd said, 'Again, once more.' He sang it again, very happy that he had been received so well. When he finished it the whole crowd shouted even more loudly, 'Again! Once more!' He sang it again. When he finished for the third time the crowd shouted even louder. Then he said, 'But I have to sing other songs too.' Then one person in the crowd said, 'Until you sing it right, we are going to say "Again, again, again."'

That's what happens in life: we are sent again, again and again. You can die, but you will be sent back until you have learned the lesson. And the lesson can be learned.

Sannyas is a concentrated effort to use this opportunity to be, so that this life can be the last life. And then you can live on the other shore, in eternity, in timelessness, where no birth,

no death exists, where all is bliss, where all is truth, where all is love.

THE MASTER KEY TO THE DOORS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

It is only through meditation that one becomes a king, that one becomes a master, master of oneself. But that is the only mastery. There is no other mastery in the world. If you are not a master of yourself you may possess the whole world but you are a slave, you are not a king.

Alexander the Great was not a king, although he conquered the whole world. Gautam Buddha was a king, although he renounced the world; even in his renunciation he was kingly. He possessed nothing, but he possessed himself -- and that is the only true treasure, the only true kingdom. All else is momentary, all else is just a dream.

Wake up from your dreams and make every possible effort to get deeper into meditation, into awareness, into witnessing. Become more and more conscious and you will become a king.

Everybody has the potential to become a king. If we miss, we miss only because of our lethargy. We never make any effort, we never try to go inwards. Or if once in a while we try, within minutes we are tired and again we start running and rushing into the outside world.

A persistent effort is needed and perseverance is needed and patience is needed. Victory is bound to happen, but it happens only when you are really ready. That readiness comes through intense effort. Make every effort to be meditative -- that is the key, the master key to the doors of the kingdom of god.

SANNYAS: A CONVERSION FROM THE OUTSIDE TO THE INSIDE

Dipak means a small lamp. It is burning there within you, it has always been there; we just never look at it. We are keeping our back towards it, hence we live in darkness.

Darkness is our own creation. If we turn in all is light, if we look out all is dark. Darkness simply means that we have become focused on the outside and forgotten the inner world. Sannyas has to be a conversion from the outside to the inside.

And it is easy. Once you start making efforts it is not difficult. All that is needed is a little exercise of those limbs which because of non-use for so long have become paralyzed. The neck is so stiff it cannot move, the eyes cannot move inwards. Not that they don't have the capacity, it is just that the capacity has not been used for so long that it has gathered rust. A little effort, a little exercise -- that's what we are doing here: just a little exercise so that limbs which have remained unused for a long time start moving again. And then things become easier.

Light is our very nature and light is the nature of the whole existence. Existence consists of light, it is made of light. That's why all the scriptures of the world say god is light. And now modern science also agrees that universe is made of electricity, electrons. Those are scientific terms; light is a more poetic term.

So make it a decision that from now onwards you have to make all effort to turn in.

MEDITATION IS THE SEED OUT OF WHICH GROWS THE TREE OF BLISS

Teresita... look at me. (She closes her eyes.)

What is the matter? Whenever I say to the Italians 'Look at me,' they all close their eyes! (laughter) That too is a way of looking. It may be the best way to look at me! But invariably it happens, so it cannot be just accidental.

Your name: Ma Anand Teresita. Anand means bliss. Teresita means a reaper.

Bliss is like farming. It is a crop. You have to work hard because the soil of the heart has to be prepared, the weeds have to be uprooted, the stones and the rocks have to be removed and only then can the seeds be sown.

Meditation is the seed out of which grows the tree of bliss. And in the right time when you are ripe, ready to receive the ultimate guest, only then does the flowering happen. Then your whole being is full of flowers, your whole life becomes fragrant.

Very few people have been able to reap the crop of bliss... only once in a while a Gautam Buddha, a Jesus Christ, a Lao Tzu -- people who can be counted on one's fingers. It is a tragedy that so few people have been able to attain to their ultimate potential while everybody is capable of it. But millions of people remain deserts. Nothing grows in them because they never make any effort to grow something in themselves. They never pay any attention to their inner space.

Become aware that you are containing an infinite universe within you. It is far more beautiful than the world outside. And your real contentment and fulfillment is going to happen within, not without.

THE WAY TO SEEK AND SEARCH FOR GOD IS MEDITATION

Murad, come here. What is the meaning of your name? (Murad looks blank.)

This will be your name: Swami Deva Murad. Deva means god. And I suspect that Murad means 'ambition for,' desire for, search for, a deep longing.

So your name will mean a deep longing for god. (Murad rises to leave.)

Wait a minute! (laughter) A deep longing but not in such a hurry! If you are in such a hurry you will miss! You will have to learn a little patience.

There are people who are not concerned about god at all, they are indifferent to god; hence for them there is no possibility of finding him. There are people who are against god. They are a little better than the people who are indifferent, because those who are against can be converted. Those who are saying no, some day may say yes. Hence the real problem is not the atheist. He can start searching for god, maybe he is already searching in a negative way, in a wrong way. And there is a third kind of people, the positive seekers, who are constantly seeking and searching for god.

The more conscious your search is, the sooner it is going to be fulfilled. But the search has to be very conscious and alert. One should devote one's whole life to a single purpose: the search for god, the search for truth. You can go on doing everything that you are doing but you have to make everything only a means to the ultimate end, only then can the murad be fulfilled, can the deep longing be fulfilled. And without its fulfillment there is no meaning in life.

Unless god is experienced meaning is not experienced. God symbolizes meaning, significance. God symbolizes the fact that life is not accidental, that there is a great hidden force behind it, that it is moving, that it is growing towards a peak, a peak of bliss. It is not just an accidental phenomenon, it is not a chaos, it is a cosmos.

And the way to seek and search for god is meditation. So focus your energies on meditation, give more time and space to meditation.

THOSE THAT HAVE SEARCHED WITHIN HAVE ALWAYS FOUND THE REAL HOME

God is our home and we should not depend on any other home. We make many homes and we never look at the real home. The homes that we make are all arbitrary, they are

sandcastles, or palaces made of playing cards: just toys to play with. They are not real homes, because death destroys them all.

The definition of the real home is that which is eternal. Only god is eternal; everything else is temporary. The body is temporary, the mind is temporary; money, power, prestige -- all are temporary. Don't make your home in these things. I am not against these things. Use them, but remember that they are just a caravanserai; they are good for an overnight stay, but in the morning we have to go.

Unless we find our real home we have to go on travelling, we have to go on journeying. And the most surprising thing is that the real home is not far away. We go on missing it because it is very close; it is not even close, it is within ourselves.

Search for it withinwards. Those that have gone in have always found it. And I say it on nobody else's authority, I say it because of my own experience. And I don't want my sannyasins to believe in it -- I want to help them experience it.

TRUTH HAS TO BE DECIDED BY YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE

The most divine experience of life is the search for truth. It is even more divine than attaining the truth itself. The journey is so beautiful. The very pilgrimage, each moment of it, is full of bliss. But very few people seek truth. People seek money, people seek power, people seek prestige, respectability and all kinds of rubbish, because the whole crowd is seeking these things and ordinarily people are imitative. You simply imitate the people you are surrounded by -- unless you become aware that the crowd may be wrong, that numbers can't decide what is true and what is not true.

Truth cannot be decided by voting, otherwise a Buddha, a Jesus, a Zarathustra, would all be defeated. They would be proved to be untrue. They wouldn't get many votes. Truth has to be decided by your own experience, not by the approval of the crowd. And the crowd never approves the truth because it is very shattering to the lies in which the crowd lives. Lies are cheap. There is no need to seek them, you can invent them, that's why they are so simple and easy. Any stupid person can do that -- to lie does not need much intelligence. But to be truthful not only needs intelligence, it needs guts too. It requires courage. It requires tremendous courage to risk all.

By becoming a sannyasin now you are really becoming a seeker of truth. Now your name will be not only a name, it will become your reality too.

TO BE REBELLIOUS IS TO BE RELIGIOUS

Sannyas is essentially rebellion -- rebellion against the mob psychology, rebellion against the past, rebellion against history and time, rebellion against tradition and scripture. Because it is only through getting rid of all these that one becomes free to be oneself. And unless one is oneself one never grows, one remains childish.

Maturity comes only through freedom. Freedom is an absolute necessity for growth, and life is an opportunity to grow. So don't be afraid to rebel. To be rebellious is to be religious. That is the only way to find god.

ONLY THROUGH FIRE YOUR INNER GOLD IS PURIFIED

Donal is a form of Daniel, an Old Testament prophet. He was thrown into a den of lions because he refused to betray his faith, but he emerged unharmed.

It is a beautiful name because it symbolizes the whole history of seekers and how the

crowd has behaved with seekers. The crowd has always been against true religion. It is not against Christianity; it is against Christ. It is not against Buddhism; it is against Buddha.

Christianity is a distortion, so is Buddhism. Christ is crucified and the pope is worshipped. The people who crucified Christ did not harm his truth much, because if you destroy the body that does not mean that you destroy the spirit. But the real destruction has been done by the Christian priests for these two thousand years. They have really been the murderers.

The Jews and the Romans succeeded in destroying the body of the Christ, but only the body. And that is not much, because the body is going to die one day sooner or later; it makes no difference how long one lives. Buddha lived eighty years and Jesus lived only thirty-three years, but Jesus said in three years what Buddha said in forty years missionary work. Because truth is so simple, you can say it in a single sentence or you can go on saying it for your whole life. It is so simple that it can be contained on a postcard, yet also it cannot be contained even in the whole of the Bible or the Vedas.

But the crowd has always been against the person who has realized truth. It is good that the people threw Daniel into a den of lions. If he had been thrown into a den of human beings he would have been killed. Lions are more compassionate. They must have felt for the man, they must have seen his simplicity; they may have fallen in love with the man.

But man is more cruel than lions -- that is the meaning of the story. Whether it happened or not, that is not the point. I can't see it actually happening, but the meaning is that lions are more civilized than human beings. Human beings are far more cruel, particularly to people who attain to truth. Why? For the simple reason that humanity lives in lies, and anybody who attains to truth becomes a danger to all your investments, to the whole edifice you have made.

You are living in sandcastles, you have been making houses of playing cards. And the moment there is a person like Daniel or Buddha or Mohammed, his very presence makes you aware of your stupidity, of your whole life's futility and meaninglessness. And that hurts, hurts deeply. Rather than changing your life you would like to destroy the man, you would like to remove the man so that you can be at ease again with your lies.

Remember that. That is going to happen again and again. That is going to happen forever. The crowd will remain the same. It has not changed in five thousand years time and I don't see any hope of the crowd changing. The crowd psychology will continue to be the same; hence anybody who is interested in god, in freedom, in truth, has to accept it as a matter of course.

So if you have to suffer as a sannyasin, don't blame me! (laughter) It's natural. Accept it with no complaint, no grudge, with deep thankfulness, because that is how the crowd recognizes you: it says, 'Yes, now we recognize you, that you are on the right path.' The moment that the crowd starts torturing you, starts going against you... That's its way of declaring that, 'Now this man is coming closer to the truth,' -- very close to the truth that they don't want to see.

But it is beautiful to suffer on the way towards god, far more beautiful than to be happy in the world of lies. It is better to suffer and sacrifice on the way towards god because each suffering will create integrity in you, each suffering will bring a blessing in disguise. It is passing through fire -- and it is only through such fires that your inner gold is purified.

DON'T LEAVE ANY STONES UNTURNED TO CREATE YOUR SOUL

Pleasure is momentary, bliss is eternal. To live in pleasure is to waste one's life. It comes and goes. You don't gain anything out of it, at the most it keeps you occupied. It kills time,

but that is stupid because time is the most precious thing. It is not to be killed, it has to be used -- once gone it is gone forever. Very few people use it rightly. Those who use it rightly become Buddhas, and those who go on killing it in unnecessary occupations live as fools and die as fools. And the world is full of fools.

To be initiated into sannyas means to make a decision that now you will get out of the mob psychology of foolishness, that now you will start striving for something eternal, something that is going to abide, something that cannot be destroyed even by death. A man has lived rightly only if he has something which death cannot snatch away. Then he has lived truly, he has loved truly. He has attained a soul.

Many people are just hollow, there is nothing inside them. They somehow manage to go on dragging themselves up to their grave. But their whole life is a tale told by an idiot, full of fury and noise, signifying nothing.

Create something significant, create some meaning in your life. Create some beauty, some love -- something that is not of time, that belongs to eternity. That is bliss.

It is possible, it has been attained by a few people but to achieve it is everybody's birthright. If we miss, we miss because of our own irresponsibility.

Be responsible. And when I say to be responsible I don't mean be responsible to somebody else. Be responsible to your own being.

You have to create a soul, you have to become integrated. Unless that happens don't leave any stones unturned. Make every possible effort, make every sacrifice needed. Risk all! But if you can gain your soul then you have used the great opportunity of life. Then great gratitude arises because only then does one know how much god has given to us of which we were unaware, how much which we never discovered has been waiting for us inside our own being.

Being here with me means moving into a new world of exploration, the inner world. It is the greatest adventure of life.

BLISS IS THE GOD OF ALL

Bliss is the god of all. A few people knowingly seek it and many unknowingly seek it. But everybody seeks it. It is the god. The theist seeks it, the atheist seeks it, the agnostic seeks, the Catholic, the communist -- everybody seeks it. Human beings, animals, trees -- everybody seeks bliss. Bliss is the god of all.

But there are two kinds of seekers. Very few people seek it deliberately, consciously. Very rarely will you find a person who is a conscious seeker of bliss. Everybody is seeking bliss, but unconsciously -- and that makes all the difference. If you seek it unconsciously you will never find it. It can be found only through being more conscious.

If one can become totally conscious there is no need to go anywhere, one will find it here and now. Suddenly it explodes. It depends on the intensity of your consciousness. Just as at a certain temperature water evaporates, at one hundred degrees, there is a certain intensity of awareness at which you find bliss. Suddenly the ego evaporates, and with the ego evaporate all its miseries and all its pathological obsessions, its whole hell. Suddenly you are out of the prison, under the starry night, unbounded. Suddenly you are on the wing and the whole sky is yours.

But the miracle happens only through consciousness. A sannyasin has to become a conscious seeker of bliss. Everybody is a seeker of bliss -- all that we have to add is consciousness.

LET YOUR SANNYAS BE A TOTAL JUMP INTO THE SEARCH

Unless one achieves bliss one's life is a failure. It may be a poor failure, the failure of a poor man, it may be a rich failure, the failure of a rich man, but failure is failure all the same.

And bliss is possible at any moment. One need not postpone it for tomorrow. We just have to be totally, passionately interested in discovering it. It should not be just a so-so search, it should not be lukewarm. It should be passionate, intense, total. It should be a commitment. That's what sannyas is, it is a commitment. One takes a decisive step that 'I am going to find,' that 'I am determined to find,' that 'I will not leave this life unless I have found it.'

It is said about Buddha that before he became enlightened, he sat for seven days under the same tree with the determination that 'I will not rise again, I will not move from this tree, I will not change my posture unless I attain it.' Such totality! For seven days he didn't move; he sat and sat and sat. And just by sitting there it happened. That's why in Japan they have a beautiful word for meditation, 'zazen.' It means just sitting. It comes from that story of Buddha. If one can just sit with totality, that's enough.

So let your sannyas be a total jump into the search, into the enquiry, the enquiry of 'Who am I?' And it is possible. It can happen any moment. Whenever your totality becomes really total, it happens immediately. It is always a sudden, enlightening experience. It comes out of nowhere but it transforms you forever. It transports you to a totally different plane.

JUST A SMALL CANDLE INSIDE IS ENOUGH

Just a small candle of love inside is enough to transform you. More is not needed. That small flame will burn all that is false, ugly. That small flame will soon become a fire and it will burn all that is gross. Only the pure gold will be left behind. That is our truth -- and to know the truth is to be liberated.

Jesus says: Truth liberates. It certainly liberates, but a borrowed truth cannot liberate because in the first place a borrowed truth is not a truth at all. The moment you borrow it from somebody it is a lie. You have to experience it on your own, you have to discover it on your own. Unless it is your own discovery it is of no use, it is unnecessary burden.

My effort here is to help you to discover your own truth. I am not going to give any truth to you or any theory about the truth. I am here only to give you a few hints, just fingers pointing to the moon. You are not to cling to the fingers. You have to look at the moon and forget the fingers.

THE MATHEMATICS OF THE INNER WORLD: ALL OR NOTHING

Courage is the most fundamental quality required to create religious consciousness. God is not for the cowards, and it is very ironical that only cowards go to the churches and the temples and the mosques. The courageous avoid them. In fact only the courageous go into the real adventure for the search of god.

To be a sannyasin means to use all your courage for the search for god, to use all your energies, to risk everything that you have, that you are.

Unless one risks all, nothing is achieved. The mathematics of the inner world is: All or nothing. It does not believe in half-hearted measures. And only a very courageous person can put all at stake, only a gambler, not a businessman, never a businessman. Hence god is not for the businessman, it is only for the gambler.

Sannyas is for gamblers, gamblers and drunkards, all kinds of dangerous people, because

the very effort to know god is the most dangerous pilgrimage one can go on. It is going into the unknown, into the beyond.

PRAYER IS THE FRAGRANCE OF MEDITATION

Life has many beautiful things but nothing can be compared to the beauty of meditation. There are many beautiful flowers and beautiful stars and sunrises and sunsets and beautiful people, but the flower of meditation, the star of meditation, the sunrise of meditation, is incomparable because it leads you into the world of god. It takes you beyond your mind projections. And once you have known what meditation is, once you have tasted the silent nectar of it, then whatsoever you see is transformed through your seeing. The same trees, the same birds, the same people, are no more the same. Everyone seems so luminous, so full of juice, so full of eternal life; one is surrounded by gods and goddesses.

Then life is really worth living. Then each moment is such a joy and such a gift that one is constantly thanking god, is constantly grateful. That gratefulness is prayer. Prayer is the fragrance of meditation. One cannot really pray if one has not meditated.

ONLY IN TREMENDOUS DANGER THE SOUL IS BORN

Life is for the courageous. The coward only vegetates. The coward goes on hesitating, and by the time he decides, the moment is lost. The coward only thinks to live but never lives, thinks to love but never loves. And the world is full of cowards.

The coward has a basic fear, the fear of the unknown. He keeps himself within the boundaries of the known, of the familiar. Courage begins when you step beyond the boundaries of the known. It is risking -- it is dangerous. But the more you risk, the more you are. The more you accept the challenge of the unknown, the more integrated you become. It is only in tremendous danger that the soul is born, otherwise a person remains just a body.

For millions of people the soul is only a possibility, not a reality. Only a very few, courageous ones have been soul-full.

THE COURAGE TO GO BEYOND THE KNOWN

There is only one courage -- the fundamental courage, the courage in which all other courage is rooted -- and that is the courage to go beyond the known, to go beyond the familiar, to go into the uncharted. That's what sannyas is.

No map of the other shore exists; no definition of god exists; no proof exists that god even is. Still, the courageous one goes on seeking and searching the unknown, even the unknowable.

The coward lives in a cosy, dark hole -- familiar, safe, secure, but for how long? Death comes and destroys everything. Seeing this -- that death is going to destroy everything -- why not inquire into the deathless? Why not risk all? When death is going to take it away anyway, why not risk all? When death is going to take it away anyway, why be so cowardly?

All those who have risked everything have witnessed that the other shore exists, although it is impossible to communicate anything about it. All those who have gone beyond the known have come with great tidings, with good news. That is the meaning of 'gospel.' But it is only for those who are courageous. Others will hear it, but they will not listen to it. Their fear is far greater than their search for truth.

The inquiry into truth needs only one quality, and that is courage. Nobody can prevent the one who has courage from knowing the ultimate bliss, the ultimate peak of life, of love and

awareness. One day the courageous one becomes the awakened one -- only the courageous one.

Cowards go on worshipping in the temples and the synagogues and the churches. These people are worshipping their own imagination. They don't know anything about god, they believe. They believe in order not to inquire, they believe because they are afraid to inquire. They believe so that there is no need to inquire.

But one knows only by inquiring, and inquiry means gambling, risking. But it is worth taking a risk -- the adventure is tremendously beautiful.

YOU HAVE TO BE THE LAB, THE SCIENTIST, AND THE EXPERIMENT

Sannyas is the science of bliss. It is less a religion and more a science. Religions depend more on belief, science depends more on experiments. And my emphasis is also on experiments. You have to experiment. You are not to believe in me, you are not to believe in my words. Accept them only as hypothetical, so that you can experiment.

A hypothesis is not a belief. It is simply knowingly accepting that it may be true, it may not be true. The experiment will prove whether it is true or it is untrue. A belief means that we have accepted that it is true before experimenting. Once you have accepted something as true you cannot experiment, you are already prejudiced. Your experiment is going to be that of a prejudiced mind and you will only try to prove what you have accepted. You will not look at facts which go against your belief and you will collect only those facts which support your belief. Then anything can be proved.

In fact believers never experiment out of the fear that -- who knows? -- if you experiment your belief may be proved wrong. Believers believe; that is their way of avoiding experimentation. And belief has dominated humanity for centuries. Even very intelligent people have lived superstitiously.

For example Aristotle, the father of Western logic and philosophy: he writes that women have less teeth than men. That was the belief in Greece in those days. He had two wives, not only one, he could have counted their teeth any time. It would have been a simple experiment, no sophisticated instruments would have been needed. But he never counted them, it never occurred to him. He simply wrote whatsoever was prevalent. And it seems that nobody had ever counted them, otherwise how could the belief exist? It is so stupid! Men and women both have the same number of teeth.

You can ask our Devageet (the ashram dentist)... if he has ever counted or not! But that's how people have lived, very superstitiously.

My effort here is to create a science of inner experimentation. You have to become the lab for your own experiment. You have to be the scientist, you have to be the lab, you have to be the experiment, because in the inner world only you are there, nothing else. You have to be all.

It yields great treasures. Once you start going in at each step there is a discovery. It is far more valuable than discovering America. In fact the world would have been far better if America had not been discovered! (much laughter)

TRUTH IS EVERYBODY'S BIRTHRIGHT

Meditation opens the door to the world of truth. To live in the mind is to live in lies. To live in the mind is to live in opinions, beliefs -- which are all lies. Because unless you have experienced something it remains a lie. Only your experience makes anything true, otherwise

not. Truth has to be experienced, only then is it true.

Meditation is the only way to experience truth. And when you have experienced truth it is possible to commune truth to others. It cannot be communicated -- that is true. There is no verbal way to communicate it, but one can radiate it. One can create a certain vibe in which people start growing towards it. That's what has been done down the ages by all the awakened ones: they have created a certain energyfield, a buddhafield, in which people start growing towards truth.

Truth is everybody's birthright.

FIRST JUMP -- THEN THINK TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

Man is a bridge between the animal world and the world of the gods. Man is just in between, he is a passage. Hence man is not really a being. A dog has a certain being, a lion has a certain being, a rosebush has a certain being, a rock also has a certain being. Man has none. Man is a becoming, not a being. Man is the only being who is not a being but a becoming. Man becomes a being only when he has transcended humanity, when he has become a Buddha, a Christ. Then he attains to being, but then he is no more man. He has passed over the bridge.

Pass over the bridge, remember -- don't make your house on the bridge. It is something to be passed over, something to be transcended. And that is the beauty of man. No dog can be anything else than a dog; no rock can be anything else than a rock. They have a fixed being; there is no possibility of growth. Only man grows. Only man has the possibility of adventure, of journeying into the unknown. The greatest beauty of man, the greatest grandeur, is that he can surpass himself.

And that is what sannyas is: an effort to transcend yourself. It looks almost impossible. If you think about it, it is impossible. If you take the jump it is possible. So for those who go on thinking about it, it becomes more and more impossible. The more you think, the more impossible it appears. It is for the courageous ones to take the jump.

It is said, 'Think twice before you jump.' And I say, 'First jump, and then think as much as you want!' -- twice or thrice, as much as you want, be at ease, think to your heart's content -- but take the jump first!

Fingers Pointing to the Moon

Chapter #3

Chapter title: Celebrating

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THE ART OF BEING TOTAL

To live blissfully is the only true prayer, the only true religion. Religion has nothing to do with god and all the mythologies that have been created around the concept of god. It has nothing to do with after-life, with hell or heaven. It is simply the art of living here and now totally. And to live totally is to be blissful, to live partially is to be miserable. Anything that you do half-heartedly will bring misery to you because it will divide you. It will create a split, it will create a subtle schizophrenia.

And we are continuously doing things half-heartedly. Not one thing but almost everything we do is half-hearted. Hence we become divided into thousands of fragments, we become a crowd. Our center is lost in that crowd. We become many voices. There is no silence, no music, no song; nothing is possible with this crowd inside. And the way that we have created this crowd is that we have been doing everything half-heartedly. So one part goes on doing something, another part goes on undoing it. One part goes to the north, another goes to the south. One part wants to do something, another part resists doing it.

Sannyas means becoming aware of this situation and changing the whole gestalt. The gestalt that you have lived up to now has to be changed totally, radically. It is not a question of whitewashing, it is not even a question of renovating the old ruins, it is simply demolishing the whole structure and beginning from abc.

Start doing things, small things, totally. You have gone for a walk: then be total in your walk. Enjoy it, as if life consists only of walking and nothing else, as if walking is the ultimate. You have gone to swim; then swim and forget everything. Then there is no past and no future, only you and the water and the present moment. In this way you will learn slowly the art of being total. Then go on applying the same art to your whole life. One day the miracle happens, when all the parts melt into one unity. That unity is your soul, that harmony is your soul. And when you are in harmony you know that the whole existence is in

harmony. You know only that which you are. You can't know more than that.

To be in harmony within oneself is to know the ultimate harmony of existence. One can call it god, nirvana, truth, or one can be simply silent about it because no word is adequate enough. Nothing can express it, nothing can explain it. The mystery remains a mystery.

UNLESS RELIGION BECOMES A CELEBRATION THERE IS NO FUTURE FOR RELIGION

Barbara literally means a stranger. And that is true: we are all strangers in this world, we are here only for the time being. This is not our home; at the most it is a caravanserai.

I am not against the world. Use the caravanserai as much as you can, but don't fall into the fallacy that it your home. Tomorrow you will have to leave it, and if you start thinking that this is your home it will create misery. If you know that it is only a serai there is no question of misery; you simply say goodbye and you never look back.

Barbara also has a symbolic meaning. That too is beautiful. The symbolic meaning is coming with joy. Sannyas is possible only if you come with joy.

Religious people have lived too seriously for too long. Their very seriousness has destroyed religion on the earth, because when something becomes too serious healthy people don't get attracted towards it. It attracts only the unhealthy, the pathological. It does not attract the young people, the alive people. It attracts only the dead, the old. And that's what has happened to religion.

In the churches, in the temples you can see almost dead people sitting there, people who have died long before; they are just living a kind of posthumous existence. Temples and churches are full of ghosts, and the reason is that religion has become too serious. People are religious because life is such a misery. They are tired of the misery; it is such an agony that they want to escape.

That is not my vision of religion. Escapism is not religion. Life is not misery, life has its own joys; of course they are temporary, momentary. But even a momentary rainbow is beautiful. Just because they are momentary I would not like to destroy rainbows.

A dewdrop shining in the morning sun is tremendously beautiful, although it is only for the moment, soon it will evaporate. But if dewdrops disappeared from the world the world would be a little less than it is. It would lose something tremendously significant.

I am not against the world and its joys -- on the contrary. Life is so joyful, even though it is temporary -- how much more joy is possible if we attain to eternity!

So my sannyas is rooted in joy, not in misery. We have tasted a little bit in life, we would like to know the whole of it. Life has only given us glimpses, faraway glimpses. We would like to reach those peaks.

My sannyas is a search for the ultimate blissfulness; hence only those who come to me with joy will be able to understand me. My effort here is to make religion more like a song, more like love, more like laughter, more like play. Unless religion becomes a celebration there is no future for religion. Each of my sannyasins has to become a proof of it, a living proof of joy. That is the meaning of your name -- let it also become the meaning of your life.

REACH GOD SINGING AND DANCING

Become a song. Drop all seriousness.

When one can reach god singing and dancing, it is foolish to go with a long face. And as far as I know, he avoids long faces. He is afraid of your so-called saints. Saints are not good company to keep. Sinners are far better as far as company is concerned. They laugh, they

smile, they play; they are non-serious.

My whole approach is non-serious. It is playfulness. I want religion to become more and more playful. I would like churches and temples to become playgrounds, theatres, where people can dance and sing and can have disco parties! If the whole earth can laugh loudly god is bound to come to earth immediately. He has been avoiding earth for many centuries because of the saints.

So please don't be a saint! That's the meaning of your name: don't be a saint, be a singer!

How long will you be here?

-- Now I don't know.

-- That's good!

-- I have a ticket for Sunday but...

-- Tickets won't work any more!

-- No!

BE UTTERLY DRUNK WITH THE JOYS OF LIFE

Dionisio is one of the most beautiful names. It means the god of wine.

The true god is bound to be a god of wine. A god that can't make you drunk is not worth calling god. Except for Dionysius, all gods are false! -- and he has disappeared from the world. Religion has been taken over by sad people, serious people -- and seriousness is a kind of disease, it is pathological.

Health is never serious. Health is laughter, health is singing, health is a dance. The healthier you are, the more you take life as a play. The whole existence becomes fun.

That was the religion of Dionysius but the serious people drove him out of existence. All the churches, all the temples and all the mosques are full of psychologically ill people.

The healthy person feels almost repulsed by religion, for the simple reason that the healthy person wants to live totally. Health means life; it is never renunciation. Renunciation is a kind of suicide, a slow suicide. Renouncing life means you are against god, because he is the creator of life and you are renouncing it.

I am all for Dionysius. Live totally, be utterly drunk with the joys of life, with the beauty and the blessing of existence. It is tremendous, it is overwhelming. Love life -- that is prayer -- and live with such abundance, with such totality that you can be absolutely lost in the whole. That's my definition of being holy.

My effort here is to revive Dionysius. It is a very difficult task because all the priests and all the politicians are against it. They have great investment in seriousness; their egos are involved.

If people start laughing and dancing and taking life as fun, then where will all these so-called holy people and saints and the pious people and the moralists and the puritans be? They will have to be thrown on the junk-heap. We can save a few specimens in the museums...

The future belongs to Dionysius.

How long will you be here?

-- One month.

-- That's good. Do a few groups... and get drunk!

A SHIFT FROM THE HEAD TO THE HEART

Mind is very cunning, it is never simple. The heart is never cunning, it is always simple.

To be simple means a shift from the head to the heart.

We live through the head. That's why our life goes on becoming more and more complicated, more and more like a jigsaw puzzle: nothing seems to fit. And the more we try to be clever, the more in a mess we are. That has been our history: man has gone more and more insane. Now the whole earth is almost like a madhouse. The time has come, if humanity is to survive at all, for a great shift to happen: we have to move from the head to the heart. Otherwise the head is ready to commit suicide. It has created so much misery and so much boredom and so many problems that suicide seems to be the only way out. The whole earth is preparing for suicide. It is going to be a global suicide, unless a miracle happens.

And this is going to be the miracle -- if the miracle happens this is the miracle -- a shift, a great shift, a radical change in the very outlook: we will start living from the heart. We will drop the whole universe of the mind totally and we will start afresh like small children. That's how a sannyasin has to be: he has to live from the heart. He has to feel more, think less, he has to be more sensitive and less logical.

Be more and more heartfelt and your life will become a sheer joy.

SANNYAS IS THE VERY SPIRIT OF FESTIVITY

My approach towards life is not of logic but of love. Through logic it is not possible to know life and its meaning; it is only through love that life reveals its secrets. Hence it is not syllogism that is going to help you; it is singing, dancing, celebrating.

We have lived too long in the head. The heart has been abandoned; we have deserted it -- and it is our true home. The heart only knows songs, it only knows how to dance, it only knows how to love. That's why we have abandoned it, because the heart cannot help you to be very rich, it cannot help you to be president of a country or a prime minister, it cannot help you in any ego trips. It is absolutely non-ambitious. It is perfectly happy as it is, it is utterly contented.

A sannyasin has to move from the head to the heart; a sannyasin has to become headless and heart-full. Then one can start singing like birds in the morning for no reason at all, just for the sheer joy of it. A new day has started, the sun has risen and the birds are happy welcoming the new day. They are rejoicing: the darkness is over, the night is over. They are celebrating, they are in a festive mood. And a sannyasin is always in a festive mood. He is the very spirit of festivity. The dimension of a sannyasin is the festive dimension.

So more and more sing, sing madly, dance. Dance as a drunkard and sing as a madman, and you will not be far away from god. God is very close when one is drunk, very close when one is utterly mad.

The clever never know anything of life's secrets -- they are too clever. Life reveals itself only to the simple ones. So be simple, be ordinary, and become a song.

THE INEXHAUSTIBLE SOURCE OF ENERGY WITHIN YOU

Bliss is possible only when the mind is put aside, when the mind is no more interfering, when the mind is no more playing its games, when you have seen the strategies of the mind, its tricks, through and through, when you have become aware of how the mind has been deceiving you for so long. And don't fight with the mind, because if you fight with the mind... That is its last strategy; if you fight with the mind you have to remain entangled with it. If you have to fight with the mind you have to use the same tactics as the mind.

So the whole art is seeing through and through, and then without any fight simply putting

it aside; just slipping out of it as a snake slips out of its old skin, without any fight. And the moment it happens, for the first time you feel that you are infinite. It was the mind that was giving you a definition, a limitation. It was the mind that was framing you, otherwise you are the unframed sky.

And the moment limitations disappear bliss arises. Bliss is freedom, freedom from all limitations. The body is a limitation, but it is easy to know that 'I am not the body.' You can feel it very easily, that you are not the body. When you are feeling hungry you know that hunger is in the body and you are a watcher. When you feel thirsty you know that the thirst is in the body and you are the watcher. When you drink water and the thirst is quenched you know that the body is satisfied and you are the watcher.

It is more difficult with the mind because it is very close. Somebody insults you and you become angry; to watch in that moment seems very difficult. You are so enraged that you forget all about watchfulness. And those are the moments in which to be aware. When anger possesses you, greed possesses you, lust possesses you, be watchful. Go on reminding yourself 'I am not this.' Keep your coolness. And you will be surprised that if you can keep your coolness even for a few seconds, the anger disappears like a cloud that has come and gone. And a great peace arises, the peace that is always there when the storm goes, the silence that follows the storm.

When lust takes possession of you watch and see, soon it will be gone. Nothing remains forever, in the mind everything is continuously changing. Just wait and watch, and when it is gone you will feel so strengthened, so full of vigour, so full of energy that you will be surprised. And this is the energy that could have been lost in lust, in anger, in greed.

And when you go on becoming more and more full of energy. When you start overflowing with energy great delight arises. Energy, overflowing energy, is a delight. It is bliss. And when you have come to know the inexhaustible source of energy within you that is no-mind, you have discovered god. It is not somewhere in the skies, it is within you. It is your very being.

FROM PROSE TO POETRY... FROM HEAD TO HEART...

A sannyasin has to be a song. He has to change his life-style from prose to poetry, from mathematics to music, from logic to love, from head to heart. Then one encounters the beauty of existence. And god is nothing but another name for the beauty of existence.

People are missing god because they are trained in logic, mathematics, and those are not the right ways to approach beauty. If you ask a mathematician about the beauty of a rose flower he will be at a loss to answer. He can give you all kinds of measurements, but beauty is immeasurable. If you ask the scientist he can show you all the elements the rose flower is made of -- how much earth and how much water and how much air -- but beauty will not be a part of it at all. Beauty will escape him.

It is only the eye of a poet that can catch hold of the mysterious. It is from the vision of a musician that beauty cannot escape; it is caught. And god is the ultimate beauty, the beauty of the total universe.

We have to learn different ways of approaching life. That's why I say move from prose to poetry, from mathematics to music, from logic to love ... in short from head to heart. Then suddenly you will encounter god everywhere.

How long will you be here?

-- Four days.

-- Four days! (laughter) Are you missing spaghetti or something? (much laughter)

- I haven't got any money.
- Mm! (a pause) Then come back again.
And we have an Italian Momma who is doing great things here!
- What does the Momma do?
- Spaghetti! All our sannyasins are full of spaghetti!
And come back; money or no money, don't be worried! For Italians I have a soft heart!

WE ARE NOT ORPHANS -- EXISTENCE CARES FOR US

One can be blissful only if one understands this fundamental law of life, that god is our protection, that we are not orphans, that we are not accidents, that existence cares for us, that existence showers love, that existence is absolutely concerned about our welfare.

Once this is understood, not only intellectually but existentially, once this is felt, once this becomes your own experience, life takes an absolutely new turn. One starts feeling blissful for no reason at all. Whereas before misery existed and persisted for no reason at all, now bliss exists for no reason at all. It is the same energy that was becoming misery because we were feeling alone, separated, afraid of this vast existence, struggling on our own with a small energy against the whole, knowing perfectly well that we were doomed to fail. That is why people are miserable.

An irreligious person cannot be blissful; it is impossible. At the most he can be resigned to the anxieties, to the problem of life. He can accept them in a cold way. He can be indifferent to them, he can practise a certain indifference but he cannot be joyful, he cannot be blissful.

Blissfulness is basically religious. It is only through religion that bliss starts growing in you. And the reason is that the moment you see that you are protected -- that this is your home, that you are surrounded by energies which are not antagonistic to you but very friendly, very loving, that you are needed and loved -- immediately a great explosion of bliss happens.

THE HEART IS ABSOLUTE POSITIVITY

Mind is incapable of praising. It can only complain, it can only find fault. It lives in fault-finding, its very existence depends on negativity. It counts the thorns in a rose bush and avoids the roses.

The heart can praise, can only praise. It is absolute positivity. It knows how to rejoice with the roses.

To praise god means to live your life through the heart and not through the mind. Then your whole life becomes prayer. And unless your whole life is a prayer nothing is going to help. These small prayers which people do in churches and temples are utterly meaningless.

PRAISE BECOMES A BRIDGE BETWEEN YOU AND EXISTENCE

Bliss is like fragrance and the praise of god is like the flower. When you praise god something inside you opens up like a bud and the fragrance is released. That fragrance is bliss. And your heart opens only when you are ready to praise.

There are only two types of people in the world, those who complain and those who praise. The complainers remain miserable because their heart never opens up, never becomes a flower. Their very approach is negative. They only look at the darker side of things, they never look at the brighter side. They count thorns, they never praise the roses.

To praise god means to praise this existence. There is no other god. This whole existence -- the stars, the trees, the people, the animals, the birds, the mountains, the oceans -- this totality is what god is. God is not a person, just a name for the whole.

When you start praising the beauty of the flowers and the silence of darkness and the joy of a river rushing towards the ocean, something starts opening up within you. You also start growing, you are no more closed. The praise becomes a bridge between you and existence. You become more and more sensitive, more and more poetic, more and more aesthetic. Your sensibility makes you aware of the immense beauty that surrounds us, and of the great mystery which is unfathomable, which has no beginning and no end.

The feeling that we are part of this great mystery creates great rejoicing. Praise is prayer, and bliss is the fragrance of prayer.

DANCE IS AN END UNTO ITSELF

Nartano means the dance. And that's what a sannyasin has to become. Life should be light, not heavy. One should not carry a burden. The past creates the burden and cripples you. You cannot dance if there is too much past.

People are carrying mountains of the past and they are crushed underneath, they cannot dance. One has to put aside the whole past, one has to be light, then one can dance. And when one can dance like a peacock under the clouds, one has to know what prayer is, what meditation is.

Dance is one of the most significant experiences, literally, because it is the only experience in which you can be utterly lost and yet you are perfectly aware. The dancer loses himself in his dance and yet is absolutely aware. It is a very strange and paradoxical experience; hence it is of great significance.

That's how god happens: one is utterly lost and yet fully aware; in one sense drunk, absolutely drunk, in another sense absolutely awake.

Dance gives you the first glimpse of it. So while you are here dance more and more, and enjoy dance, literally, actually. And then metaphorically also, make your life more like a dance rather than like running.

People are running hither and thither, not knowing why, for what. They just go on gaining more and more speed, thinking that if you have more speed you are bound to achieve -- not knowing what exactly it is that they want to achieve.

Dance is a totally different kind of experience. There is no achievement, there is no goal. You are simply enjoying the experience itself. You are not going anywhere. There is no destination in it. It is means and it is the end also. It is an end unto itself.

WE ARE MADE OF MUSIC

Deva means divine; sangit means music -- divine music.

It is always there, it is just that we are so noisy that we cannot hear it. We are so full of garbage that we go on missing that which is precious. We are so full of hot air that we never become aware of the beauty, the joy, the dance, the music, that existence is.

The stars are dancing in deep harmony. The whole existence is an orchestra and everything is in tune with everything else. Nothing is separate, everything is meeting and merging with everything else. It is a tremendous symphony.

To be a sannyasin means to fall in tune with this symphony. Be more silent so you can hear the music. Be more still so that you can feel that which surrounds you, within and

without.

We are made of music. That is the realisation of all the mystics of all the ages.

LIFE IS GOD

Life is divine. Up to now all the religions have been anti-life. Not that Jesus and Buddha and Krishna were anti-life, but Christians and Buddhists and Hindus have been anti-life. The awakened ones cannot be anti-life, but the priests that gather around them have always felt that if they were for life then the whole business of religion would stop. Then people would say 'You are not needed. We can live our lives without you.' Hence the priests have to be against life, only then can they create a business out of religion. So they condemn life in every possible way. And they have created a very poisoned atmosphere around the earth, they have poisoned everybody's mind.

My effort here is to help you to get out of that conditioning. I want to declare that life is god, that life and god are synonymous. Life is god's manifestation. Renouncing life means renouncing god. If you renounce his visible form you are automatically renouncing his invisible reality. The invisible can be found only through the visible; the visible is the entrance. Life is the door to god.

Rejoice in it -- it is a blessing. Make it a dance, a song, a celebration. Love life, worship life, let your life be as sincere, as authentic and true as possible, and let it be as total and whole as possible. When life is whole one is holy. For me, that's the only way to become a sage, a true sage.

BECOME A CELEBRATION

Man ordinarily lives a life which is a drag. (laughter) He lives in such a boring way. Seriously and heavily, he somehow goes on pulling himself towards the grave. There is nowhere else to go. With such great effort the result is the grave!

There is another way of living: one can dance and sing. And the moment you start dancing and singing and enjoying life, death starts disappearing. You start having experiences, glimpses of eternity, of the immortal, of the divine.

So become a song and then all bliss is yours. Become a celebration. My sannyas is simply initiation into a life of love and laughter. It is difficult for a Japanese (laughter) ... very difficult to laugh. But I will corrupt you! -- don't be worried. My people will seduce you. The whole climate here is corruptive and seductive!

ALWAYS ENTER UNKNOWN TERRITORY

Life should be lived like a river, not like a pond. One should be flowing, moving, dynamic. One should be always moving into the beyond, always entering into unknown territory. Life can only be blissful if it is an adventure. And the river is a symbol of adventure: it goes on and on seeking and searching for the ultimate merger with the ocean. Until it reaches the ocean it never stops for a single moment. And it dances the whole way, it sings the whole way, it laughs the whole way!

The whole pilgrimage is a celebration. Remember it.

People have become stagnant pools. Now their life is simply going nowhere or going around in circles. Their life is a repetition, a dull, dead routine; and then they feel bored. Everywhere you can see people's faces bored, utterly bored. Boredom is one of the greatest problems facing modern man, for the simple reason that people have stopped flowing and

growing, people have stopped seeking and searching. People are no more adventurous; they have become things, machines!
Never allow that to happen to you.

PLUG YOURSELF INTO YOUR OWN BEING

Bliss makes one an emperor. You can possess the whole world but you will remain a beggar if deep inside you bliss is not happening. If deep inside you there is misery, suffering, anguish, anxiety, then you may sit on a throne of gold but it is irrelevant. It is wasting your life. And that's what millions of people go on doing. They have all become achievers: achieve this, achieve that. They keep themselves engaged so that they don't have to look in, because there they find great misery, great anxiety. They want to remain oblivious of it so they go on from one conquest to another conquest, from one desire to another desire, endlessly. But their whole life is futile.

Unless your inner being is full of bliss you have not lived at all. And the way to bliss is not difficult; it takes a little perseverance, persistence, patience, but it is not difficult. If I can attain it, you can attain it. In fact to use the word 'attain' for it is not right. It is already there, we just have to become connected with it. We are disjointed; we have to plug ourselves into our own being. We have to become rooted, that's all.

And that's what meditation is all about: getting roots in your innermost being. Once your roots start growing, your branches become green, new leaves start coming, you gather great foliage, joy, life, and birds start singing around you, and flowers are bound to happen. Once the roots are healthy, flowers are bound to happen. And when a man flowers no other flower can compete with it, because it is a flowering of consciousness.

Bliss is another name for the flowering of consciousness. And the moment you have tasted bliss, you have tasted deathlessness, eternity, you have tasted god. After that, life is a celebration, an eternal delight.

Spring represents abundant life. Spring is the peak of life. Life celebrates, dances and sings, when the Spring comes. Sannyas has to be a Spring to you, because it is the beginning of abundant life.

We are living in tiny cells while the whole sky is ours. We are living by a small light, by candlelight, while all the suns and the stars belong to us. We are poor just because of our own decision to remain poor; otherwise we are not meant to be poor, we are not meant to be beggars. The whole of life and all that it contains is ours. We are as vast as the universe, as eternal as life. All the depth of god is ours, and all the height.

Sannyas is only a beginning, and beginning of coming out of your prison cell, the ego, the mind. It takes a little time to get accustomed to the open sky, to the insecurity of it and the beauty of its insecurity. It takes a little time for the eyes to become adjusted to so much light, to so many colours. The old cell seems to be cosy, familiar, and we have lived in it for lives. We have decorated it and we have furnished it according to our needs. It seems familiar; one feels good in it, just out of habit.

But we have suffered enough: it cripples us, it paralyses us. It gives a certain false sense of safety and security, but it is really a grave. It is not life, it is death. Millions of people are not alive. They only appear alive, otherwise they are dead. They don't know what life is. Just to be able to breathe is not life. Unless you start experiencing god never believe that you are alive.

Only with the experience of god does life begin. Before that all is preparation for that

ultimate experience.

Grace is inner beauty, the beauty of the soul. Just as the body has a certain beauty of its own, the soul also has a beauty of its own. And just as a body can be ugly, a soul can also be ugly.

We take every care of the body to make it more beautiful. We never take any care of the soul; hence it is almost always ugly. It is very rare to find a person whose soul is beautiful, because nobody takes any care. No beauty parlours exist for the soul, no cosmetics, no beauticians. Nobody has any idea that the inner world also needs care, nourishment, nurturing.

So on the surface we go on becoming more and more beautiful, and deep inside there are only wounds, ugly wounds where flowers could have been. On the surface we have many things that help us to be beautiful, to be healthy, to be hygienic, but our inner world is completely neglected, as if we have abandoned it. We don't look at it. Only weeds grow there, no roses, It is a very upside-down situation, a very topsy-turvy world: people thinking too much of the physical, which is momentary, and not thinking at all of the soul, which is eternal.

I am not against the body. Take every care of the body -- it is a beautiful gift of god. But it only a very small fragment, it is not your real being. It is your house -- decorate it, clean it -- but it is not you. You also need a bath. And only when you start becoming beautiful inside does grace arise.

The inner world is full of jealousy, hatred, anger, violence, ego -- and these are poisons. These keep you ill. They never allow your soul to be healthy and whole.

One has to uproot all these weeds. This is what sannyas is all about, uprooting all these poisonous weeds from the inner world and preparing the inner world for roses.

And the miracle is that the moment you have uprooted all the weeds, roses start growing on their own. God starts descending in you. You become worthy, you start deserving god. You become a host and he becomes the guest. And then there is great grace overflowing.

To be graceful is to be blissful, because one has come home. One has achieved the unachievable, one has fulfilled one's destiny; hence one can rejoice and celebrate.

Man is also a flower, a flower of consciousness; hence it is invisible. It is not an ordinary rose, not an objective rose, but something that belongs to subjectivity. It is something inward, it consists of consciousness. But very few people become flowers. Many remain buds, they never open up; hence they never become aware of the meaning of life.

Only when a flower opens, blooms, releases its fragrance, is the meaning of life realised. Then one knows one's significance. Then one comes to feel that one is not accidental, that one is very intrinsic to existence. And the moment it is felt there is great rejoicing.

From now onwards you have to be a farmer of the inner world. You have to cultivate your own heart. You have to sow the seeds of bliss so that one day you can reap the crop of bliss.

It happened that Buddha was passing by the side of a farm. The farmer was sitting just near the fence. Buddha was also tired so he sat by the side of the farmer. The farmer said 'I cannot understand you people. You never do a thing, you simply go on wandering from here to there. All that you do is sit with closed eyes under trees. What kind of work is this? What are you doing? We are working from the morning till evening. You people are just lazy!'

Buddha laughed and he said 'That's not right. I am also a farmer, but my farm is invisible

to you. My own being is my farm and I saw the seeds of bliss. When you see me sitting with closed eyes underneath a tree, do you think I am being lazy? I am doing the hardest work that a man is capable of. I am working. I am doing as much as you are doing, even more, because at least you sleep at night; I am not allowing any sleep to my being. The body sleeps, but I continue to work in my consciousness. I remain aware, alert twenty-four hours a day. Even in my sleep I have to be watchful because the thing that I am growing needs constant watchfulness.'

I don't know whether the farmer understood it or not, but Buddha was saying something very significant.

How long will you be here?

-- Two days.

-- Two days? That's great! There are a few people who stay only one day! Next time come and stay for at least three days! Slowly, slowly...?

Bliss and freedom are always together, inseparably together, inevitably together. If one is blissful one is always free, and vice versa; if one is free one is bound to be blissful. They are like two sides of the same coin, achieve one and the other follows.

There have been two kinds of seekers in the world: those who seek bliss and those who seek freedom. But they both arrive at the same point, at the same space, which is both together, simultaneously. It is blissful freedom or freedom-full bliss. And that's the goal of sannyas.

These two words can help you tremendously. If you can keep alert not to create bondage for yourself and not to create misery for yourself, god is not far away. It is just around the corner.

Bliss can only come through wisdom. It is a by-product. You cannot achieve it directly. You have to be wise and then bliss comes of its own accord. But by being wise I don't mean that you have to be knowledgeable, that you have to know the scriptures, that you have to collect much information.

Knowledge is not wisdom. On the contrary knowledge is a hindrance to wisdom. Wisdom comes to the innocent ones, wisdom is a state of innocence. One who knows that he knows nothing has started moving towards wisdom, because now he will be full of wonder, full of awe; the whole existence will appear in a totally different light to him.

When you approach existence through your knowledge you demystify it, because your ego says 'I know, I know everything.' And when you know, the wonder dies; when you know, there is no awe; when you know, your life loses something immensely valuable. It cannot move in the dimension of the mysterious. Even ordinary things, the rocks, the trees, the people -- everything is simply mysterious. And to experience that mystery is to experience god. Knowledgeable people never experience god. A sinner can experience but a pundit, never...

And I feel a little apprehensive about you. Why have you shaved your head?

-- I never did it before... until my baby was born. Then I got the idea from him.

-- The baby gave you the idea?

Yes, my baby.

-- The baby also seems to be dangerous! Some ancient Hindu is born to you, it seems. He must have been a Hindu mahatma in his past life. If the idea comes from the baby, beware of the baby! He may give you more ideas! Watch out!

This happens: when people come from the West to India... There they are in a certain bondage called Christianity. They are simply changing prisons, changing from one prison to another prison.

My sannyas is neither Christian nor Hindu nor Mohammedan. It is simply freedom from all creeds and all dogmas.

So start growing your hair... otherwise you will look out of place here!

How long will you be here?

-- As long as possible.

-- Yes. You have to be here until your hair has grown!

The desire to rule is something very essential, but it can take two routes. Either it can become a desire to rule over others -- then it leads you into politics and into all kinds of violence, struggle, or it can become a desire to rule over oneself -- then it takes you into religion. It is the same desire but it can have a totally different meaning. It all depends on how you interpret it.

The majority takes an extrovert interpretation, hence the majority lives in misery and creates misery for others, because to rule over others is ugly. If you succeed you destroy others, and by destroying others you cannot create yourself. That is not the way to be creative. First you destroy others, then ultimately you will destroy yourself.

That's why the story of Adolf Hitler is very significant. First he destroyed millions of people, pushed the whole world to the very fringe of destruction, and then he committed suicide. It is the whole story of the politician. Very few politicians live the whole circle -- that is another matter. But politics is ugly.

An introvert interpretation is needed, and that's what sannyas is: a desire to rule over oneself, a desire to become a master of oneself. It has tremendous beauty. Not only are you blissful, but you create opportunities for others to be blissful also.

Man lives in defeat unless he finds bliss. He lives in failure and frustration unless he finds bliss. And bliss is not far away, it is within you, it is very close by. It can happen right now. No time is needed for it to happen because it is not a question of travelling a long distance. It is not a question of distance at all; it is your nature. You have just to relax within yourself, rest within yourself, and suddenly you start feeling it, being it. And the moment you start feeling bliss within yourself is the moment of victory. Not that you have conquered the world: you have conquered something far more valuable, you have conquered yourself. And nobody can take away this victory from you; not even death can destroy it.

But people go on searching for money, power, prestige; and everywhere they find frustration, everywhere they find failure. Their search is doomed from the very beginning because what they are searching for is inside them, and they are searching for it outside themselves. It cannot be found there because it is not there, it can only be found within. They are running hither and thither, going everywhere except in.

They go everywhere. They are ready to go to the moon, to Everest; they are ready to travel ANY distance. They have completely forgotten just one thing, and that is how to sit silently within themselves, utterly in tune with their being.

Just still, silent, doing nothing. Then each breath is such bliss, then each moment is so pregnant with beauty and benediction that one cannot imagine it. One has to feel it to know it -- there is no other way.

That's what we are trying to do here. it is an experiment in helping people to go in.

Victory is our birthright. All failure is false. We fail only in dreams; if we wake up we are victorious. And if we wake up all the failures look so ridiculous, so impossible.

It is said that when Bodhidharma became enlightened he laughed loudly. His friends asked 'What is the matter?' And he said 'I am laughing at all those thousands of lives I have been asleep thinking I am this, thinking I am that, trying to achieve this, trying to achieve that, and always failing. Now I know that it was only a long, long nightmare. My reality is totally different from that dreaming.'

Our reality is made of the same stuff as god. We are parts of god so how can we be failures? But we are trying to live as egos -- that creates the whole trouble. Then we are doomed to fail.

My effort here is to help you wake up so that you can come to know that this whole kingdom is yours and nothing is missing. From the very beginning nothing is missing, from the very beginning all is as absolutely perfect as it can be. The moment one realises it life becomes a celebration.

Bliss has no boundaries. That's why many people have decided to remain in misery -- because misery has boundaries and you feel safe with the boundaries. To move into the unbounded needs courage, it needs guts because you are taking the greatest risk of your life: moving into a vast ocean with no way, with no idea of where you will land. But once you start moving into the unknown, great joy is yours. Ecstasy is a by-product of adventure. When the adventure is for the ultimate, the ecstasy is ultimate.

And god is the ultimate adventure. It brings great bliss, great benediction. But in the beginning it requires that you risk your total being. Less than that won't do.

Sannyas is taking a jump into the unknown. But I can assure you that without taking this jump into the unknown a man remains only a seed. He never becomes a tree, never comes to bloom, never becomes able to release his fragrance to the winds.

Bliss is an ocean, unbounded, infinite, with no beginning, no end. So don't waste your time with whatsoever begins and ends, it is not bliss. It is deceiving you, it is a false coin. You can call it pleasure, happiness, or whatsoever your like, but it is not bliss. It only appears to be bliss -- but remember that all that glitters is not gold. It is just a soap bubble shining in the sun. Maybe it looks very beautiful, all the colours of the rainbow are in the soap bubble. And it is good if children make soap bubbles, but it is very sad to see even old people playing with soap bubbles. It is a pity that people grow only in body and not in soul. Their body becomes old but their being remains childish.

Sannyas means a conscious effort to grow. And this has to be your criterion: anything that is not unbounded is not worthwhile, anything that is not eternal is not worthwhile, anything that is momentary is not worthwhile. In this way you negate the temporary and slowly slowly your consciousness starts rising towards the eternal.

Bliss is with the eternal. Bliss means a state of such peace, silence, that knows no disturbance, no suffering, no misery, that knows no darkness. All is light, and forever and forever.

Bliss has no form. It is not a thing, it is an experience like love. It is not like a flower, it is more like fragrance. You can feel it but you cannot catch hold of it. You can feel it but you cannot treasure it. You can feel it but you cannot show it to others unless they also are ready to move in the same space as you are in.

Hence it is unprovable. The sympathetic ones will feel it; they don't need any proof. The unsympathetic ones will ask for proof -- and there is no proof possible because it is not a thing. You cannot show it to them. If they ask 'What is bliss, where is it? Show it to us,' you can't show them anything.

And never try to define it, because it is indefinable. The very effort to define it destroys it. Never talk about it to unsympathetic people, because in the beginning it is very fragile. Talking about it can be destructive. They can argue against it, they can create doubt in you. It is very fragile in the beginning; hence for centuries schools have existed, mystery schools where the disciples only talk about their experience either to the master or to fellow travellers, because they will understand,. And they will help to strengthen it, they will support it, they will vouch for it. 'Yes,' they will say, 'This is how it happens. This has happened to me too.'

Sannyas is another effort to create a great mystery school on the earth again, because the old mystery schools have disappeared. Instead of those mystery schools we have bogus organised religions.

Jesus lived in the mystery school of the Essenes, he was brought up by the Essenes. That's why Christians don't have any records for eighteen years of his life: from the year he was twelve up to his thirtieth year, they don't have any records. For those eighteen years he lived secretly with the mystics.

In the past there were many mystery schools in the world. There were Egyptian mystery schools, Indian mystery schools, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, Jewish. Now they have all disappeared. Instead of those beautiful schools there are hocus-pocus pseudo organisations.

Becoming a sannyasin means you are entering again into something mysterious. As you go deeper in yourself you will become more and more aware of what sannyas is, of what this communion of fellow travellers is, how a new family is being created, a universal family, a world family. Schools have never existed in this way. All other schools were local schools. There were Indian and Egyptian schools , but they were all local schools. Once in a while a few seekers travelled from one school to another: they were guests. But this is the first time an effort is being made to create a universal school.

The whole earth is going to be our field.

So be aware of the great importance, of the significance that sannyas is going to have in your life. Be alert, because this is just a beginning. Many things are going to happen to you through it.

Bliss is always perfect, it is never otherwise. It is just like a circle: a circle is always perfect, if it is not perfect it is not a circle. Perfection is intrinsic to bliss.

Don't seek perfection, seek bliss, and you will find perfection. If you seek perfection you will simply become neurotic, because perfection is a shadow of bliss and you can't seek the shadow. You can only seek the substance; the shadow comes with it inevitably.

Millions of people try to be perfect. They drive themselves crazy and others too. All perfectionists are neurotic people because they make great demands upon themselves and upon others. They are cruel. They cannot forgive. They cannot forgive themselves, hence they cannot forgive anybody else. They can't accept human limitations, they can't feel compassion for human frailty. They can;t accept the idea that to err is human. That is against their idea of perfection. Of course they remain miserable because they cannot achieve perfection. Nobody has ever achieved perfection this way, there is no direct way to perfection.

But one can find bliss. That's how a Buddha, a Jesus, a Zarathustra, become perfect: not by seeking perfection but by becoming blissful they are suddenly perfect. Nothing is missing. All suddenly fits together, the whole jigsaw puzzle suddenly fits together.

Bliss brings you a new vision of seeing, of being. Bliss away all your garbage, cleans you. It is a shower, it purifies you.

I am not teaching my people to be perfect. I am teaching my people to be blissful, to be totally blissful -- and then perfection comes of its own accord.

Pleasure is animal -- and millions know nothing more than that. They are only human animals. Happiness is human; very few people rise to that. Pleasure means exploiting the other, using the other as a means. Happiness means sharing. In pleasure you simply take, you don't give. In happiness it is both give and take; it is fifty-fifty. You give because you want -- it is a bargain.

Bliss is divine. You simply give; there is no question of getting anything back. You give for the sheer joy of giving.

Pleasure is physical, happiness is psychological, bliss is spiritual. One has to rise from pleasure into bliss. They all look alike but there are subtle difference, they are very subtle, but very important differences. If you slowly watch them within yourself then you will be able to see those differences: when it is pleasure, when it is happiness and when it is bliss.

Be alert and watchful and witness. And when you have found what is only pleasure don't hanker for it, don't desire it. Remain a little detached from it. I am not saying to repress it, just keep a little distance. Remain unco-operative, don't give energy to it. Give a little more energy to happiness -- but that too only for the time-being. When you have started feeling some glimpses of bliss then the whole energy has to be given to bliss. Then withdraw all your energy from pleasure and happiness and make it one-pointed, moving upwards. Then it becomes a peak, a very orgasmic peak.

Pleasure is momentary, happiness can last a little longer, but bliss can be forever. it is eternal.

Bliss is our home, that's why nobody can be at ease with misery. It is impossible to be at ease with misery because it is not our home, it is not our nature.

We are not meant to be miserable, hence our whole being rejects it. Our very nature is bliss, that is our home; but we have forgotten the way home, we are lost in the jungle of the world. So many things are attracting us, alluring us, fascinating us; we are running hither and thither and there is no time to come back home. The world goes on and on promising many things to us. Of course no promise is ever fulfilled, all promises are false. The goods are never delivered but we are such fools that we still go on believing. We go on being deceived again and again, still we go on believing.

Sannyas means a reconsideration of your whole life structure, a reconsideration in silence, in meditation, in contemplation.

One has to be cool enough to see what one has been doing to oneself, where one is moving. Is it possible that the world can fulfill one's desires? Has it ever been possible? Has anybody ever achieved anything in the outside world? There has not been a single person in the whole world, in the whole history of humanity, who can say that 'The world has not deceived me,' that 'I am fulfilled,' that 'I have arrived'. Not even Alexander the Great can say that. Only the few people who have moved inwards say they have found the home, they have found the ultimate resting place.

It is within you. Call it the kingdom of god, call it bliss, call it your self-nature -- these are different expressions for the same thing. But sannyas should become a radical change in your life-style. It should not be extravert any more.

Meditation is the only possibility for being joyous. Meditation is the door to a blissful life. Those who have not tasted meditation have not tasted of bliss either. They are synonymous, two sides of the same coin. You fulfil one side -- that is meditation -- and the other side comes as a reward, inevitably.

Without being meditative one can go on searching, looking everywhere, from one life into another life. One will find only frustration, misery, pain, suffering, hell. One will not find god, one will not find truth, one will not find bliss. And the irony is that if you had looked within you would have found that it has always been inside you. Meditation means looking within.

It is our nature to be blissful. We have forgotten how to commune with our won nature. We have forgotten the language the very language of being in touch with ourselves. My whole effort here is to help you to get in touch with yourself. And the moment you are in touch with yourself you are in touch with reality. That is another name for god.

Meditation is possible only through love, not through greed. Many people start meditating out of greed, they think they will get this and they will get that. They are interested in esoteric powers, in miracles, in all kinds of stupid things. But then meditation is not going to happen at all. From the very beginning they have taken a wrong step.

Meditation has to be your love affair, not your greed. Greed kills love, greed is poison to love. One loves for love's sake -- for no other reason, for no other motive. If one can meditate for the sheer joy of meditating, then something happens some day which is incalculable, immeasurable. It takes you beyond time, beyond mind. It takes you to the infinite, it takes you to the other shore. But these are all by-products.

You should not hanker for the other shore. If you meditate just to go to the other shore, meditation will never happen. If you simply meditate, meditation is going to happen and the other shore will follow as a natural course.

One should not meditate to achieve anything. Much is achieved, but that is not to be your motive. It has to be left to god. You meditate and whenever you are ready... whatsoever you are ready for, is bound to happen.

Nature is very generous. It is very just too, it is never unfair. If you are worthy of something you will get it, you are bound to get it. Not even a single moment will be lost; you will get it immediately. If you don't deserve it.

It is only in deep meditation that one becomes aware of god and also becomes aware that he is constantly watching you. Not even for a single moment are you left alone. He never abandons you. You can go astray, you can runaway from god as far as you can, but he follows you like a shadow, he remains in the deepest core of your being. And he is the only judge, so don't be bothered about what others say.

There are different kinds of moralities in the world. According to one society something is good, and according to some other society the same thing is bad. If one decides from other people's opinions then it will be impossible to know what is right and what is wrong.

The only way to decide is to face your own consciousness. Let decisions come from there. Hear your own inner voice, because that is god's voice. When your head is silent, the heart speaks -- and the heart is only a vehicle of god, god speaks through the heart. And he

always guides you; his guidance is always available. And if he says something is right, it is right, even if the whole world says it is wrong. And if he says something is wrong then it is wrong, even though the whole world says it is right.

Let god be the ultimate judge, the ultimate deciding factor in your life, and then you will know that life is a bliss. Then life is a constant rejoicing.

Only a meditative person knows the difference between aloneness and loneliness. The non-meditative person knows no difference because he has no taste of aloneness. All that he knows is loneliness. Whenever he is not with somebody else, not engaged, occupied, he feels lonely, he feels suffocated in his loneliness, he feels miserable. He does not know that one's own company can also be a joy.

That's what the whole art of meditation is: to be joyous in your own company, unoccupied, unengaged, to be alone and yet utterly blissful.

Once you have understood the beauty of aloneness you will find how much you have been missing in the past, because to be together with somebody, howsoever beautiful it is, is nothing compared to the beauties of being alone. It can't have that silence, it can't have that peace, it can't have that overwhelming experience of the mysterious and the miraculous. It can't have that purity and innocence. It can't give you the sense of the eternal, the deathless, that which is beyond time.

Only when you are utterly alone do the mysteries of existence open up their doors for you. For the first time you are allowed as an insider into the mysteries of god.

Learn the art of being alone. And am not saying not to be together with people. One who knows how to be alone can be with people and yet remain alone. He can be in the crowd and yet remain alone. His aloneness remains untouched, his aloneness remains non-wavering. Then that person has a certain solidity about his being. You can feel his substantiality. You can feel his presence -- he has a presence. Ordinary people don't have any presence, they are hollow, non-substantial. They are just empty shells, containers without any content, bodies without any souls.

The soul is born only in aloneness, out of the womb of deep solitude the soul is born. And only with the birth of the soul do you start seeing that which is, experiencing that which is. God is another name for that which is.

Bliss is bright, it is luminous, it is light. Misery is dark, misery is black. When you are miserable you are in a gloom, you are surrounded by a dark cloud. Even others can feel it. The miserable person creates a certain vibe around himself. He is walking death, a black hole. He sucks people's energy. He is destructive. He himself may not destroy anything, just his presence is destructive. And the opposite happens when you are blissful: you are creative.

You may not create anything in particular; your very presence, your vibe, your radiation, nourishes people. You are bubbling with joy. It is shining. You cannot hide bliss, it is impossible. It is such a bright sun that it shines forth and those who have eyes will be able to see it from thousands of miles away and will be pulled by it like a magnetic force.

That's how all the Buddhas down the ages have been working: in a subtle way their magnetism starts pulling people. Even unknowingly, unconsciously, people start travelling towards that light, the source of that light.

Now all kinds of communications are possible. The earth has become a small village, but in the days of Gautam Buddha or Lao Tzu it was not so. Still, from almost every part of the world people travelled to Gautam Buddha. There were no aeroplanes, no trains, no cars, no

telephones, no postal system -- nothing of the sort. But in some mysterious way people travelled from all nooks and corners of the world.

Something invisible starts stirring people's heart. Those who are ready, those who for lives have been waiting for some light, for someone who is awakened, start moving towards him. They may not be alert as to why it is happening or how it is happening. They may be surprised themselves: 'What are we doing?' Many sannyasins here are surprised at what they are doing, at how they have arrived here. And they are puzzled when they become sannyasins -- they had never thought, not even dreamt about being a sannyasin *ever* in their life and suddenly something has possessed them.

Bliss has that magnetic energy. It is like a sun -- very invisible but very powerful. And it is impossible to hide it. Many times, many awakened ones have tried to hide it so that they are not bothered by other people, but nobody has ever been successful in that. Sooner or later people are bound to arrive.

Become blissful so that your bliss can become a blessing to the world. That's the only way we can thank god, that's the only way we can pay him back. He has given so much and we are so poor. But there is one way in which we can really show our gratitude -- and that is by becoming blissful and by sharing our bliss, by becoming luminous, by becoming alight for ourselves and for others too.

Bliss is a by-product, a by-product of the experience of inner light. Ordinarily we are full of darkness inside; hence nobody wants to go in, everybody wants to remain occupied with the outside. But that darkness is only a layer that we have accumulated, it is not our inner reality. We have to pass through that darkness to reach the centre, but the moment we reach the centre everything explodes into light. Our inner centre is full of light, full of divine light, eternal light. It is light.

To know it, to be it, brings great bliss. Then life is no longer ordinary, nothing is ordinary any more. Everything becomes suffused with the sacred, everything starts overflowing with beauty, benediction. The whole existence is transformed just by your reaching your inner core, because your vision is no more the same; you have a new vision. With the new vision the world is no more material, it becomes divine. It is full of godliness. Everything becomes simply god. That is the goal of sannyas.

It is within our reach. Because it is within our being we have not to go anywhere to seek it. We have just to be silent and still, so that we can settle inside at the centre. The more restless we are, the more on the circumference we are. The more still we are, the closer we are to the centre. When we are absolutely still, when nothing is moving, then we are centred. In that very moment you are reborn. Darkness disappears; the sunrise has happened, and bliss follows just like a shadow of the experience.

The awakening is called enlightenment because it is an experience of being full of light, overflowing with light.

Bliss happens only in innocence, in a state of not-knowing. The knowledgeable goes on missing, the knowledgeable person is the most far away from god. Even the sinners are not so far away. That's the whole meaning of the biblical story. The original sin was eating from the tree of knowledge, eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge. But the meaning is missed. It is so clear that that is the greatest sin, the original sin. But the religious people are very knowledgeable people; they go on committing the original sin.

Jesus says, 'Be like a child, only then will you enter into my kingdom of god.' That's the

meaning of innocence. Drop knowledge, become a child again, full of wonder and awe, and you have taken the most important step towards god. Then everything else is easy, then everything else follows of its own accord.

Every child comes full of joy but we have created a society so pathological so miserable, that soon the child learns to be miserable, soon he starts forgetting the language of bliss. And the moment he learns the art of being miserable we think that he has become part of our society, he has become civilised, he is educated. Till we destroy his capacity to be joyous for no reason at all, we are not at ease. But every child comes with joy, brings joy, is full of joy -- and that joy has to be regained.

That's what sannyas is all about: it is an effort to attain a second childhood so that you can laugh again, so that you can dance again, so that you can wonder again, so that butterflies again become significant and life takes on a mysterious colour and everything becomes extraordinary.

The moment a person becomes a child again he is a sage, because he is again full of joy, he is again full of god. Joy is synonymous with god.

To be blissful is to be virtuous, to be miserable is to be in sin. It has been said down the ages that if you sin you will be miserable, and if you are virtuous you will be rewarded with bliss. I say to you just the opposite: if you are miserable you are in sin, if you are blissful you are virtuous.

Bliss is not a reward; bliss is a way of life, just as misery is a way of life. There are only two ways to live: to either live miserably or to live blissfully. And the choice is yours, the freedom is yours; you are free to choose. But remember you are not free not to choose, you will have to choose -- that is inevitable. But the freedom is there: one can decide to be miserable, then one can learn the whole art of being miserable. And there are so many people who can teach you how to be miserable; they are teaching already.

The whole society lives in misery and poisons every child. It teaches you ambition -- ambition is one of the causes of misery; it teaches you ego, pride -- that is one of the causes of misery; it teaches you guilt. It creates so much guilt in people that they become incapable of living, they become paralyzed. It makes you so afraid of life that you stop being alive, you somehow manage to live at the minimum. That seems safer, because if you live at the minimum, you will not commit many mistakes. The more you live, the more danger there is of committing more mistakes, of going astray. So people have become stagnant pools, dirty pools -- they stink. The whole of life is being managed by miserable people. They are the politicians and the priests and the professors, and they are the powerful people. It is very rare to find a person who has chosen to live blissfully. It needs tremendous intelligence to go alone; not with the crowd, not on the super-highway, but alone into the jungle where no path exists; where you have to create the path by walking, where you have to find your way, no map is available, where on each step there is danger and you are so alone that you cannot take shelter in somebody else. Hence very few people choose the path of bliss.

But once you have chosen the path of bliss, life starts happening to you in a multidimensional way, you start becoming richer every moment. And then danger is no more danger, it has a beauty of its own. It sharpens your sword, it sharpens your being, it gives you integrity. Then insecurity is not a question of fear -- you love it. You love it for its own sake, because the more insecure you are, the more your life is full of thrill and adventure. Then you don't hanker for safety, because you know that safety is death. Then you live dangerously because that is the only way to live.

To be a sannyasin means choosing to live blissfully, choosing to live dangerously, choosing to live not according to the crowd but according to your inner light, risking; because unless you risk you can't be an individual. You will remain just a small part in the big machine of the society, a cog in the wheel. You will not be your own self -- and not to be your own self is hell. To be your own self, to taste the joy of freedom, to open your wings to the unknown sky is the only way to know god.

It depends on us -- whether to be miserable or to be blissful. Basically it is our decision. People have decided to be miserable, that's why they are miserable. Nobody can help them unless they decide to snap out of their misery. Then it can happen in a single moment. Both possibilities are always there.

Sannyas means that from this moment onwards, you will always choose bliss instead of misery. Make it a conscious effort in every situation to find something which is blissful, and choose it. I have never come across a single situation in which bliss is not present. Of course misery is also present, in the same proportion. That's how life keeps balance, just like day and night. But it is for you to choose; there is no need to choose misery. You can let it pass. You can simply say, "I am fed up with you and I have decided to choose to be blissful."

Nobody is hindering us. We are our own enemies. We go on always choosing misery instead of bliss for a simple reason, and the reason is that the ego feeds on misery, it thrives on misery, it dies in bliss. When you are crying it is there, when you are all laughter it is no more there. When you are sad it is there, when you are rejoicing you cannot find it anymore.

All the awakened ones say, "We have looked inside ourselves but we don't find it at all," for the simple reason that it is not there, they have stopped feeding it, nourishing it.

Give it a try and you will be surprised that there is no need to analyze the misery, no need to go to its roots and causes as to why it is there. There is no point in thinking about it, about how to get out of it. All those efforts simply perpetuate it. One simply walks out of it.

Buddha used to say: It is as if your house is on fire. Then what do you do? You don't consults ancient scriptures to see what people used to do in the old days in such situations. You simply run out! Even if you are in your bathroom naked, you will forget all appropriateness. You will jump out of the window. You will forget to take even the towel with you. (laughter) This is not a time for etiquette! And I don't think anybody is going to take any note of it.

Buddha used to say that the situation is the same. We are living in misery. To live in misery is to live in a house which is on fire.

Jump out of it! And just across the road is the palace. And it is waiting for you, it belongs to you. How long will you be here?

-- For a long time.

That's very good. I don't think that you will ever go back! I know my people!

Fingers Pointing to the Moon

Chapter #4

Chapter title: Waking / Watching

7 March 1980 pm in Chuang Tzu Auditorium

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Sannyas is a decision to wake up, whatsoever the risk. And whatsoever the cost. Once you have become absolutely decisive. It is not difficult. But it all depends on you.

I can help. I can show the way. But you have to follow it. The Buddhas can only show the way.

Sannyas is a deep, profound art of acting in the world. The world is a great drama, it is a vast stage, and you are only playing a role. There is no need to be serious about it. The role may be that of a beggar or that of an emperor; a role is a role -- it makes no difference what role you are playing. One knows that this is just acting, one never becomes identified with it. One plays it as efficiently as possible, but it does not create any worry. There is no anxiety.

Sannyas is not renunciation of the world but only renunciation of getting identified with the world. Don't get identified with anything. Keep your distance. go on doing whatsoever is needful. Whatever role god has placed you in, do it beautifully, joyously, but remember always: it is only a stage, and the moment the curtain falls all roles disappear and only pure consciousness remains.

If one can do that one has really become a sannyasin.

Meditation is the only method for inner illumination. Meditation is the only bridge to move you from darkness to light. Meditation is the only process to transform your life from mechanicalness into real life. And by meditation I simply mean awareness.

Learn to be more and more aware: aware of your body, aware of your mind, aware of your heart, aware of action, thought and feeling. These are the three dimensions to which awareness has to be brought. And when you are aware of all the three you will become aware of the fourth -- that is awareness itself. The fourth is the transcendence. The fourth leads you to god.

No awareness has two functions: one, it cuts you off from that which you are not, and

secondly, it connects you to that which you really are.

Our real being is never born and never dies. Birth and death are only episodes in the eternity of life. Life is not confined between these two episodes. The idea that life means the span between birth and death has created great anxiety in man, because then life seems to be so short and there are so many desires to be fulfilled. It seems impossible that one can manage them. Failure seems to be absolutely inevitable. Whatsoever you do you are going to fail, and death is always hanging just in front of you, like a naked sword hanging by a thin thread. Any moment it can happen: just a breeze is enough and the sword will fall on you.

Hence the great hurry and speed and the great worry that 'I have to do things and live fast. Who knows whether tomorrow comes or not?' So people are running with such speed that they cannot see anything, they cannot taste anything. They have no time. They cannot enjoy anything; the shadow of death is always over them. They cannot relax, they cannot just sit silently.

And the greatest experiences happen when you relax, when you simply sit doing nothing, when you absolutely disappear in your rest. Then bliss happens, truth happens, god happens. All these things have become almost impossible.

Modern man is living in such a hurry that he cannot sit, he cannot rest. He has become incapable of rest. And once you are incapable of rest you are incapable of all that is valuable. And the reality is that we need not be so worried about anything. Life is eternal. We have always been here and we always will be here; we *are* immortals. The body is going to change, the mind is going to change, but we are neither; neither the body nor the mind.

It is only in deep meditation that one discovers this simple fact, that we are not the body and the mind; we are awareness, consciousness. We are the witness of the whole game. Once you have known that witness you have tasted something of the nectar. This is the nectar alchemists were in search of.

Peace is not something that can be cultivated from the outside. Many people cultivate it from the outside, then they have a peaceful outside, but it is only an appearance. Deep down they are just the opposite, they are sitting on a volcano. It can erupt at any moment.

So, I am not in favor of cultivating peace as a facade. Peace should be an inner worth, not an outer cultivation; only then it is true, only then it is liberating. And the inner peace comes only as a by-product of meditation. You cannot achieve it directly; it is a consequence of meditation. The more meditative you become, the more peaceful. When the meditation is absolute, peace is absolute.

And by meditation I mean a state of no-mind. Mind is always unpeaceful, it exists in conflict. Mind is a kind of insanity; there is no sane mind as such. The sane person is one who has gone beyond mind, one who had a taste of no-mind, one who lives in no-mind and uses the mind as a servant or as a mechanism.

To live in the mind is to be insane, to go beyond mind is to be sane. And to be sane is to be peaceful. They are the same.

Meditate more and more. Meditation has to become the very foundation of sannyas. Whatsoever you are doing, do it meditatively, watchfully, alert, aware. Watch your body, watch your mind, watch your heart. These three watchfulnesses make the whole of meditation.

Actions have to be watched, thoughts have to be watched, feelings have to be watched. Just by watching, slowly slowly mind evaporates. And the day that mind is not found within

you, peace is found. That day is of great benediction.

You have to create a peaceful state within. This is the work that you have to do upon yourself.

Usually man's inside is a constant conflict. It is an ongoing civil war. We have to disperse the whole crowd from inside -- the crowd of thoughts and desires and memories and imaginations -- so that we can know who we really are.

We are lost in this crowd, and this crowd is constantly fighting. The fight makes so much noise that one cannot enter into one's own being. The crowd can be dispersed very easily, and with the crowd all conflict disappear. The fundamental work is of being watchful.

Make it a point to watch whatsoever goes on inside you. Watch as much as you can, without any judgement. It is a simple watchfulness, no evaluation is implied. Then one starts feeling a miracle happening: watchfulness is so magical that it simply helps the crowd to disperse without making any effort to disperse it. The crowd starts escaping from you of its own accord.

When you are left alone there is peace. That peace is the bridge between you and god. That peace will allow you to know yourself and also the whole existence, because man is a miniature universe. To know man in his totality is to know the whole existence.

Man lives either in pain or pleasure. He goes on moving like a pendulum, between pleasure and pain. Each pleasure brings its own pain, and each pain brings its own pleasure. They are not opposites, they are two sides of the same coin. The moment one becomes capable of seeing this -- that they are complementaries, not opposites -- one stops choosing. When you choose pleasure you have already chosen pain. Choose one and the other comes with it automatically, they are inseparable.

Seeing this one stops choosing. One becomes a choiceless witness. Then whatsoever comes one simply watches. One neither hankers for pleasure nor does one try to avoid pain. If pain comes one is a witness, one is not in a hurry to get rid of it. If pleasure comes one is a witness, one is not greedy to prolong it. In that understanding peace happens.

Peace is the flowering of choiceless awareness. And unless one knows what peace is, one knows nothing.

(To a five-year old) Become more and more silent. And it is easy to be silent when you are young. The older you grow, the more the mind collects word, knowledge, noise.

Children can be silent easily. So this is the right time for sannyas. Ans sannyas is nothing but the science of silence. So just sit silently, dance, sing, but remember one thing: deep inside one has to be utterly silent.

Yes, sometimes thoughts come. Watch them and they will go. They come and go -- there is no need to be worried about them. Yes, sometimes there is inner noise; just remember to watch. It comes and goes like a breeze and one remains untouched.

Slowly slowly the knack is learned. It *is* a knack. Once you have learned the knack you can be silent anywhere. Sitting in the marketplace one can be silent. The whole world may be in a turmoil but one can be silent. And that is the beauty of meditation, that it gives you a centering, a grounding. And in that silence one comes face to face with god.

There is a beauty which is not of the body -- and that is the true beauty because it cannot be taken away, it cannot be eroded by time, it cannot be destroyed by old age, it is not even

affected by death. It is abiding, it is forever.

My whole interest is in helping you to find that beauty. And it is everybody's potential, it is hidden in everybody's being -- we have to discover it.

Put more energy into entering your own self. Whenever you have time just close your eyes and relax inside. Doing nothing, just slip inside, with no struggle, no conflict with the mind. Let the mind go on chattering -- remain unconcerned about it. It's okay, it has nothing to do with you. Don't fight with it, don't try first to make it silent, because that fight takes so much time and so much energy.

There is no need to waste that time and energy with the mind. Just tell the mind 'Please go on. Do whatsoever you want to do and let me do what I want to do, as if we are separate.' Start with that, that 'We are separate.' The mind is continuously chattering; let it chatter. It is traffic noise happening somewhere else. Then it is very easy to relax and rest in your being.

And as one starts quietening, as one becomes more and more still, one discovers the inner beauty. And to find it is to find all. To miss it is to miss all.

Man ordinarily lives like a robot. He goes on doing things but he is not there. He eats, he walks, he talks, he listens -- but he is not there. The mind is roaming all over the world: from the outside you may be sitting at the table taking your breakfast, but inside you may be on the moon... or any other stupid place. Not that one has to be on the moon -- there are so many stupid places in the world, one can be anywhere. But one thing is almost certain, that you are not at the table. It is just a routine, automatic; you go on stuffing.

You go for a walk; you don't look around, you don't see the green of the trees, the red of the trees, the gold of the trees. You don't see anything. You don't see the sun, you don't see the birds, you don't see the people passing by. What to say about others? There are people who may not have looked at their own wife for years or at their own husband or at their own children for years. Not that they don't live together; they live together, they sleep together, they make love, they go on producing children -- but all mechanically. Even while making love there are not two persons in bed, there may be many. The husband may be thinking of some other woman, the woman may be thinking of some other man -- so at least four are always there (laughter). And they are just going through empty movements.

People are saying hello to each other, "How are you?" and talking about the weather, but it is almost as if a kind of tape recording is inside them. They don't mean anything, they are not interested at all. It has to be said so it has to be said; it is just a mannerism, etiquette. And this is our life. There is no wonder if we go on missing the beauty of it.

To be a sannyasin means to start living in a totally different way. We have to de-automatize ourselves, we have to become a little more slowed down in every act. So you have to be aware. When you are walking, don't walk at the old pace, with the old speed; slow down, so much so that you have to be alert, otherwise you will gather your speed again. That is automatic.

Buddha insisted very much that his disciples walk very slowly, for the simple reason that if you walk very slowly you have to be constantly alert. The moment you lose track of alertness you start walking the old way, you go fast. The machine starts functioning again.

Buddha used to tell his disciples to breathe very slowly, for the simple reason that if you breathe very slowly you will have to be conscious about it.

So do everything very silently, very slowly, very peacefully, gracefully, so that each act becomes a deep meditation in awareness. If we can transform our acts into meditation, if meditation can be spread all over our lives, from morning to night... The moment you wake

up, remember the first thing: get out of the bed, but be very alert.

You will forget many times in the beginning; remind yourself again and again. Slowly slowly one gets the knack of it. Once you have got the knack of how to be aware in your day-to-day life, you have the secret key. And that is the most important thing. There is nothing more valuable than that secret key.

Meditation brings fragrance because it helps your inner being to blossom. Meditation is like spring: thousands of flowers of your consciousness start blooming, all the buds open, your potential starts becoming actual. You are no more just a hope, you become a reality. You are no more just a dream, you become absolutely concrete. But it happens only through meditation -- and meditation means getting out of the mind.

Watch the mind so that you can start feeling you are separate from it. That's the whole secret: whenever you watch something you become separate from it. The watcher cannot be the watched. When you are the watcher and the mind is the watched, you have created the right distance. From that distance perspective happens. You can see things more clearly, you have a wider vision. All your prejudices and memories and thoughts and concepts are no more a hindrance. Then suddenly one starts feeling that one is opening up to one's ultimate flowering. Great fragrance happens to the man of a meditation, and great music and great poetry. His whole life is grace.

Remember two words: one is gravitation, the other is grace. Gravitation is the law of the earth, it pulls things down. Grace is the law of heaven, it pulls things up. Science discovered gravitation; religion discovered grace.

Ordinarily we are born and we live under the law of gravitation. Our whole life is a downward pull. We begin in birth and we end in death. We begin as fully alive and we end as a corpse. This is the downward flow.

Unless one starts moving inwards the grace, the second law, cannot function. If we remain identified with the body then the law of the earth prevails; the body is part of the earth. When we start moving inwards -- that's what meditation is all about -- we become aware of something which is not part of the body. It is in the body, it is not the body. The body is only a temple, it is not the deity.

Once you have become aware of the inner deity that resides in the body, the second law immediately starts functioning, you are pulled upwards. Life becomes more and more abundant, more and more rich, more and more infinite, more and more perfect. It moves towards the sky, it starts becoming as vast as the sky, even the sky is not the limit. But the secret is meditation.

Man is not only a man. He is a hidden god, a potential god. The god has to be discovered. It is not available there on the surface. One has to dig deep to find it. It is hiding in the deepest cave of your being, in your very heart. It is such a precious treasure that it has to be in the deepest cave. It can't be just available on the outside.

If you have a great treasure you will keep it in the most secret place of your house, in the innermost chamber. You may dig a hole in the earth and hide it there.

God is our treasure you will keep it in the most secret place of your house, in the innermost chamber. You may dig a hole in the earth and hide it there.

God is our treasure, it is our life, our love, our all and all. It can't be available on the surface. On the circumference we are only partially manifest; at the centre we are totally

manifest. But people go on living at the circumference, worrying about money and power and prestige and all kinds of stupid things which don't really matter, which can't make you blissful.

The only possibility of being blissful is to discover your godhood, and the method is meditation. By meditation I mean watching your mind, simply watching your mind -- not doing anything, not interfering with the mind, not judging -- remaining absolutely silent and looking at the mind, whatsoever goes on: the traffic of thoughts, desires, memories -- aloof, cool, just looking at it unconcerned, detached. Slowly slowly that traffic disappears a window opens into god. You become aware of a godliness which was always there, within and without, but of which you were not aware. You were fast asleep.

Man can live in freedom only if he is meditative, otherwise not. Meditation is the source of all freedom. Without meditation you are a slave, a slave of your own instinct, a slave of your unconscious desires. You may think and believe that you are free, but you are not.

Somebody insults you and you become angry. Are you free to be angry or *not* to be angry? You are not free. He has simply pushed your button and you have behaved in a mechanical way. You are predictable. It was not within your capacity *not* to be angry. You see something and greed arises. You are not free, you can't do anything about this greed. Or lust arises and you are simply a victim of it.

It is only through meditation that slowly slowly more consciousness is created within you, more light is created; more watchfulness, witnessing, happens. And that is the miracle of awareness: if you become aware of anger you become a master of anger. Then it is up to you whether to be angry or not. You are absolutely free to be this way or that way.

To people who have not meditated may go on believing that they are free but they are deceiving nobody else except themselves. Be more meditative and you will know how to live in freedom. And of course, life is life only when you are able to live in freedom.

Nobody need be a failure. If we are failures it is for the simple reason that we go on looking for bliss and for truth in the outside world -- where they don't exist. Our search is right but the place where we are searching is wrong. We have to turn the same search inwards.

Religion is subjectivity. We have to get rid of the objective search, we have to become less concerned with objects and more concerned with our won interiority. Our fundamental question should be 'What is this that is within me? Who is this that lives within me, that I am? Who am I? Certainly I am not the body, certainly I am not the mind either because I can watch the mind, I can watch the body. The only thing I cannot watch is the watcher; hence only one thing is certain, that I must be the watcher, the witness, the awareness.'

You cannot go behind awareness. You can go behind the body, behind the mind, you can see the mind and its functioning. Anger comes and goes and thoughts pass and desires come and dreams pass -- and you can see the whole scene of the mind just as if you are watching a television screen. You can see your body: the stomach is hungry, your head has a headache, your legs have gone to sleep. You can watch all these things but you cannot watch the watcher. That is the only thing you cannot go behind. Everything else can become an object.

That which can become an object is not you. You can never be an object, you are always the subject, irreducibly the subject. Hence the real search is for this subjectivity. To know it is to be victorious, to know it is to know all that is worth knowing.

Man can exist in three ways: either like an animal or like a human being or like a god.

Ordinarily people live like animals; there is not much difference. The only difference is that man is a worse animal than other animals, he can fall lower than any other animal. He is more cunning, more corrupt. He misuses his capacities. Rather than being creative he becomes destructive.

Adolf Hitler could have become a Buddha, he had the same potential. Judas could have been a Jesus, he had the same potential, the same energy. But energy is neutral; it depends on how you use it, how you decide and choose to use it. Life is your choice. You are free to choose, but you are not free not to choose; you will have to choose this way or that. Even choosing not to choose is a way of choosing. It is inevitable, you cannot avoid it.

The people who exist on the lowest level are the people who have not chosen... because choice means struggle, effort, it is an uphill task. It seems better not to choose and to remain as one is born. One is born as an animal. Very few become human beings. Humanity exists only in name, it has not yet arrived.

Only those people are human who have chosen, who have become decisive about their destiny, who have a sense of direction, who are creative, who are constantly discovering, exploring new ways of being and growth, who are not satisfied with the instinctive, who want to be intelligent in their lifestyles. They are human beings. And very few human beings rise to the ultimate, to be divine.

The only difference between the animal and the human is that the animal is absolutely unconscious, the human is a little bit conscious. And the only difference between the human and the divine is that the divine is absolutely conscious. Man exists between the two: the absolute unconsciousness of the animals and the absolute consciousness of the Buddhas, of the gods. One can either move downwards, fall back into darkness, or one can start climbing.

Sannyas means the decision, the ultimate decision and commitment, that 'Unless I achieve absolute awareness I am not going to rest.' Only in that ultimate awareness is true rest possible because true contentment is possible, true bliss is possible.

Ordinarily man is very cruel, more cruel than any other animal, more animalistic than any other animal. Man in his unconsciousness is far below the animal kingdom, because no animal kills its own species except man, no animal kills just for play. Amongst animals there are no hunters. They kill when they are hungry, otherwise not. Man kills just as a game. That seems to be the ultimate in cruelty; destroying life just to keep yourself occupied. But as you become more conscious of your cruelty, of your violence, gross and subtle, you start becoming more and more compassionate. Not that you cultivate compassion. Just by becoming aware of your cruelty, violence, ugliness... the very awareness brings new changes in you. And the energy that was involved in cruelty, in violence, starts changing. The same energy becomes purified, the same energy becomes compassion. No other animal is compassionate either. Hence man can fall below the animals and can rise above the gods. That is the beauty of man, his splendor, his glory; he has a vast spectrum, the whole universe is available to him. He can be the lowest and he can be the highest.

To be initiated into sannyas means becoming dedicated to the goal of the highest. It is a decision that "I will not rest content until I have reached the highest transformation." And if you decide totally, it starts happening. Nothing is missing except the decision, except decisiveness.

It is easy to rule the world, it is easy to rule others. The real problem is how to rule oneself. Others can be ruled through violence. Even a stupid, a very stupid person can do

that. These people -- Genghis Khan, Tamerlane and Nadir Shah, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin -- are not very intelligent people. They are stupid people, the most stupid one can find in the whole of history. They could rule others because they were so stupid and insensitive that they could destroy easily, they could be violent and murderous very easily. But violence is not needed to rule oneself. Great love is needed, great intelligence is needed, understanding is needed, awareness is needed -- that's why it is difficult.

History is full of great kings and rulers, but history is not so full of great Buddhas, the awakened ones. The awakened ones can be counted on your fingers, for the simple reason that they moved in a direction where a radical transformation is needed: from unconsciousness to consciousness.

And that's the whole effort of sannyas: your unconsciousness has to be transformed into consciousness. When not a bit of unconsciousness remains inside, when you are full of light, you have become a master, a real master.

Atmo means the Self, the Self with a capital 'S' -- not a lower case 's' because the lower case 's' means the ego. With a capital 'S' I mean the supreme Self. It is another name of the god within you. And Dieter means a king, a ruler.

The moment you know your supreme Self you become an emperor. Before that one remains a beggar. Self-knowledge makes you aware of your kingdom for the first time. The kingdom is not of the outside. All outside kingdoms are false, they are sandcastles, or houses made of playing cards: at any moment they can disappear. Just a little breeze is enough to destroy them.

But there is another kingdom too, the kingdom of the within -- and that is the true kingdom, the true treasure. To know it is to possess it. The very knowing is its possession. It is ours, we have just forgotten about it. It is not lost, simply forgotten; hence religion is basically nothing but a remembrance. Meditation, prayer and all other techniques are just helpers to remember who you are.

The moment you have remembered, recognised your reality, you don't have any desires because all is fulfilled. All that you ever needed is already available. God has given it to you from the very beginning. God does not make beggars, he only makes emperors.

We have two words which are very different but which appear very similar. One is self-consciousness, the other is self-awareness. The meaning is exactly the same as far as language is concerned, but existentially there is a great difference. Self-consciousness is a disease. The emphasis is on the self. You become self-conscious only when you are nervous, afraid. If you suddenly have to go for an interview you become self-conscious, or if you are suddenly asked to deliver a lecture standing on a podium you become self-conscious. Facing so many people who are all focussing on you creates great trembling inside.

It is said that the mind starts functioning the moment the child is born till one day you stand on a podium to speak, then it stops. Then suddenly you don't know what is what. Suddenly all thoughts disappear. Those are the only moments you know of no-thought. But you miss them because you are so afraid and trembling and perspiring. That is self-consciousness.

Consciousness is not important, ego is important -- that's why you are trembling. You want to have a certain image; now you are afraid whether you will be able to manage it. Facing so many people you are afraid that if something goes wrong you will be exposed, that you are not so intelligent, that you are not the person that you pretend to be, that you are

standing almost naked before eyes which are looking at you like -rays. You become very concerned about the ego, how to protect your ego. That is a kind of dis-ease.

Self-awareness is totally different. It has nothing to do with the ego. You have two selves. One is the false, the ego, which is only a belief. If you look deeply into it you will not find it anywhere. The other is your real self, your original face, your essential nature. To be aware of it is to be aware of the tremendous mystery that life is.

And the only door goes through you. You cannot approach that mystery from anywhere else because the closest thing to that mystery is your own being, your own heart. You have to enter from there.

Once you have known the mystery of life through your own being you will know it everywhere. Once you have known it within you will know it without too. But the first work has to be done in your inner world. A sannyasin has to become a lab, a great experiment. He is the experiment, he is the instrument of the experiment, he is the lab, he is everything because inside you there is nobody else, nothing else. You are all: the experimenter and the experimented upon and the experiment.

Once you start moving into the subjectivity of your inner world, of your interiority, you slowly slowly become acquainted with the miraculous. And to be acquainted with the miraculous is to know that which is worth knowing; otherwise one can go on accumulating knowledge which is worthless, which is simply junk.

Meditation is the process of achieving immortality. Meditation is the only alchemical secret. It transforms mortal beings into immortal beings. It transforms dust into the divine. Meditation is a bridge between the earth and the heaven.

And by meditation I don't mean concentration. That has to be remembered. Concentration is a misunderstanding about meditation. Concentration is of the mind. It is tense, it is a strain. It needs great effort. It is violent, and I am against all violence, even violence against yourself.

By meditation I mean a relaxed awareness, a very restful awareness; no effort, no straining. Meditation does not mean focusing your mind, because whenever you try to focus the mind, tension is bound to arise because the mind naturally wants to flow. It is unnatural for the mind to force it to stay stuck somewhere. It does not want to be dormant, stagnant, it wants to move. It *is* movement, and nothing is wrong in its movement. Of course it is a little monkey-ish; it moves too much from one branch to another, from one tree to another -- and that is tiring.

But concentration is like when you force a child to sit in the corner of a room and be silent. Tell him to be silent, 'Be quiet, don't move,' and see what happens to him. He will force himself, he will close his eyes, his eyes will be clenched shut and he will be boiling within. He will be restless and he will want to jump out of himself. And that's what happens to people who try to concentrate.

Meditation is a non-focussed awareness. Meditation is more like a mirror: you simply watch whatsoever goes on happening in the mind. A thought comes, a thought arises, stays there for a time being, then moves, goes out, comes in from this door, goes out from another door; even another thought arises. There is a constant procession, a traffic of thoughts, desires, memories, imagination. And you are just a watcher, cool, unconcerned, indifferent.

That watchfulness is meditation. You are neither for any thought nor against any thought. You are not choosing anything, you are just in a state of choicelessness. You cannot be distracted. A man who concentrates can be distracted, *will* be distracted, by anything. The

phone starts ringing and he is distracted; the neighbours put their radio on a higher volume and he is distracted. Everything is distracting.

But a man of awareness, a meditative person, is never distracted because he watches everything. He will watch the phone ringing, he will watch the child crying, he will watch the neighbours and their radio getting louder and louder. He has nothing to do with it. He is cool and calm and open from all sides. So whatsoever happens -- the train whistles, the aeroplane passes by or there is a distant call of the cuckoo -- everything is included.

Concentration means only one thing is included, everything else is excluded. Meditation means *all* is included, nothing is excluded; you are simply resting within yourself.

It is a knack. If you go on doing it, slowly slowly the knack is learned. And the moment you have learned the knack of meditation you are a new being. It is a new birth, the real birth, because in that very moment you know you are neither the body nor the mind, you are pure consciousness. In that very moment you know that this pure consciousness was before birth and is going to remain after death. It is immortal.

This is the discovery of immortality. And to discover immortality is to discover god, to discover immortality is to discover eternity. Otherwise everything is momentary, everything is passing by. We go on clinging to things but they will go out of our hands and then there is misery. When you know that you are eternal you don't cling to anything. And you understand; a great understanding arises that life is only like acting, playing a role in a drama. And that's what sannyas is all about.

Nothing has to be renounced, everything has to be understood. And the very understanding transforms you, helps you to transcend all that is ugly, miserable, dark.

Bodhicharya means the life of the awakened one, the behaviour of the awakened one, the character which comes when your consciousness is released.

That's the difference between morality and religion: morality tries to change your character without bothering about your consciousness; hence morality creates hypocrites. It only gives you a beautiful painted facade, but behind the facade you are the same ugly person.

Morality creates a kind of split in you. You remain unconscious within but on the surface you start acting as if you are conscious; that creates schizophrenia. Hence in a certain sense the whole humanity is schizophrenic. That's what morality has done to humanity.

Religion is totally different. Religion tries to transform your consciousness first. It makes you more and more alert, more and more aware, more and more silent, more and more watchful. And out of that watchfulness a new character starts emerging. Then there is a unity between the inner and outer, a great symphony. You are one, one piece. And that harmony between the within and the without is felt as bliss, as joy, as peace, and ultimately it is through that harmony that one experiences god.

Bodhicharya means character arising out of consciousness. I am against cultivating character. My whole effort here is to help you to be more conscious and then your consciousness will decide what you have to do, how you have to act.

I don't give you ten commandments, I give you only one commandment: Be aware -- and all else follows of its own accord.

When morality comes following you like a shadow, it has a beauty, tremendous beauty of its own.

Peace is possible in two ways. One is to cultivate it from the outside. But that is a false

peace, it is only a mask. Deep down you go on boiling. You have repressed all your discontent, but it is there, it can explode any day. You have a painted face. You look sane but only on the surface, deep inside there is insanity. This is not the peace I teach, this is the peace that is being taught by the so-called organised religions.

They teach you to repress, they teach you to cultivate, they teach you to create a certain character through will. But anything that is achieved through will is achieved through the ego. It can't go very deep -- the ego itself is a very superficial phenomenon. It can give you a beautiful facade, that's all. People will think you are a saint, very holy, and because people think you are a saint you will also think that you are a saint; how can so many people be wrong about you? That is a mutual game people go on playing with each other, and it satisfies only your ego: you start feeling holier-than-thou. It feels good, but only on the surface; deep down you know you are sitting on a volcano.

But you can't talk about it, you can't say anything to anybody about it. That will expose you. So you live a double life, one on the surface, one inside. Every night in your dreams the inside erupts, that's why your dreams are all nightmares.

That's why psychologists enquire about your dreams, not about your waking hours: because your waking hours are false, pseudo. Your dreams are still truer because your priests have not been able to change them, they are far more authentic. This is very ironical, that dreams are far more authentic than your waking life. In fact it should be the other way round but it is not so.

The second way to attain peace is meditation: not cultivation of peace but awareness of your thoughts, awareness of what you are doing, thinking, feeling -- a three-dimensional awareness. One dimension is action, the second dimension is thought, the third dimension is feeling. All these three dimensions have to be watched silently, with no judgement. Slowly slowly a miracle starts happening: the more you watch, the less there is to watch. When your watchfulness becomes perfect, your mind stops completely, ceases completely. And in that cessation of the mind is peace.

Peace comes as a by-product of meditation; then it is true, then it is a bridge between you and god.

It is possible to cultivate a certain purity. That's what so-called religious people do: they cultivate character. Without becoming conscious they impose certain rules and regulations on their behaviour. They are behaviouristic. Pavlov and Skinner and company have discovered behaviourism just recently, but the saints have been behaviouristic for centuries. They just go on changing their behaviour: do this, don't do that. Rather than transforming the being they only cultivate the outside, they create a facade.

Georges Gurdjieff used to say to some people sometimes 'You have a beautiful facade.' That's what is respected by the society. People call someone a religious person, saintly, a mahatma, if he has a beautiful facade. The society is not concerned with more than that. You should have a beautiful facade, that's all. Who cares about your inner world? -- that is nobody's business. Your behaviour is good, that's all. Don't do anything wrong. If you are wrong in your inner world that is for you to worry about.

My whole concern here is to change you, not your behaviour... because the behaviour can easily be changed, very easily. That's what behaviourists are saying.

In Soviet Russia they are trying and they have been successful... For example somebody wants to drop smoking -- it is so easy. There is no need to go on sermonising against smoking and writing on each packet that smoking is harmful to your health. All nonsense! Who reads

it?

Simple methods can be used. A device can be used: the moment you smoke you get an electric shock, every time you smoke you get an electric shock. Within three days you will be finished with it; you will not smoke again. The same can be done with your sex; everybody can be made celibate. Then the moment you make love you get an electric shock. So all kinds of foolish things that have been done for years -- practising yoga and standing on your head -- are nothing but primitive methods of conditioning.

In a developed world with new technology these things can be done very easily. Just by giving electric shocks everybody can be made so afraid of sex that even to think about it will be enough to give them a shiver in the spine. That's what your so-called saints have been doing down the ages, making people afraid. Their methods were crude, ugly: creating fear because of hell and hell-fire. We can use quicker methods, speedier methods. But the person is not changed, the person remains as dark as ever.

I am not concerned much about what you do, my whole concern is what you are. My effort here is to change your interiority, your vision. And that happens only through meditation, that happens only through being more aware, more alert. When you are more alert, more conscious, a purity starts happening to you, and innocence starts flowing through you which is uncultivated, unconditioned, which is natural and spontaneous. That I call divine purity.

One does not become holy by cultivating a certain character. That is bogus holiness, that is only superficial, on the surface; deep down you remain the same. You will get respect, you will become very respectable. You will be known as a saint, a mahatma, but *you* will know that all that is only a pretension, a hypocrisy, because you have not changed even an inch.

One can cultivate a beautiful facade, but that does not make any inner revolution. The inner being changes only through meditation -- not by cultivating a character but by creating more consciousness.

So it is not a question of doing good and not doing bad; it is a question of becoming aware of whatsoever you are doing, good or bad. The emphasis is on awareness, not on goodness, because if you are aware you cannot do bad. It is impossible. To be aware and to be a sinner is impossible, just as it is impossible to be unaware and to be a saint; one can only pretend.

My sannyasin has to drop all pretensions, all hypocrisies, all facades, all masks. I am not giving you any ten commandments: Do this and don't do that. A single commandment is enough, the eleventh commandment -- that is, be aware. And then do whatsoever you want to do. Remain aware, and you will become holy, because you will become whole. Awareness heals, makes one whole. And to be whole is to be holy.

The real virtue arises out of meditation. The unreal virtue is a cultivated phenomenon and the unreal virtue is a conditioning of the society, of the parents, of the teachers, of the priests. The real virtue arises out of your own insight. So the most important thing is not to be virtuous, the most important thing is to be insightful so that you can see what is what, so that you can see what is right and what is wrong on your own, so that you have the capacity of discriminate. And that is possible only when your mind is completely silent, when there is no noise within.

Out of that silence arises clarity, and that clarity brings virtue. One need not bring it; it comes of its own accord. And when it comes of its own accord it has a beauty of its own.

Wisdom is a by-product of meditation. It does not come in any other way. It does not come through accumulating information. It comes only through the transformation that meditation brings to you. And meditation means a state of no-mind, a consciousness without content.

That's the goal of sannyas. We have to become more and more aware of thoughts, desires, imagination, memory, because this is the secret, that if you watch your mind, slowly slowly it evaporates -- just by watching. One day it happens that there is no mind; you are left absolutely alone, in solitude. There is nothing surrounding you, infinite nothingness.

You are fully aware, absolutely aware, but there is nothing to be aware of. You are pure light, but the light is not falling on any object; there is no object left. That is meditation or a state of no-mind. And wisdom is a by-product of it.

Bliss is possible only through the heart, through a generous heart, through a great heart. The head is very small. The head cannot contain bliss, it is too small for that big a phenomenon. It can contain misery perfectly well; misery is also a small thing -- but for bliss to happen you need something more spacious.

The heart knows no bounds. But very few people are aware of their heart, very rarely are people aware of the heart. They think that the blood-pumping system is their heart. Medical science has been a great blessing in many ways, but as far as the concept of the heart is concerned it has been a curse. The heart has disappeared. The heart that Buddha talked about, the heart that Jesus talked about, the heart that people like Lao Tzu and Zarathustra lived through, has disappeared. Instead there is just something physiological, just a blood-purifying system, a mechanism which can be changed, substituted by something plastic, by something synthetic.

This is not the heart of Jesus, of Buddha, of Kabir. They are talking of something else. By heart they don't mean lungs, they don't mean the breathing system. They mean something totally different. The heart is symbolic for them. It is a metaphor.

It is coming down from the world of thoughts into the world of no-thought, from mind to no-mind. It is a transformation from content to consciousness. It is a total change of gestalt. We are focussed on the contents. We go on being worried about thoughts, designs, memories -- these are contents.

Once we start looking not at the contents but at the one who is the watcher, once we start watching the watcher, once we start becoming aware of one who is aware within us, then we know what the heart is. Then we have moved beyond body-mind complex. Then we have something so vast that bliss can descend in it and dance in it. Then we can become a host to the ultimate guest, to god himself.

Discontentment is human, contentment is divine. Animals know neither contentment nor discontentment; they simply go on living mechanically, unconsciously. It is the great privilege of human being to be aware of discontent. To be aware of discontent means there is a possibility to grow towards contentment. But very few people make any effort towards inner growth. Their whole life is rooted in a misunderstanding.

They think that if they have a bigger house or more money or more power or more prestige they will be contented; that if they become famous, if their name is known all over the world, then they will be contented. That is sheer nonsense.

How can a bigger house make you contented? You will remain the same. The house can be small or big, it may be more comfortable; you will be comfortably discontented, that's all.

In fact when you are in much discomfort you don't feel much discontent, because your whole energy is involved in fighting with discomforts. That's why poor people don't feel so much discontent. rich people feel discontent. richer countries are very restless, because they have all the comforts. Sitting on their comfortable sofas, what else do they have to do? They start thinking about their life situation -- what they are doing, where they are going, what is happening to them. And nothing is happening and they are going nowhere. A great discontent arises in them.

I am not against riches, not at all. I am all for riches because they help you to be aware of discontent. I am all for comfort so that you can think about the *real* problems of life. A man who is hungry thinks of bread. A man who is naked thinks of clothes, but a man who is well-fed, in fact perfectly fed up, starts thinking 'What is this life all about. What am I doing here? Why am I here at all?' He starts thinking about the meaning of life, and then a turning point is possible.

Nothing on the outside can ever make you contented. contentment is possible only through inner growth.

Inner growth can be helped in many ways. Down the ages meditation has been found to be the most essential part of inner growth because it helps you to cool down, it helps you to become more alert. It helps you to be more loving, it helps you to be more detached. It helps you to become clear about things. It gives you clarity, transparency. Slowly slowly you become a mirror and you start reflecting things as they are.

And the moment you start reflecting things as they are growth has started, you are no more the same person. Your consciousness is becoming richer, more intense, more alive. And it is only through that growth that one day you start touching the world of the divine. That is our ultimate goal, that's what we are all seeking. And unless it is achieved there is no bliss, no benediction, no meaning in life.

Meaning happens in life only when god enters you. When you become pregnant with god, only then is there meaning -- and great meaning and eternal meaning.

Man can exist on two levels, either on the level of passion or the level of compassion. Passion means a state of unconsciousness. Man is almost like an animal, just at the mercy of unconscious instincts, a victim of natural forces, not his own master. And when one lives in passion one has to live in jealousy, possessiveness, anger, hatred, greed; these are all part of passion. Passion exploits others, it sucks others; it is like a parasite. On the second plane, as you start rising into meditation, into awareness, into consciousness, the energy that is involved in passion starts changing into compassion. Just bring consciousness to all your passions and a miracle starts happening within you, a great alchemical change. That which was dust starts becoming divine, that which was useless, just rubbish, starts becoming golden. The night itself turns into day.

The whole secret is consciousness. Become more conscious of your anger, of your lust, of your greed, of your jealousy, of your possessiveness, of your violence and cruelty. Become aware of all that you are. Don't avoid anything, don't hide anything from yourself. Be utterly naked before yourself, because in that very nakedness the first glimpse of transformation happens. If one goes on avoiding something inside then the transformation is not possible. It is just like heating water, at one hundred degrees it evaporates, not before that. So unless you are totally naked before yourself transformation is not possible. That total nakedness creates a one-hundred-degree temperature and a quantum leap and a jump from the lowest to the highest, a sudden transformation from passion to compassion.

Compassion gives, shares. It is a giver. It gives for the sheer joy of giving, for no other reason. With compassion, anger, greed, jealousy, possessiveness, all disappear and different qualities appear: grace, love, prayer, intelligence, understanding.

The secret of transforming your energy from passion to compassion is hidden in the art of meditation. Become more aware, alert, watchful. Become less sleepy, more awake, and then the miracle happens.

We are carrying many poisons within ourselves. It is unconscious, because nobody can carry them consciously. If we become conscious we will immediately drop them. The moment you become aware that you are carrying something poisonous, you will not wait even for a single moment. You will not ask even how to drop it, you will drop it. There is no question of how, you will simply jump out of it.

It is as if a snake crosses the path -- you don't ask what to do, what not to do, because there is no time. You act immediately -- you jump out of the way. It is so dangerous that you cannot just sit there and philosophize that out of one hundred snakes ninety-seven are non-poisonous; so there are ninety-seven chances that this snake is non-poisonous -- why be afraid? Only three per cent of snakes -- which are very rare -- are poisonous.

People die not because the snake was poisonous but because it was a snake! That is enough to kill them. The fear kills, the idea kills. They become hypnotized by the very idea: "A snake -- I am gone!" You don't sit there and philosophize, because snakes are not philosophizers and they don't know what per cent is dangerous and what per cent is not dangerous. And they will not wait for you thinking, "Just wait. Let this man first decide what he wants." You act immediately.

We are full of jealousy, full of possessiveness, full of hatred, full of greed. These are all poisons, poisonous snakes. These are the snakes I am talking about -- the three per cent. When you see them clearly, you jump out of all this nonsense; in a single blow one cuts them out. It is not a question of deciding what to do, not a question of willpower -- "I will conquer my possessiveness." That is not the way. Your willpower is not going to function at all. It is simply a question of understanding, of awareness.

I don't teach willpower here. Willpower is a bogus thing. All these people -- Dale Carnegies and Napoleon Hills and these American philosophers who go on talking about how to grow rich through willpower, positive thinking, and how to win friends and influence people... are all talking nonsense. The only thing that man needs is awareness. I teach awareness.

So here your whole work is to be more aware of all that is within you, that's all. As you become aware changes will happen automatically, naturally, spontaneously. And whenever a change happens spontaneously it has a beauty of its own.

-- How long will you be here?

-- Two weeks.

-- Come back again for a longer period. This is too American!

The greatest warrior has nothing to do with war. He has nothing to do with fighting others. He has something to do inside himself. And it is not a fight, although it brings victory; it is not a war, not a conflict. But one has to be a warrior because one has to be very alert just like a warrior. One has to be very watchful, very meditative, because if one is moving in the darkest continent in existence... Ultimately there is light, infinite light, but first one has to pass through a great dark night of the soul. There are all kinds of pitfalls, all possibilities of

going astray and there are all kinds of inner enemies. They have not to be killed or destroyed; they have to be transformed, they have to be converted into friends. Anger has to be transformed into compassion, lust has to be transformed into love, and so on, so forth. So it is not a war, but certainly one needs to be a warrior.

That's how, in Japan, the whole world of the samurai, the warrior, came out of meditation and all kinds of martial arts became paths towards inner peace. Swordsmanship became one of the most meditative things in Japan. One has to be very alert because a single moment of unconsciousness, and you are finished.

The real swordsman becomes so alert that before the other person attacks him he knows. Before the thought of attack has even crossed the other's mind, he has prepared himself. He is ready. His watchfulness becomes so deep that he starts reading the thoughts of the other.

It is said that if two real samurais fight nobody can win. The fight can continue but nobody can win because both will be reading the other's mind. And before you can attack, the other is already there to defend.

Swordsmanship became one of the greatest sources of enlightenment. It seems strange, but Japan has done many really strange things. From tea drinking to swordsmanship, everything has been changed into meditation. In fact the whole of life can be transformed into meditation, because meditation simply means becoming more aware.

So go inwards and be more aware. One day victory is yours -- that is absolutely certain. You just have to fulfil the requirement: you have to be totally aware.

God cannot be proved. No argument is possible either for or against. But if one grows in consciousness one starts feeling god. As you grow in consciousness more and more, you become aware that things are disappearing; matter is disappearing, and instead of matter the universe starts appearing to be divine, to be consciousness.

It is a simple law: the world appears to be matter because you think of yourself as the body. Whatsoever you are, you will think the world is. If you think you are the body, the world is matter; there is no god. If you think you are a soul, if you experience yourself as consciousness, immediately the world is experienced as consciousness. The world is a mirror; whatsoever you are it reflects back. So you get only that which you deserve.

Become more conscious and the world becomes conscious with you. When you are at the peak of your consciousness the world disappears as matter, it is transformed into godliness. That is the ultimate experience of truth, of love, of bliss.

The sleeping person cannot be blissful. The unconscious person cannot be blissful. A great awakening is needed. And we *are* asleep. We are snoring. As far as our souls are concerned we are almost in a coma. We have to be shaken to the very roots. We have to be awakened. We are as if dead, we only appear to live. That is only an appearance. Deep down there is no life flowing, deep down there is nothing; hence everybody in some saner moments feels the meaninglessness of life. It is not the meaninglessness of life; it is because of our sleep that the life seems meaningless, otherwise life is meaning, life is significance, life is poetry, great poetry.

Hidden behind life is the great poet -- call him god or the universal soul or the supreme self -- but there is certainly a great artist behind. So much creativity is there and we don't feel any meaning. We are somehow cut off from the main current of life, as if we have become small islands and we are no more part of the vast continent. We have become dead weights.

Meditation is an effort to wake up. It is a process of alarm. So this has to become your

central, your most important thing in life from now onwards. Nothing else is more important than meditation because that is the only way that you can be awakened. Nobody else can do it for you, only you can do it for yourself. So you have to learn how to be silent, how to be peaceful, how to be still, how to relax, how to disappear for few moments into nothingness.

Slowly slowly one becomes capable of going into nothingness and coming out, going in and coming out, just as you go into your house and come out of your house. That day when you can go into nothingness easily and can come out again into the ordinary world-work, do your things, earn your livelihood and whenever there is time close your eyes and disappear into nothingness, you have really become a sannyasin.

My sannyasin is not to renounce life. My sannyasin has to create a great synthesis between the sacred and the ordinary, between the inner and the outer. And where both these meet god is found. At the meeting point god is found the meeting point is god.

(To Svarupo)

Bliss is not an achievement, hence one cannot be ambitious for it. One cannot even desire it. To desire it is to miss it. It is already the case. We have it but we are oblivious of the fact. It is like a king who has fallen asleep and is dreaming that he has become a beggar and now is very worried about how to regain the kingdom, what to do, where to find the army, how to plan... there is no money, it seems almost impossible... and he does not want to remain a beggar either. He tosses and turns in his sleep but in the morning he wakes up and laughs at the whole dream. While he was dreaming that he was a beggar he was still the king.

The dream cannot destroy the real. It can cover it, it can create a kind of fog around it, but it cannot destroy it.

That is our situation. Our nature is bliss, but we have fallen asleep, we are unconscious. We are dreaming a thousand and one things and we are desiring, planning how to attain things, how to be happy, how to be blissful. There is no question of how; no how is needed. You are already it. All that is needed is a little tossing and turning in your sleep so that you can wake up. A little effort to wake up is needed. Just remember it. Even remembrance takes one a long way.

You may have experiments or you may not have, but thousands of people have experimented and found it correct, that if you want to get up at five o'clock in the morning, just as you are falling asleep, repeat your own name three times and tell yourself 'Svarupo, you have to wake up at five. don't forget -- remember.' Say it three times and fall asleep. You will be surprised: at five o'clock exactly, your eyes open up. A certain undercurrent remained, it worked.

That's the whole function of a master: to create a certain undercurrent in you which can help you to wake up. So all kinds of devices are used. To give you a name is also a device. To give it a meaning is a device so that it becomes an undercurrent in you. Whenever anybody calls you Svarupo, something inside you will stir the memory that 'Bliss is my nature,' that 'I have not to seek it anywhere else,' that 'I have not to seek it at all,' that 'I have only to wake up.'

And this constant hammering can break the fog that surrounds us. It is only a fog. It is not very solid, it is not very substantial -- a very shadowy phenomenon. If one really intends to wake up, pulls oneself together, and gives a good shout, one will wake up.

Buddha used to call it the lion's roar. He said that nothing else is needed. Just pull yourself together and give a good shout, so piercing that it goes down your spine, reaches to the lowest chakra and stirs your whole being.

and the moment we are awake all miseries and all sufferings look so absurd, so foolish, so ridiculous that one wonders 'How did I suffer? And what was suffering? For how long I suffered -- and all was false. There was no substance in it; it was just an idea, a dream.'

Hence the mystics call our world an illusion, maya. Suffering is illusory, bliss is our true nature; remember it. And remember it again and again and again.

What else can a messenger from god bring to the world except bliss? Bliss is the only message. It is bliss that everybody is seeking -- knowingly, unknowingly, consciously, unconsciously, rightly, wrongly. But bliss is the only goal of all life.

But one can seek where it cannot be found. For example one can seek it outside oneself. That is an exercise in futility; nobody has ever found it there. All those who have found, have found it within themselves. One can seek it in money, in power, in prestige. One is seeking the right thing but in the wrong place.

One has to turn inwards. It has to be found not in money but in meditation, not in power but in peace, not in prestige but in becoming more and more aware, alert, watchful.

Sannyas has to be a turning point in your life. It is the beginning of a new chapter. Let this be the first lesson: turn in, make every effort to turn in, don't miss any opportunity. And we have made all possible opportunities available here. They are all devices to help you wake up. Wake up to your own being and then the greatest revolution in life happens. When your inner light burns bright you have arrived.

We are born as kings and queens. Because we are part of god we can't be otherwise. If we have become beggars, that is our own responsibility. We have forgotten our real nature, we have forgotten the very language to understand it; hence the whole misery, the poverty, the spiritual emptiness, meaninglessness. One can go on stuffing oneself with things -- that is not going to help. The more one feels stuffed with things, the more one feels empty, because no thing from the outside can fulfil your inner need, your interiority remains hollow. And that is where the wound is which hurts.

It can be changed, it can be healed. And the only way to heal it is meditation, because meditation is the language with which to commune with yourself. Meditation means silence. Meditation means a thoughtless awareness. Meditation means just absolute stillness, so that there is no distraction and you can settle into your own being, you can relax into your own being. The moment you relax into your own being, the first taste of richness, of immense richness, the first taste of your kingdom, the first taste of something that is beyond time, happens. And that is the point from which no return is possible. Then the whole past becomes meaningless, futile, a nightmare. But one is finished with it, one is fully awake and all those dreams are gone.

To be a sannyasin means to be committed to this goal of awakening.

The only misery in life is to be ignorant of one's own being. The moment you know who you are all misery disappears -- just as the moment you bring light in, darkness disappears. Suddenly you are a king. Not only that, you come to know that you have always been a king. Even when you were thinking that you were not, you were a king. You had forgotten the treasure, the kingdom, but it still belonged to you; you were carrying it within yourself.

That's the whole purpose of all the Buddhas: to remind you that the kingdom of god is within you.

We are temples of truth. We are unaware, unconscious, but that makes no difference; truth is still there. We have fallen asleep but the truth is there. Any moment that you decide to wake up it is yours.

Truth is something that cannot be lost, there is no way to lose it. It is intrinsic to your being, it is not accidental. It is not a property that you can lose, purchase, borrow, or give to somebody else. It is your very existence, hence it cannot be borrowed and it cannot be given.

But that's what people go on doing: they think that by reading scriptures they will know the truth. You cannot borrow it from Jesus or Buddha or Krishna. They think 'Somebody will have compassion on us and he will liberate us,' so millions of people go on waiting for the saviour, for the messiah.

Nobody can liberate you, except yourself. And it is good that nobody can liberate you, because a liberation that comes from somebody else will not be much of a liberation. It will be a new kind of bondage.

This is something very basic to my approach, that one has to go into oneself, not into the scriptures, to know the truth. The real Bible is within you. It does not consist of words, it consists of wordless silence. You have to go very alertly because the deeper you go, the more is the temptation to fall asleep, because our consciousness is only on the surface. The deeper we go, the thicker are the layers of unconsciousness.

All the methods, all the devices called meditations, are nothing but strategies to keep you alert when there is every temptation to fall asleep. If one can go alertly to the very core of one's own being, one discovers the temple of god. And then one laughs at the whole joke that 'I was searching and searching everywhere for millions of lives, and god was hiding within me!'

We are part of the ultimate truth. We have not lost it - there is no way to lose it. That which can be lost is not truth. Even if you want to lose it you cannot lose it. But you can forget all about it.

So there are only two possibilities: either you forget or you remember. Sannyas means the beginning of remembrance. All the methods and meditations and therapies here are nothing but different ways to shake you up, to wake you up, to make a little alert so that you can remember who you are. The moment one knows 'Who am I?' life is a blessing, a benediction, a celebration.

The truth is not somewhere else. The truth is not there or then, the truth is now and here. The truth is within you, you are it. Hence the journey of sannyas is not of achievement but only of remembering. That for which we are searching we never lost in the first place, we have just forgotten it. Hence all that is needed is a little more alertness, awareness. That's what I call meditation.

It is through meditation that one recognises the truth of one's own being, and that is the truth of all. Lies are private, truth is universal. Your lie is yours, but your truth is not yours. Lies are many, truth is one. So the moment you recognise your truth, you have come home. You have recognized the very truth of the whole -- and that liberates.

Meditation is the only divine phenomenon. Meditation means getting out of the mind. One can use any device to get out of the mind. There are two basic devices: one is love, the other is awareness. And all other devices are part of these main alternatives.

But the essential thing is to get out of the mind so that you can know that 'I am neither the

body nor the mind.' The moment it is known, all misery, all suffering, disappears like a dream -- one is awakened.

Asleep we are in the world, awakened we are in god.

Your name: Swami Buddha Hagen. Buddha means the awakened one. It has nothing to do especially with Gautam Siddharth; he is only one of the awakened ones. It is just like Christ, it is exactly equivalent to Christ. It has nothing to do with Jesus. Anybody can be a Christ and anybody can be a Buddha. The essence of both is the same: one has to become awakened.

Ordinarily man is unconscious. Just a very small part has become conscious, a very tiny part, very flickering. Any moment if there is any small incident you are unconscious. Somebody treads on your toes and you are unconscious; somebody hits you and you are unconscious; somebody insults you, looks at you with anger and you are unconscious; a beautiful woman passes by and you are unconscious. Your consciousness is not much, it is just a very peripheral phenomenon. Within, you are carrying a vast continent of unconsciousness. That has to be transformed.

When your whole being becomes conscious, when nothing can make you unconscious, when even in deep sleep the consciousness remains as a subtle background, as a back-drop, then one has come home. That is the meaning of Hagen; Hagen means home. If one is awakened one has come home. If one is not awakened one goes on wandering everywhere except towards home. Sannyas is a return journey home.

Hagen also means refuge and that too is beautiful: take refuge in awareness, take shelter in awareness. Let awareness become your home. Then there is no death, no misery, then one lives life in a totally different dimension; in the dimension of eternity. Then life is bliss, freedom, love, god.

We have the potential to be fully awakened. We may not actualise it -- that is responsibility. We have the seed and the soil and the climate and everything that is needed, but still you may not drop the seed into the soil. You may keep the seed, you may treasure it behind locked doors, in an iron safe. Then the potential will remain only a potential -- your life will remain only an opportunity unfulfilled.

That's why millions of people are in suffering. There is only one suffering I know of, and that is not to be that which you are capable of being. That is the only suffering in the world; all else is very minor, insignificant. The real suffering is to go on missing the opportunity to transform your potential into a reality.

Your name will remind you again and again that this is your potential. Unless you become a Buddha, an awakened one, life is going to remain a hell. Life is hell for everybody except the Buddhas. Only a few people know the paradise of life. Others are absolutely unaware of the splendour and the great blessings and the benediction that existence is.

We have forgotten who we are. All that is needed is remembering. We are not to search and seek, we have just to remember, because whatsoever we are, we are. Even if we have forgotten it, it is not destroyed. Even if we have forgotten, it is there.

The whole religious process is that of remembering. Buddha calls it right-mindfulness; Gurdjieff calls it self-remembering; Krishnamurti calls it awareness -- these are different names for the same thing. It is something we have known and have forgotten. It is just on the tip of the tongue; a little effort and it will become a reality, just a little effort.

Sannyas means that now you will make your life an effort to remember the reality of your being. In knowing it one becomes blissful, in knowing it one transcends death, in knowing it one knows god.

Let blindness be your past. It need not be continued. Everybody is born blind and everybody has the capacity not to be blind. Everybody is born blind because at birth we are bound to be unconscious, unaware. It is only through life and its experiences, good and bad, painful and blissful, that one slowly slowly wakes up. It is only through a rich life -- and by rich I mean a lived life... One who has been in the thick of life one day becomes capable of opening his eyes.

In that very moment one passes through a radical transformation. Then life is no more the same again. When you are with closed eyes all is dark. When you are with open eyes life is all colour, all light. God is the experience of existence with open eyes. Those who deny god are simply saying that they are blind. Not only are they blind, they are stubborn too. They are insisting that they are not blind but that there is no god.

Friedrich Nietzsche says god is dead. The reality is that Nietzsche is mad, that he is blind. If one keeps one's eyes closed, the sun may be there in the sky showering light but you live in darkness. Just a small curtain over your eyes is enough to prevent you from seeing the truth.

Sannyas is a deliberate effort to open your eyes. And it is time; you are ripe enough, mature enough. you have lived all kinds of games. It is easy now to get rid of them, it is very easy to slip out of them. As one grows old, if one is a little intelligent, a little alert, it becomes easier and easier to stop playing foolish games.

Life is the greatest teacher. It prepares everybody to take the ultimate jump from darkness into light. let sannyas be that ultimate jump.

We are made of light, the whole existence is made of light, and yet the very puzzling phenomenon is that we live in darkness. It is really unbelievable how we manage to live in darkness. It is a feat! It is almost as great a miracle as Jesus walking on water. We are all doing a great miracle, one even greater than that: we are made of light and yet we are living in darkness.

The reason is that we never watch ourselves. We watch everybody else, we go on looking here and there. Our eyes are constantly running from one object to another object, but they never become still and silent to have a little glimpse of our own being.

and just that little glimpse transforms, wakes you up. Sannyas is a deliberate effort to awaken, to come to know that 'I am light.' Then there is no death, then there is no limitation to you. Then you are unlimited, then you are freedom -- and the joy of freedom is infinite.

The lotus is the symbol of the ultimate unfolding of consciousness. It is the most beautiful flower in the East, the most fragrant, and it has become the symbol of ultimate awakening, ultimate awareness.

It has become the symbol for certain reasons. One is that it grows out of dirty mud. It is such a revolution -- to see the mud, and the lotus growing out of it -- it is unbelievable, it is a miracle. One cannot believe that such dirty mud can create such a beautiful flower.

Man in his unconsciousness is nothing but dirty mud. Seeing man, one cannot believe that Jesus or Buddha or Lao Tzu could have been possible. That's why so many people doubt the very existence, the historical existence of Jesus and Buddha and Lao Tzu and people like that. They doubt for the simple reason that all around they see a humanity which is nothing but

dirty mud, and they see people throwing dirt on each other, enjoying mud-slinging. How can they believe that a man like Buddha really did happen? It seems improbable, it seems impossible, it seems only a myth -- maybe a wish-fulfillment, maybe a fictitious story to keep man's hopes alive. Their doubt has a reason in it, it is logical. These people seem to be so exceptional and they happen so rarely, only once in a while, but you come across dirty mud every day.

The experience of ordinary humanity is so bitter that one cannot believe that there was a man like Jesus who loved for no reason at all, whose love was just unmotivated, who loved for the sheer joy of loving, who died because he loved too much, who was ready to die for his love.

But it happens. That's why the lotus has become a symbol. If the dirty mud can produce a lotus, the dirty humanity can also produce a Buddha, a Jesus, a Zarathustra. And it is everybody's potential.

The second important thing about the lotus is that it grows out of dirty mud and floats in water. It is a water flower, but the miracle is that the water never touches its petals. Even if it rains there will be drops of water on the petals but they will be separate. You can see them resting like pearls. The lotus is so velvety that they don't touch it, it remains untouched; hence it has become the symbol of sannyas.

A sannyasin is a man who lives in the world but remains untouched by it, who remains with all kinds of unconscious people -- one has to remain with these people, there are no other kind -- but who remains untouched, unaffected. One remains absolutely still, restful, cool, as if nothing is happening anywhere. One remains in time and yet beyond time, in the world yet not of the world.

Fingers Pointing to the Moon

Chapter #5

Chapter title: Sharing

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Love is my message.
But don't cling to the word 'love'
Don't make a gospel out of it.
It is to be experienced.

My function here
Is just to point towards god.
You are not to become attached to me
And my words.
You have to remain absolutely free
So that you can move towards the moon
The ultimate experience.

All gods other than the god of love are false, created by our crafty, cunning mind. They are just pseudo realities, they exist only as concepts. But the god of love is not our creation, on the contrary we are his creation. The god of love is not our creation because it is beyond the capacity of the mind. It is of the heart. Everything else falls within the territory of the mind. Only love is beyond its reach.

That's why love is the only pure experience. Mind has not been able to corrupt it, pollute it, contaminate it, poison it. Mind is very afraid of love because to be in love is dangerous for the mind's existence. Mind calls it blind, mind calls it mad. These are condemnations so that you don't move towards it.

Even the ordinary love of two persons is beyond the comprehension of the mind -- and I am talking about the ultimate love, the love between you and the whole. That is absolutely beyond mind, mind cannot have any idea of what it is. But that's its beauty: mind cannot create it, it cannot visualise it.

Move from logic to love and you will be moving from this shore to the other shore. The name of the journey is sannyas.

The most godly experience in life is that of love. Everything else falls short. It is only on the wings of love that one approaches close to god.

Logic is very heavy. It keeps one tethered to the earth. Love is very light, so light that it makes you free from gravitation. When one is *really* in love with existence itself, when one becomes love, one starts rising upwards. And that's how one comes closer and closer to the ultimate.

It is only through the window of love that we have our first glimpse of the existence of god, that god is. And with that glimpse life starts having a different flavour, a different meaning. It is no more confined between birth and death -- it becomes eternity.

It is only when the heart is full of love that many flowers bloom. Everything that is valuable happens through love. Anything that is really of any significance cannot happen otherwise, it always grows in the garden of love -- all the roses and all the marigolds and all the lotuses. Compassion grows in the garden of love, meditation grows in the garden of love, creativity grows in the garden of love, sensitivity grows in the garden of love, awareness grows in the garden of love, and, ultimately, god grows in the garden of love. Devote yourself to love. Let love be your religion. That's my religion. If people ask you what your religion is say "Love;" not Christianity, nor Hinduism, nor Mohammedanism nor Judaism, but love. We have to spread the flower of love all over the earth.

Love has to be your path. Be consciously more and more loving. Avoid anything that is anti-love. Don't cooperate with any idea that is anti-love, and pour all your energies into anything that is loving. Slowly slowly, the shift happens, the gestalt changes. People are too invested in anti-love activities. Religions teach them anti-love, religions teach them to be against other religions; nations teach them to be against other nations; races teach them to be against other races. And all this creates a state of insanity. The whole of humanity is quarreling, constantly quarreling. Sometimes it is hot war, sometimes it is cold war, but it is war all the same. My sannyasins have to love the ways of love. My sannyasins are not to be part of any organized religion, they are not to be part of any fanatical nationalist ideologies. They have to look at the earth as one, undivided, they have to look at humanity as one family. And then, slowly slowly, love animals, love trees, love rocks -- let the love grow on growing. When you can love the whole of existence for no reason at all but the simple joy of loving, you will have discovered God. Each step towards love is a step towards God.

Love and only love is full of justice. Without love there is no justice possible. It is only love that gives you clarity, understanding, insight. It is only love that makes you compassionate, and out of compassion the flower of justice grows. The man of love is always just, always right. He cannot do wrong. It is impossible for him to do wrong, because on the tree of love the wrong cannot grow; it is not in the nature of things. Wrong grows only when your love is missing. When you live without love then whatsoever you do is wrong and unjust -- unjust to others and unjust even to yourself. You may even try to do the right thing, but you cannot do the right thing if your heart is not full of love. Your intentions may be good but your actions and the consequences of the actions will not prove to be right. The world is full of people who try to do good but only succeed in doing more harm. The

good-doers, the public servants, the people who believe in service, the missionaries, all go on doing whatsoever they think and believe is right, but the total result is that the whole world is in a mess. These missionaries, these do-gooders, prove very mischievous -- unknowingly, of course. Their intentions are not bad but intentions are impotent. The real thing is love. If love is there, if overflowing love is there, then your life will have grace, beauty, your actions will have compassion. That's the only way for a man to be right. My emphasis is not on rules and regulations and commandments and ethical codes and morality. My emphasis is on love. If love is there all is well.

Love is the only helper of mankind. Without love mankind is lost. Without love there is no light. Without love there is no poetry. Without love there is no laughter. Without love there is no meaning. Without love all that is significant disappears. Then life is simply garbage, a drag, a boredom. It is love that makes life flowing, growing, gives it a sense of direction, gives it a center. When you have something so valuable in your life that you can sacrifice your life for it, only then has your life any value. Love makes you aware of something valuable, far more valuable than life itself. One can sacrifice only for love. But love cannot be sacrificed for anything because love is never a means, it is always the end. Everything else can be sacrificed for love. This is my whole teaching. Be a warrior in the service of love. People are warriors but not in the service of love. They are in the service of hate, in the service of all kinds of ugly things: nationalism, imperialism, socialism, communism, capitalism, Mohammedanism, Christianity, Hinduism... People are ready to sacrifice for all kinds of stupidities. But their fight is in vain, they are simply destroying themselves. The God they are serving is their own creation, it is their own projection. The true God means only one thing -- love. Jesus says God is love. Love is the only real statue of God, the real image of God; all other images are false. Serve love, and serve with totality. In that very service one becomes love itself. And that is transformation, that is a new birth, a birth into godliness. Love is the bridge.

Man is powerful when he is with god. Whenever he is not with god he is absolutely powerless. Plugged into god you have infinite power; unplugged you are just empty. And unfortunately millions of people are living their lives unplugged; hence so much misery, so much feeling of impotence, so much feeling of emptiness, so much feeling of futility.

Everybody once in a while finds life utterly absurd. There seems to be no sense in it. One goes on living because one is afraid to commit suicide, one is afraid of death -- at least one is acquainted with this empty life. One never knows what is going to happen in death and after death, so it is better to go on dragging yourself for the time being and hope for the best. But people are unplugged, that's the whole problem.

Religion simply means the art of getting plugged in to god again. Then you are so full of power that it starts overflowing from you. You can share it and it is not exhausted. In fact the more you give it to others, the more you have it.

Lust is not love. Lust is untrue love. It is only an appearance of love, a facade, a strategy. But there is no truth in it. The moment your lust is fulfilled, your love is finished. Your love was only a diplomacy. Real love is a totally different phenomenon. It is not lust in the first place. Lust uses the other person as a means. And love? -- love respects the other person as an end unto himself. Lust is momentary, it is instinctive; it is the lowest phenomenon of our life. And love is non-instinctive, it is conscious; it is the highest phenomenon of our life. Lust

is the lowest rung of the ladder and love, the highest rung of the ladder. It is the same ladder. So I am not saying to be against lust. We have to make it a stepping stone, we have to use it to go beyond it. Use it to go beyond it, but don't remain confined in it. The moment you start loving for the sheer joy of love, for no instinctive urge, then something tremendously beautiful opens up in you. That is the only proof of god. When one starts loving one knows that god is. There is no other proof; love is the only proof. Hence Jesus is right when he says that god is love.

Love is a paradox. It is the most fragile phenomenon in existence and yet the strongest. It is as fragile as a flower and as strong as a rock. Those who have tasted of love have tasted something of deathlessness. Those who have missed love have missed all: they may believe in god but they know nothing of god; they may pretend to be religious but they cannot be truly religious.

God, truth, bliss -- all that is really valuable is born out of love. Hence love is the only shelter in this homeless world, love is the only home, the only protection, the only castle. Remember it and try to live it.

It should not remain just an intellectual understanding, it should become your very being. Then each moment is divine and each breath is such a bliss and each beat of the heart brings so much benediction that one cannot believe it, one cannot imagine it. Even when it starts happening one is constantly taken by surprise, because as you grow deeper in love, more and more goes on happening.

For me love is the only true prayer and the only true bridge to god. Take shelter in love. Let that be your only religion.

Friendship is the very essence of love, the purest form of love. Love has something earthly about it because love has something biological about it. Friendship is beyond biology. It is love without the earthly element of lust in it; hence friendship is one of the greatest achievements in life. And if one can be friendly, friendly to all, friendly to everything, even to oneself -- which is the hardest, remember... It is easy to be friendly with others.

Jesus says: Love your enemies as you love yourself. But to love your enemies is easy -- to love yourself is the most difficult phenomenon in the world -- because enemies are far away and you see only their appearance. You see your reality from within and you know all its ugliness, all the anger and the hatred and the jealousy. It is impossible to accept all this.

But once you start accepting life as it is, once you start becoming friendly to everything -- whatsoever god has given to you -- even friendly to your sex, to your anger, to your greed... It is only through friendship that they can be transformed; through enmity there is no transformation possible. And if one lives in friendliness towards all this very earth becomes paradise. Then not only is one changed through one's friendliness, one's total universe is changed. It is no more the same universe because your eyes are different; they have a clarity, they have insight.

It is out of friendliness that one comes to feel the invisible. And the name of the invisible is god or truth or tao or dharma. They are different names for the same invisible reality which surrounds us. We cannot touch it; it is intangible. We cannot see it with the ordinary eyes. But when your heart is full of love, pure love, that is friendliness. It is seen, it is known, it is realised. And that is the goal of sannyas.

I am creating here: a world of love. Love is its foundation. Become more and more

loving... not for any particular reason. Start enjoying the very phenomenon of love. Share whatsoever you can share. Don't be miserly, don't hoard, because the more you give, the more you have. The more you give, the more you get; the less you give, the less you have. And if you don't give at all, you have simply an empty shell, hollow; there is nothing inside you. Life happens only to the givers. Love is the art of giving. I teach only two things: love and awareness. Awareness is something that you have to do inside your being, and love is something that you have to do with others. Love is relating with others, it is bridging yourself with others. And awareness is bridging you with yourself. If one can fulfill these two simple processes of love and awareness nothing else is needed. This is my whole religion. These two words contain my whole philosophy of life. You start with love, and the other will come of its own accord -- the other always comes. If you start with awareness, one day love comes. If you start with love, one day awareness comes.

There are only two possible ways to reach to god. One is meditation, the other is love. They are not really as separate as they appear, in fact they are two sides of the same coin. But to a few people meditation appeals, it suits them, and to a few other people love appeals and suits. So there can be only two kinds of religions in the world: the religion of the meditators and the religion of the lovers. Both reach to the same peak but through different routes. Let love be your route. Love more and more. Enjoy loving. Let love love itself! Let love be your beloved, and then you are not far away from god. He is just around the corner. The meeting can happen at any moment.

Love has to become your meditation, it has to become your work upon yourself. It is the greatest work one can do, but it is arduous too because you have to drop your jealousies, you have to drop your ego trips, you have to drop your possessiveness, you have to drop all kinds of politics of dominating people. Only then can love well up within you.

Love is there -- everybody is born with it. Inexhaustible sources of love are there but so many rocks are preventing its flow. And rather than removing those rocks we think they are very precious, we protect them.

One has to consciously remove all rocks on the path of love, only then one day will love start flowing. And the day it flows from your heart you start expanding, you start becoming bigger and bigger, you start becoming oceanic. The small dewdrop disappears, you become something vast. That vastness is god, that infinity is god.

Love is the surest bridge to god. If anything succeeds, succeeds absolutely in finding god, it is love.

There have been religions which concentrated only on awareness; for example, Buddhism, Zen, Tao. And there have been religions which have concentrated only on love; Sufism and many many Hindu sects of devotion, bhakti.

My effort here is to create a synthesis between love and awareness, because if you are simply aware and not loving, you become dry, you lose all juice. You become stonelike.

It is not an accident that Gautam Buddha was the first man whose statues were made in marble and stone. He looked like stone, he looked like marble, so still, so silent, almost cold. That too has a beauty of its own but the beauty is that of a desert, no the beauty of a jungle.

There have been lovers, the Sufis: Jalaluddin, Bahauddin, Al Hillaj. These people are pure love, drunk with love, but something is lacking. They are much too drunk with love, the awareness is missing. They are beautiful people. If one has to choose then their company is

far better than the company of the Buddhists. As far as company is concerned, Bahauddin is a better friend, to be with him will be an ecstatic journey. If you want to worship then Buddha is perfectly good. But to be with a Buddha is going to be a little hard, difficult; it is living in a desert.

Both have their beauties but my feeling is that both are one-dimensional.

There is a possibility of a new religion in the world, a new kind of religiousness rather than a religion, which combines the beauties of both. You have a beautiful garden and also a patch for a desert in the garden; you can make a beautiful oasis in the desert. You can enjoy both. And my approach is: when you can enjoy more, never settle for less!

Be a loving awareness. Love and be aware too, and you will find a far richer experience than has ever been found.

My sannyasins are moving towards a tremendously new synthesis. It is not visible, it cannot be visible on the surface; it is something inner. You know it only when you experience it. But you can also feel the vibe around if you are sensitive and receptive. You can see here people who are utterly drunk, drunkards, and yet fully alert.

One becomes a beloved by loving more, because existence always returns whatsoever you give to it, and returns it a thousandfold. If you pour love into existence love is poured on you in many many ways, from many dimensions, from all directions. You give just a little and you get so much, it is unbelievable.

But people don't give at all. They go on holding back, and holding back is the only cause of misery, is the only cause of premature death, of untimely death. Hence the earth is full of dead people; they walk, they talk, they do all kinds of things, but they are dead. They are living a posthumous existence. They died the day they started holding back.

Start pouring again. Don't be a miser at all, because to be miserly is to be miserable. As far as love is concerned be a spendthrift. And existence returns whatsoever you give to it in so many ways and with such grandeur, glory, splendour, that one cannot even see the relationship. Because what we give are just stones and what we get are diamonds, there seems to be no relationship.

But only a giver gets, only a lover becomes a beloved. Remember that simple law and that can transform your whole life and being.

Very few people are capable of giving love. Although everybody wants to be loved, nobody is ready to love. This is the whole misery of the world. Everybody wants to be loved and nobody loves; hence everybody suffers. Everybody remains a beggar, begging for love. In fact one need not beg for love because love is our intrinsic nature. We can give it, and it is by giving it that it grows. The more you give, the more you have it. And when you start giving it you become aware of such an inexhaustible source within your own being, that you can give to the whole world within any conditions, without even thinking about whether the other is worthy or not. There is no need to worry about that -- giving in itself is such a joy. And the miracle is that if you give, the whole world loves you; if you beg nobody loves you. Nobody loves a beggar, remember it. Emperors are liked, not beggars. And as far as love is concerned one should learn the art of being an emperor, never a beggar. Give, and the world will respond. Ask, and there is no answer; beg and the whole world turns its back towards you.

Ester is a beautiful name. From one source it is the name of a plant with every green

leaves and fragrant white flowers. The evergreen leaves represent love, symbolise love. Love is always green. It never dies, it is always alive. If it is at all, it is forever. If it disappears that only means it was never there in the first place. Those evergreen leaves symbolise the ever-flowing life juices of love.

And the white flowers are also very significant. White is the combination of all the colours, the synthesis of all the colours. White in itself is not a colour; it is the ultimate synthesis of all the seven colours. The whole rainbow has merged, mingled into oneness, and out of that oneness arises white. White symbolises union, the ultimate union. Love is ultimate union.

From another source ester also symbolises love. It comes from the name of a goddess, Ester, who is a goddess of love. But the first is far more significant; the second is only mythological. The first is far more real.

Become evergreen love. When the season is ripe, when the time has come, you will be showered with white flowers.

God gives many gifts but meditation is the greatest, because one becomes aware of god only through meditation. There are many other gifts: life is a gift, love is a gift, joy is a gift, creativity is a gift. One remains with these gifts but never becomes aware of the hand that gives them gifts.

It is only through meditation that you become aware of the hand, the hidden hand, the hidden energy, the unmanifest source of all. Hence meditation is the greatest gift, because it not only gives you joy, love, peace, silence, it also gives you the giver; it gives you god himself.

Beatriz is a beautiful name. It means one who is capable of blessing others.

It is possible only when one has achieved blissfulness. When one is overflowing with bliss one can bless others, not otherwise. If one is miserable one goes on making others miserable. Even though one does not want to, it is almost inevitable because you can only give that which you are. In your relationships you are bound to reflect your being, you are bound to share yourself.

It is impossible to remain miserable and to go on pretending that you are happy. Those pretensions are not going to help anyone. Everybody will be able to see through them, nobody is deceived. And unconsciously you go on creating the vibe of darkness, of misery, of sadness, around you.

The same happens when you become blissful; you start showering flowers of bliss, a great fragrance is released from you. And it is possible to be blissful, it is possible to be a blessing to the whole existence. Remember it -- it is within your capacity, it is within everybody's grasp. If we miss it, we miss only because we never make any endeavour to get it.

We use the expression 'falling in love' because our ordinary love is certainly a fall. It is falling from consciousness into unconsciousness, it is falling into the hands of blind biology, blind nature, blind instincts.

But there is another kind of love too, which is not a fall but a rise. Only that love, which is not a fall but a rise, can fulfill. And the distinction between the two is simple: when you are falling you are becoming more unconscious, when you are rising you are becoming more conscious. Let that be the criterion, the touchstone. Everything that helps you to be more

conscious is good, is virtue; anything that helps you to be more unconscious is vice, is sin.

Learn the alphabet of the new love. It has to be unconditional. Don't make any condition, don't ask for anything in return. It has to be unmotivated. Let it be for the sheer joy of giving. It has to be a gift, not a bargain. And then slowly slowly you will see that you are growing wings, that you are rising towards the sun.

And the unconditional love, the unmotivated love, is never a bondage; it never creates a prison for you, it always helps you to be more free. Ultimately it gives you absolute freedom -- and that is the goal of sannyas.

Love more and more, for no other reason than for love's sake. Be in love with love itself so that you can love people, trees, birds, rocks, stars, clouds without any motive. When one learns to love without motive a miracle happens: one becomes love. If you go on loving for some motive you never become love.

This is the whole secret on the path of love: unmotivated love transforms your whole being into love energy, and to become love energy is to become divine. Nothing more is needed. That is more than one can ask for, that is more than one can dream of. It brings absolute fulfillment, it brings flowering. You bloom. Flowers of consciousness start opening within you.

Love is true when it is unconditional, love is true when it is non-possessive. Love is true when it enjoys giving and is not hankering to get something, when it is not a bargain, when it is not business, when it is for the sheer joy of sharing.

Share whatsoever you have. Share your life with people, with animals, with trees, with stars, with clouds, mountains, rivers. Share, because this whole universe is our family, we are part of it.

And the miracle is: the more you give, the more you get. But don't desire. Love is true when it is not a desire, when it is unmotivated. And if love is attained then there is no need for any other region -- it is enough. It will give you all that is needed. It will give you truth, it will give you god, it will give you liberation.

People are very bitter. Even if they are sweet sometimes, their sweetness is diplomatic. It is not their true face, it is just a facade. They smile because smiling pays, but deep down they are only thorns; inside their being there are no roses. They maintain a certain surface, a certain superficial beauty. They cultivate a certain character -- appealing, influential, attractive, but that is all part of their ambitious ego. And ego can never be sweet -- it is pure poison. You can sugar-coat it, that is possible, but it can never be sweet.

A sannyasin has to drop all superficial smiles, all facades, all cultivated so-called manners and etiquette. He has to be more spontaneous, he has to be really loving -- not in a diplomatic way, not with any motive, not to get anything out of it, but just to share his being.

And the moment one starts sharing one's being without any motive life becomes a sweet fragrance. It is all honey. Then everything remains the same, yet nothing is the same any more. When your heart beats in harmony, in love, in joy, when you are no longer greedy, when there are no desires and no ambitions, and when there are no ego trips any more, one is simply, ordinary, but sweet. That taste is the taste of god.

The Eastern mystics have defined god as satyam, shivam, sunderam. Satyam means the truth, shivam means the good, sunderam means the beautiful.

The Christian trinity looks very poor -- this is the true trinity. These are the three approaches towards god, three doors to enter into the ultimate.

Either you enter as a seeker of truth... That is the approach of the philosopher. And by philosophy I do not mean that which is taught in the universities. That is not philosophy at all. By philosophy I mean the original meaning of philosophy: love of wisdom. Lovers of wisdom enter from the door of truth. It is a different path but they reach the same peak, the peak is the same.

And the person who enters through the door called good is the person who tries to live a life of simplicity, innocence, purity -- the virtuous one. And by the virtuous I don't mean the moralist. The moralist is an egoist. He is cunning, calculative. His morality is not much, his morality is just a policy; hence he says 'Honesty is the best policy.' It is politics. He is playing a game. He is trying to deceive even god. He is only pretending to be good, he is not good.

To be virtuous is totally different. It is not a question of having a good character. It is a question of having more consciousness in your being, not conscience but consciousness. Conscience makes character, consciousness creates virtue. When you are alert, more alert than people ordinarily are, you have the capacity to see what is right and what is wrong. And each moment you decide; you don't carry ready-made answers.

The man of so-called character lives out of ready-made answers; hence he is never in tune with life, never in step with life. His answers are old and life always raises new questions. But the virtuous man is spontaneous. He enters from the door of good.

And the poet and the painter and the sculptor and all those who love beauty enter from the third door. If one can enter from the third door, my preference is for the third. If it is impossible then my next preference is for the second door, the door of spontaneous virtue. If that too is difficult, then only should one choose the path of wisdom, because that is the hardest path, the most arduous. And there is no need to be a martyr unnecessarily. When one can go easily, when one can go dancing and singing, why carry a cross?

Let that be your path -- creativity. Create something beautiful, out of your being create something beautiful. And whatsoever you do be creative -- that will be your religion, that will be your meditation.

In the past religion has not been creative. That's why religion has existed for thousands of years but has failed, utterly failed. It has not been able to transform human consciousness, not at all. Just a Jesus, a Buddha, a Lao Tzu, here and there -- this is not success. Out of millions of people one person, Jesus... it does not prove anything. The exception simply proves the rule. And what did we do to these people? -- we poisoned them, we killed them, we crucified them. We are closer to Judas than to Jesus. The whole humanity is closer to Judas than to Jesus. If Jesus comes back we will kill him again.

Religion has failed for the simple reason that it was uncreative. Anything uncreative cannot succeed. God is a creator. The only way to succeed in god's existence -- and there is no other existence -- is to be creative.

Create beauty, appreciate beauty, love beauty. Let beauty be your god. Worship beauty.

In the past all religions have been very uncreative; that's why they became a dead burden on humanity. My effort here is to create a new quality of religiousness, and that quality has to be rooted in creativity.

God is the creator, and the only way to know him to be a creator; there is no other way. When you create something you participate with god. When the painter is lost in painting he is part of god, he is no more himself. When the musician is lost in his music he is part of god,

there is a meeting and a merging. In those moments he is vast, enormous. He is not ordinary, he is not human. He has transcended all limitations.

And it happens in all kinds of creativity, so it does not matter *what* you create, just create. Let creativity be your prayer, your worship, your religion.

Meditation brings many flowers, many gifts. One of those gifts is creativity. Suddenly you are so full of energy that you would like to create something, paint something, sing something, play on the guitar or on the flute. When one is overflowing with energy, the energy is bound to be creative.

It is a strange phenomenon that the uncreative people are the people who are lacking in energy, the destructive people are the people who are lacking in energy. They are impotent people. Because they cannot create they start destroying. Destruction is easy -- anybody can do it. How much energy is needed to destroy a painting? A painter may have worked on it for months, but to destroy it... just a child can destroy it. How much energy is needed to destroy a flower? The gardener may have worked for years...

Destruction needs no energy; hence my observation is that Adolf Hitler and Mussolini and Josef Stalin are not really powerful people, they are people who are lacking in energy, they are impotent people. Because they cannot create they have to destroy, that seems to be the only way to prove themselves. Those who can create will not bother to destroy at all. But to create one needs great energy, more energy than you need for your day-to-day activities, so much energy that you cannot contain it, that it starts overflowing.

When it starts dancing on its own then something beautiful is going to be born out of you. If your meditation does not make you creative then it is not meditation; then you are taking something else as meditation.

Creativity has to be the criterion. My sannyasins particularly have to prove their meditation in their creative acts. To be creative means sharing your joy with others. To be creative means bringing something from the unmanifest into the manifest world. Creativity means sharing something with god, because he is the creator and whenever you create something you are participating with him. You become a partner -- of course a small partner, but a partner is a partner.

Fingers Pointing to the Moon

Chapter #6

Chapter title: Allowing

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GRATITUDE IS THE ESSENCE OF PRAYER

Man has only to allow; bliss is always established by god. We can create misery but we cannot create bliss. Misery is within our hands, bliss is not. Bliss has to be allowed to happen. It is not a doing, it is a happening. The moment you surrender, misery starts disappearing and bliss is established through surrender.

Man can achieve many things, but there are a few things which are unachievable: bliss, truth, love. These are the things which happen. You cannot be aggressive. You can only let them happen, you can allow them to happen. You can only be receptive.

If you are simply receptive money will not happen. It won't come and start rushing towards you. Even if you have some, it will leave you; somebody else will possess it. Political power will not happen. You have to fight for it tooth and nail, you have to be absolutely mad for it. The maddest is going to win. And you have to forget everything: you have not to worry about what is good and what is bad, only then you can win in the struggle for money, power, prestige. The law is that whatsoever leads to achieving your end is good.

But there are a few things which cannot be achieved in this way -- and they are the real things. So this has to be used as a criterion: that which can be achieved by you is bound to be unreal. The very idea of your ego is unreal, so whatsoever it achieves is unreal. Only things that come to you from the beyond, things which shower upon you, are real. They are gifts of god.

So one has to learn to be a little feminine. The outward aggressiveness is masculine. That's why it is a man's world and why man has dominated down the ages. And unless women also become ugly like men they will not be able to dominate in the outside world. Unless they also become cruel, violent, aggressive, unless they also lose their grace, they will not be able to succeed. And even if they lose all their grace they will be second-rate men; they can't be first-rate because that will not be natural to them.

That's what is happening through the liberation movement: women are only becoming second-grade men. It is not liberating them, it is simply making them imitators, and all imitation is ugly. A woman has to be a woman. She is equal but she is not similar to man. She has a totally different dimension of existence.

Science is masculine, religion is feminine. Science is aggressive, it is an effort to conquer nature. And religion is receptive, it is an effort to be pregnant with god, to allow god to happen.

Friedrich Nietzsche has criticized Jesus very much, and one of his greatest criticisms was that Jesus is feminine, womanish. And I agree with him. I agree with him, he is right, his insight is right -- but his criticism is wrong.

Jesus is feminine, Buddha is also feminine, Lao Tzu even more so. All the great religious people have been feminine -- feminine in a very spiritual sense, not biological. They were receptive people, they made themselves utterly silent and open and they waited. They were patient.

One has to learn to wait, pray and wait, meditate and wait, and then bliss starts happening. Out of nowhere it comes. It is a gift of god. And when something has been felt as a gift of god, gratitude arises. And it is gratitude that is the most significant religious quality. Gratitude is the essence of prayer.

LIFE IS GOD'S GRACIOUS GIFT

-- (Mukta whispers to Osho as he leans forward, 'She is Joke -- pronounced Yo-ka.')
Yo-ka? Come here!

You have a beautiful name. Mukta destroyed the whole beauty of it. I would have read it as 'joke'. (much laughter)... but she said yo-ka! (more laughter)

Joke is a form of john; it means god's gracious gift. Life is a gift, but very few people recognize it, because god goes on giving us life without making any fuss about it. It is given so silently that we never become aware that something precious has been given to us. And god does not even wait to be thanked. He does not make a show out of it. He does not even whisper "I am giving you the most precious thing in existence -- life, consciousness, love." He really knows how to give. That is the art of giving: the person to whom the gift is given should not know about it, otherwise it will be a little humiliating, he may feel embarrassed... Hence god gives anonymously, in such a way that the people who are the receivers never become aware of the gift, unless they make a deliberate effort to wake themselves up.

Sannyas is a deliberate effort to be conscious of what has been given to you. And if you become conscious of it, you become capable of receiving more. If you become grateful for it, you become worthy of receiving more.

The person who thanks god for all that is happening to him goes on receiving more and more, because a thankful heart becomes more and more open, a thankful heart becomes more and more receptive.

So your name is beautiful. Remind yourself that everything is a great gift. Everything that has happened to you is a great gift -- all the pains and all the pleasures, all the agonies and all the ecstasies, all the ups and all the downs. Everything is beautiful because everything is contributing towards your growth, towards your ultimate flowering.

BECOME A HOST FOR THE DIVINE

The walk of a wolf has a beauty of its own. It is graceful, very alive, full of vigor. It has

an inner strength, courage. The wolf represents all these things: grace, courage, strength. And these are all gifts of god.

We can only be receivers, we can't be achievers. All that is significant has to be received. All that we achieve is insignificant. Remember that distinction: whatsoever man can achieve is going to be mundane and will be taken away by death; whatsoever comes to man from the beyond cannot be taken away by death. It is immortal, it is eternal.

To be a sannyasin means to be constantly in a receptive mood, with doors open, with a welcoming heart, vulnerable, unafraid. To become a host for the divine -- that's what sannyas is all about.

SANNYAS IS AN INVITATION TO GOD

Sannyas is an invitation to god, that 'I am ready,' that 'I am open,' that 'I am available,' that 'if you come, you are welcome,' that 'if you come my doors will be open and I will be waiting for you,' that 'if you come you will not find me asleep; I will be awake and I will be ready. I am ready to be your host.' That's what sannyas is all about, an invitation to god so that he can become a guest.

But he is always ready to become the guest. All that is needed is that we should be ready to be his host. The moment we are ready he suddenly appears at the door. Perhaps he was already standing there but because we were not ready we could not see. Perhaps he was knocking on the door but we were not receptive so we could not hear him.

Remember it, and let this invitation become an undercurrent, day in, day out. Not so much verbally but existentially, become an invitation. And no invitation has ever been rejected by him.

SURRENDER AND YOU WILL BE VICTORIOUS

The law of bliss is simple, and anybody can become its master. But very few people try it, very few people even think about it. It is so simple -- that is one of the troubles. We are always interested in the difficult, in the complex. The complex is a challenge for the ego. The obvious, the simple, is not a challenge at all. The ego is not interested in the obvious and the simple -- and god is obvious and very simple. Unless you also become simple you will not be able to commune with god.

This is the simple law, that if you want to commune with god... God is not a challenge. It is not a question of achieving something unachievable. It is not a question of walking on the moon or reaching Everest. It is not far away from you, it is your ordinariness. Your very ordinariness is your godliness.

One just needs to relax, to be in a let-go and accept life joyously, with no desire to achieve anything. The desire to achieve creates tension, anguish, anxiety, and in that anxiety we go on missing that which is very close by. We remain occupied with the anxiety and remain oblivious of the truth that is within us.

Relaxation is the law, let-go is the law. God is not a question of conquest but of surrender, hence the ego is not interested in it. It is interested in conquest. Without god our life is nothing but a defeat, a failure, a frustration. Only when god enters into your life is there meaning and joy and love and laughter. With the entry of god some celestial music starts happening within you. Your heart becomes a temple and your life starts having a beauty, a grace.

The simple law is: Surrender and you will be victorious. If you want to be victorious you

will be defeated. You will never be victorious. But remember, god has to be invited and we have to prepare for the great guest. We have to learn how to be a host. Sannyas is nothing but the whole art of being host to the ultimate guest. And then all victory is yours.

THE SECRET OF LET-GO

God is always ready to give. He is always ready to share his being, his bliss, his truth, but we are unavailable, we are very closed. We don't give him any way into our being, we don't open even a single window. Out of fear we keep all the doors and windows closed; hence the wind and the sun and the rain... nothing can reach us.

God comes in many ways, in thousands of ways, but he just remains standing outside. And he is so polite that he will not even knock on the door, he will not ring the bell. He is so silent that you will not hear his footsteps. He will wait, and he can wait because he has infinity. But we lose much because our life is short, our time is very small and it is slipping out of our hands every moment.

And the older we grow, the more closed we become because the more afraid we are: death starts knocking on the door. Death is not polite. It is very noisy, it is not silent. If you don't open the door it will force the door open, it will pull you out. So as we grow older we become more and more afraid, we become more and more enclosed, encapsulated, and god becomes farther and farther away.

He is always close but we are not available. He is near but we are far, far away from him. The strange phenomenon has to be understood because much depends on that understanding. He is very near but we are very far away; he is always available, we are never available.

The whole effort of all the masters down the ages has been to help you to become available, to help you to gather courage so that you can open your doors and windows and you can allow him -- not reluctantly: you can welcome him. The moment you are ready to welcome him he immediately transforms your being. And that transformation is bliss. His grace showers on you, cleanses you, purifies you.

Man alone, on his own, cannot do that. It is impossible for man to cleanse his own heart, to purify his own being. It is like pulling yourself up by your shoestrings. It is impossible. You can try to jump a little bit but you will be back on the same earth again. You may even fall and have a few fractures.

Man has to learn the secret of let-go.

SANNYAS IS AN EFFORT TO BE WITH GOD

Manuela is a prayer. It is a prayer for god. It means 'god be with us.'

But in fact the problem is not that god is not with us, god is always with us, the problem is from our side, we are not with him. If god were not with us we could not exist even for a single moment. He is our life, he breathes in us, he beats in our hearts, he is our consciousness. He is always with us, but we are not always with him.

The moment we are also with him a radical change happens. Then you become aware of the meaning, of the significance, of the song of life. Then you become aware of how much has been bestowed upon you, how much has been given to you. Then great gratefulness is felt, and that gratefulness is the essential core of religion, the very soul of religion. Everything else is ritual. To feel gratitude is to be religious.

But the prayer is good: it is a longing of our heart to be with god. But we don't know what to do, so we pray, 'God be with us.' But an empty prayer is not going to be fulfilled. You have

to learn how to be with god, you have to practise your prayer, you have to come to a point where you deserve to have it fulfilled.

That's what sannyas is all about: an effort to be with god.

PRAYER MEANS LISTENING TO GOD

Prayer does not mean saying something to god, asking for something, prayer means listening to god. If you have to say something it can only be a thank you. A simple yes is enough.

But organized religions all over the world have been teaching people unnecessary prayers. And people are repeating those prayers, parrotlike. They have lost all meaning, they have become pure ritual, they are only formal.

Being here with me you have to learn the true prayer. It consists of silence, it consists of deep listening. God wants to convey something to you. He's searching for you, but he never finds you because you are always so busy. Whenever he rings you are engaged.

Be silent, more and more unoccupied, more and more available, and soon you will start hearing the still, small voice within.

God does not speak from the outside, he speaks from your innermost core, he is already there. And to be connected with your innermost core is true prayer. The moment you are connected... it is so blissful, so ecstatic that you can only bow down in deep gratitude. There is nothing to say, or only a deep yes. One may cry in joy or dance almost like a drunkard -- that is okay, that is absolutely right. But a Christian prayer, a Hindu prayer, a Mohammedan prayer, are all nonsense. Prayer cannot be Christian or Hindu, just like love cannot be Christian or Hindu.

'Prayer' is one of the most beautiful words, but tremendously misunderstood. and the misunderstanding has been perpetuated by the so-called religious people: by the priests and the rabbis. They have been telling people that prayer means a dialogue with god; if you have to say something to god. That is utter nonsense -- we have nothing to say. On the contrary we have to listen to god; that is prayer -- not saying something but listening.

Saying is aggressive, listening is receptive. Saying is masculine, listening is feminine. We have to be just all ears. When you are just all ears, listening from every pore of your body, you are in prayer. And then certainly god speaks. And he speaks from the innermost core of your own being.

But we are continuously full of chatter. Even in the churches, temples, synagogues, we are chattering. In the name of prayer we go on chattering. We go on talking, saying things to god. He knows; there is no need to say anything to him. But we need to listen to him. It is a very still, small voice, but if you are silent it is heard.

And once you have heard the divine voice within you, you are no more the same. That is the moment of rebirth: you are born anew.

SANNYAS: A NEW BEGINNING

It is very rare to find a person who is ready to learn. A teachable spirit means one who is ready to learn, who is humble enough to learn, who is ready to accept his ignorance.

People pretend to know without knowing. They become unteachable spirits. The knowledgeable person is impossible; he cannot be taught.

A great musician used to ask a double fee from the disciples who knew something about

music, and those who were absolutely ignorant he was ready to teach for half the fee. People were puzzled and they asked 'What is the matter? Are you mad? People who have learned so much about music, they should be taught for a lesser fee.'

But the master said 'That is not so. First I have to take away their knowledge -- that takes much time. First I have to destroy their knowledge, and that is more difficult than teaching. Those who are ignorant are available, immediately available. They are like blank sheets of paper, you can write upon them. But the people who come with knowledge have already written many things on themselves. First they have to be cleaned, and that is an arduous effort.'

I agree with the master. That man must have known more than music, he must have known something deeper than music. He must have known the very secret of being a master.

So really be a disciple. Drop all that you know, unlearn it, so that I can start. It is always good to start afresh. That's what sannyas is: a new beginning, a discontinuity with the past, a death and a rebirth.

IT IS ALL YOURS!

All that we have is a gift from god. If we recognise it as a gift gratitude arises; if we don't recognise it as a gift we live in ungratefulness. And to be ungrateful is to be irreligious, to be grateful is to be religious.

Religion has nothing to do with churches and temples and rituals and all that. It has something to do with gratitude. It is essentially gratefulness that is the foundation of true religion.

Look in, look out, and everywhere, in thousands of ways, you will find the grace of god showering on you. Don't remain blind to it. Become more sensitive to it. To be totally sensitive is all there is in meditation. Meditation means opening up, becoming sensitive, receptive, seeing things as they are. And then naturally one starts feeling tremendous thankfulness arising, from every pore of one's soul, mind, body, from one's totality.

That moment is the moment of transformation.

Everyone is favoured by god equally. There is no partiality in existence. Existence is absolutely impartial. But that does not mean that it is cold. It is very warm, loving, protecting, caring. But we are not open to its warmth, we are closed.

The problem is with us, not with existence. Hence the whole effort down the ages has been a single one: to help people to open up so that they can commune with the stars and the clouds and the sun and the moon -- because this totality is what god is. There is no god other than this existence. And unless you are open, fearlessly open, you will never become aware of what you are missing. You are missing life, you are missing love, you are missing truth.

Sannyas means the longing to commune with existence. Gather courage and open yourself to all the beauty and the blessing and the benediction. It is all yours. Just for the asking it is yours.

WE ARE NOT ORPHANS

God is the protector. We are not orphans, we are not insecure, but we unnecessarily become worried about security, safety, and we create so much worry that we go on missing the joy of life. The whole energy becomes converted into worrying. Rather than becoming a celebration it becomes misery, anguish.

One of the most fundamental things to understand is that we are protected. There is no

need to worry about it, no need even to think about it. Then the whole energy becomes available. And to be full of energy is to be full of delight.

William Blake is right, he says 'energy is delight.' That's a great insight. He is one of the most insightful persons that the West has produced. His words are very pregnant. Just being full of energy for no reason at all, overflowing with energy, one feels blessed. But our whole energy goes into worrying: we create a thousand and one worries. We create our own enemies, and then those enemies become parasites.

In a single blow drop worrying, drop all anxiety and anguish. That's the beginning of sannyas: leaving everything to god. If he can take care of the whole existence he can also take care of you. And then one lives a carefree life. Not careless but carefree; very careful but not anxiety-ridden, careful in the sense of being alert, aware, conscious.

NOTHING EVER GOES WRONG

One of the most important thing to understand is that whatsoever we can do is going to be very small, tiny, momentary. It can't last. It is like a sandcastle, or like paper boats: you can play with them but they cannot take you to the other shore.

Man's hands are small. He has to learn to depend, to rely on, to trust in god. All that is great is always a divine gift: love, beauty, bliss, truth, freedom -- they all come to us. We have to be on the receiving end, we have to be humble, receptive, open, welcoming.

Everything is happening on its own. We need not be worried about anything -- the whole universe is running so smoothly. Seeing its beautiful harmony one should drop all worries. There is no need to be worried. Nothing ever goes wrong, all is always right. Yes, sometimes we feel that things are going wrong. That feeling comes because we have a certain idea of how things should be. If they are not going according to that idea we feel miserable.

Drop that idea and then everything is absolutely right. If you don't have a certain idea of how things should be, then everything is as it is and one starts living in suchness. That is Zen.

This is going to be your path. Become more and more silent, cool, alert, aware, unworried, unhurried, with no idea of the future, with no burden of the past, living in the moment, living the ordinary life with great joy because it is god's gift; it can't be ordinary.

It looks ordinary because we have created great ideals about how life should be. We are creating all our frustrations by creating expectations. Drop all expectations, and frustrations disappear like shadows as if they had never been there, like dreams. And to be without expectations and without frustrations is to be really alive, fully alive, totally alive.

BECOME A WARRIOR FOR GOD

In a way everyone is a warrior. Either one fights for one's own ego or one fights for god, not for one's own ego. That's the only difference between the sinner and the saint. The sinner fights for his own ego, the saint fights for god; he has no ego of his own. He is god's warrior, he is just a vehicle, a medium. He allows god to take possession of him. He leaves everything, surrenders everything, to god. He lives in a let-go. His only prayer is 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.'

Let that be your path: become a warrior for god. That's what a sannyasin is, a warrior for god.

To fight for the ego is doomed because the ego is false and the fight is foolish. You are fighting for something which does not exist in the first place. To fight for god is tremendously beautiful and it is bound TO Succeed.

One of the great mystics of the Upanishadas has said 'Satyameva jayate' -- truth is bound to win. Truth wins. There is no possibility of it failing, it is impossible. It is not in the nature of things for truth to fail. Truth is always victorious.

To be with god is to be with truth, to be with god is to be in harmony with the whole. And then there is no defeat, no failure, no frustration.

BE A CLOUD

A cloud is absolutely free, tethered to nothing. The whole sky belongs to it. And it is so free that it has no destinations, because destination also becomes a bondage: you have to go only in a certain direction, you can't go in other directions. The cloud is utterly free, it can go anywhere; there is no destination, there is no destiny.

And the cloud is so free for the simple reason that it exists in a let-go. It allows the winds to take it wherever the whole wills, it has no will of its own. It is free from its will too, it is free from its ego too. It is always available. If the winds are going to the East, it goes to the East as dancing as it goes to the West. It has no preference, no choice. Its existence is that of choicelessness. And that's exactly what a sannyasin has to be: a cloud.

Man can move towards god in many ways. There are wrong ways also, just as there is a right way. Wrong ways are many, the right way is one.

It is just as diseases are many, health is one, hence health has no name, diseases have names. Somebody has T.B. and somebody has cancer and somebody has something else; there are thousands of diseases.

But health has no adjective to it. It is simple because it is one. Whenever you are healthy you experience the same thing as anybody else who is healthy will experience, but when you are ill you are privately ill. Illness has something private about it, it is personal. Healthy is impersonal.

There are many wrong ways towards god but only one right way. The wrong ways are... One can move towards god through fear. One will only think *that* one is moving, one will never move. That's why it is wrong. How can you go toward god if you are moving out of fear? The natural tendency when you are afraid is to escape. You can go away, farther away from god, but not closer to him. And all the religions have been teaching people to be afraid of god.

Religious people are defined as god-fearing. Now, that is ridiculous -- a religious person never fears god, he loves him. Fear is not a bridge. If you fear god, deep down you will hate him; deep down he is your enemy, he can't be your friend. And how can you surrender out of fear? The surrender will be superficial. You will wait to take revenge.

It is because of these religions that the modern mind has taken revenge. It is because of the accumulated fear of centuries that Friedrich Nietzsche has to declare 'God is dead and now man is free.' This is the whole sentence. People quote only half of it -- that god is dead. The other half is as important, even more **IMP**ortant than the first part: god is dead and now man is free. Free from what? -- free from fear. There is nothing to fear now if god is dead.

And the next sentence Nietzsche says, 'Now you can do whatsoever you want to do' there is nobody to hinder you. You are no longer in a prison.'

Nietzsche is just the opposite of all the priests who have been creating a fear in people's minds. This is the outcome; Nietzsche is the by-product. And our century is atheistic for the simple reason that we have become tired of remaining afraid.

Man can also move towards god through greed. That is the wrong way again, because

greed means you want to exploit. Greed means you are motivated. You have certain desires to be fulfilled through god, god is not your goal. You want money, you want power, you want paradise, you want all the pleasures of paradise. And because they can be got only through god, out of compulsion you surrender to god. But god is a means, not the end, and to reduce god to a means is ugly, it is disgusting. God is the ultimate end, there is nothing beyond it.

And so on, so forth ... these are the wrong ways. They appear to be ways but they are not ways they are walls. The only right way is love.

Love more, love deeply, love for love's sake, and you will be surprised that slowly slowly something new starts happening around you: the presence of god is felt.

Whenever you are in a loving space god fills it. And once you have tasted the joy of being filled by god you would like to remain in love twenty-four hours a day. Then love becomes your natural state and god becomes your inner experience. It is only through love that people have reached god. Others have been wandering astray.

Love is my message, but don't cling to the word 'love', don't make a gospel out of it. It is to be experienced.

The words of the buddhas are just fingers pointing to the moon. Don't cling to the fingers, they are not the moon. Look towards the moon, to where the fingers are pointing.

My function here is just to point towards god. You are not to become attached to me, you are not to become hooked on me and on my words. You have to remain absolutely free so that you can move towards the moon, the ultimate experience.

Gerald means a heart full of love, loyalty, trust.

That's exactly the definition of a religious consciousness. These qualities are needed. Without these qualities one can never become aware of god, of love, of beauty, of the tremendous splendour of existence.

Existence is known through the heart, not through the head. And the heart approaches existence in deep love, trust. There is no other way to commune with the whole.

These qualities slowly slowly transform you. They transform you from a doubting confusion into an absolute certainty of knowing. They take you out of the chaos of the head into the harmony of the heart.

Remember them.

Meditation should not be forced. It should be helped, it should be invited, one should prepare oneself to receive it, but one should not force it to happen. It is a delicate matter.

It is as if a bud has come to the rose bush. You can force it open, it can be opened forcibly, but it won't have the same beauty. You have killed something, you have destroyed it, you have been violent. You should have waited. And waiting does not mean that nothing has to be done. Water the bush, put fertilizers in the soil, protect the bush with a fence. Take every care so that the bush is nourished, is strong, because the more nourished the bush is, the stronger the rose is going to be, the longer it is going to stay on the stem. The richer the soil is, the more fragrant the rose is going to be. But these are indirect methods to help. You should not simply go and force the bud to open. One can FORCE it, and one will have a certain kind of flower, but it will be half-dead, stillborn; almost from its very birth it is dead.

Exactly that is to be remembered about meditation. It is also a very delicate flower, so do everything to help it, to nourish it, but don't try to force it. That's what people do: they bring in their will power. That is violence, will is violent. Don't bring in your will power. Leave it to god. Be in a surrender, clean yourself of all thoughts, of all desires, become more alert,

more watchful, more silent, more together, more graceful, more harmonious. Do all these things ... and then one day suddenly the satori, the meditation. Suddenly you find that you have changed. Wings have grown on you, you can fly. Gravitation has no power over you any more.

When meditation is spontaneous it has tremendous beauty because it is alive. And only an alive meditation can liberate you, not a forced, dead meditation.

Bliss is a sun that rises within you. Ordinarily man lives in a dark night, never knowing any dawn, never knowing any sunrise, just stumbling in the darkness, falling here, falling there, getting wounded.

If you look at man's life, the whole life is simply a groping, and is of absolute futility because through this groping he never finds the door. The door can be found only if your inner being becomes full of light, if the sun rises.

It happens through meditation. Meditation is the beginning of a sunrise. It is an invitation for the sun to rise within you. It is inviting light. It is inviting silence, peace. Ordinarily we never think of these things: peace, silence, stillness, light -- and these are the real Treasures. They constitute our real kingdom.

So from now onwards meditation has to be your way. Invite more and more peace, more and more silence, stillness. Don't miss a single opportunity to be silent, to be still. Don't miss a single opportunity to relax and look in.

And one day it happens. It never happens gradually, it happens suddenly. You suddenly see the eastern hemisphere inside you becoming red; the sun is rising, the night is over. Then real life begins. Then each moment is so precious, so ecstatic, that each moment contains eternity. Then there is no past and no future, the present is all. Then one knows that one never dies, one is never born. One is always here and now.

Samarpan means surrender. Stephen means a crown, a symbol of victory. Your name is paradoxical. But life is a PARadox, and unless one understands the nature of paradox, one never understands the nature of life.

One is victorious only if one is ready to surrender. If one tries to be victorious one never succeeds. If you want to gain abundant life you have to be ready to lose all, you have to be ready to risk all, to not withhold anything.

This is the way of love and this is the way of god, this is the fundamental law of existence, of tao. In love if you try to conquer you will destroy the whole phenomenon and the beauty of it; if you surrender victory is yours. When two lovers surrender they are not surrendering to each other, remember. That is a misunderstanding. They are simply surrendering to the god of love or the law of love. They are both surrendering to something invisible: the phenomenon of love. In that very surrender both become victorious.

But if both are trying to be victorious then there is no possibility. They will destroy all love. Millions of couples go on destroying their love for the simple reason that both are trying to conquer, to dominate, to possess.

And whatsoever is right about love is right about god too, because god is nothing but ultimate love. If you want to be victorious in life learn the art of surrender.

Sannyas is the first step of surrender. And it is so beautiful to surrender to the ultimate, to the whole. All anxiety disappears, all anguish disappears, all problems are cut from the root in a single blow. You are suddenly free from all misery. It exists only because you are trying to be on your own, separate from the whole, trying to be the ego, fighting for yourself,

fighting for your place.

The person who surrenders says 'I am no more. Thy will be done, thy kingdom come.' And immediately, instantly, this whole existence is his kingdom. Immediately he is a king, he is crowned.

Man can fight against god or for god. One thing is certain, man has to fight. That is inevitable, one cannot avoid it. But the choice is between these two: either you are on god's side or you are against him. Those who choose to be against him choose to be miserable; they are basically fighting against their own nature, because god is nothing but your nature. They are in an inner turmoil, a civil war. They are destroying themselves. They become many, fragmentary, divided. There is a quarrel continuously going on underneath. It is an almost constant undercurrent.

Those who choose to be with god choose to be blissful. The moment you are with god you are no more; hence there is nobody to worry, to be anxious, to be afraid, to be greedy. They whole has taken over, you have surrendered.

This surrender is sannyas. It is surrendering to the whole and allowing the whole to live through you. Bliss starts happening, immediately silence descends. One suddenly feels so peaceful ... one has never known it before. One has never even dreamt about it, one could not have even conceived that it was possible. And the whole phenomenon is a simple change of gestalt: not to fight against god but to fight for him.

Sannyas means becoming a soldier for god.

Only creators know what bliss is. To create anything, to enjoy creativity, is to allow bliss to happen. One cannot approach bliss directly, there is no direct route. While you are absorbed in creativity bliss comes silently and possesses you. Bliss is very shy: if you try to grab it directly it escapes. Bliss is very feminine. There is no way to be aggressive with it.

It happens only when you are in an absolute surrender. And that's what creativity is. A painter lost in his painting is utterly surrendered. In that moment he is not, he has disappeared. Painting is happening as if of its own accord; he is not doing it, there is no doer. If the doer is there then bliss will not happen. Then he is not really an artist, not a creator, he is just a technician. He knows how to paint but he has no vision.

When the painter gets lost in his painting, when the dancer gets lost in his dance, bliss happens. It comes silently, you can't even hear its footsteps. It comes and possesses you.

Once this secret is known then creativity becomes real worship. Then one need not go to the temples, need not go to the churches, need not bother about god at all and need not bother him. One goes on doing the few small things that one can do, whatsoever they are, but one does them with absolute love, with totality. And one gets lost in them. And slowly slowly twenty-four hours of one's day become creative. Even cleaning the floor becomes creative, even cooking food becomes creative, washing the clothes becomes creative.

Creativity has nothing to do with what you are doing but with how yOU are doing it. It is not concerned with the what but with the how: the energy you are bringing to it, the love you are pouring into it.

So this is my message for you, this has to be your path: let creativity be your meditation, your prayer. Let that be your route towards god.

Victory and bliss both happen together, both are two sides of the same coin. The moment you become victorious over yourself you become blissful too; or vice versa, the moment you

are blissful you are victorious. A miserable person remains a slave.

So there are two possible ways to climb the ultimate peak. One is the path of will. That means trying to be victorious over yourself. Finally bliss will be yours, but will come as a consequence, as a by-product. You will find it only on the peak when you have arrived. The second path is of surrender. You start by surrendering to god, rather than trying to be victorious over yourself. By surrendering to god bliss starts happening right now, this very moment. And as you become more and more blissful, you start climbing higher and higher. Ultimately victory is yours but that is a by-product. You meet it on the peak.

You can choose between the two. My suggestion is always for surrender But you are Japanese, and Germans and Japanese are difficult people! You may like the path of will -- that is the path of the samurai. So you can decide -- a few samurais are also needed here! I leave it to you!

How long will you be here?

-- I'm leaving tomorrow.

-- That's what samurais do! (much laughter) They are always on the go! Then come back again ... and the sooner, the better!

A loyal spirit is the very fundamental of religiousness.

Science depends on doubt, it is rooted in doubt. Religion is rooted in trust. If you trust and you want to make a scientific discovery, you will never succeed. And in the same way, if you doubt you will never be able to grow in a religious way.

Doubt is a perfectly adequate method for extrovert enquiries, it is the right method. I am not against doubt. It has tremendous importance. The whole edifice of science stands on it: doubt and doubt, unless you stumble upon something that you cannot doubt. But still that is only a hypothesis. That means you are still not going to trust it absolutely. Who knows? -- tomorrow some new facts may turn up, so keep the doors open for doubts. For the time being, use it hypothetically; for the time being this is true, but only for the time being. Science never comes to truth, only to approximations, hypotheses.

Religion is a totally different endeavour: it begins in trust. It needs faith, such faith that no doubt ever arises. Not that one has to repress doubt; if you repress it, it will be there.

One has to watch, one has not to co-operate with doubt. It will arise; we are trained in doubt, so it will arise. Just watch it. Be alert that you are not caught by it, that's all. Don't repress it and don't follow it, neither be inimical to it or friendly. Just remain neutral, utterly neutral, and slowly slowly doubt disappears.

Without being repressed, when doubt disappears all clouds disperse and the sun of trust is out of the clouds. And that is the beginning of god in your life. You have moved on to a different plane, into a different dimension.

Your name is beautiful -- you have to make it your very life. Become trust, and see miracles happening.

Science can do miracles through doubt, religion can do miracles through trust. Both are valid, but both are different directions, different dimensions. Both are valid in their own spheres. Neither religion should interfere in science nor science should interfere in religion. On the contrary they should co-operate, compensate each other, become complementary to each other.

That is my vision of a new religiousness -- where science and religion live together in a deep co-operation and become complementary to each other. Bliss happens only in a state of deep trust. Only one who is capable of trusting in existence is worthy of receiving bliss. It is

not a question of trusting in any church, any religion, any sect, any doctrine or dogma. The question is of trusting existence.

The moment you trust existence a great peace descends in you; you are at home, at ease. You are not an outsider, a stranger any more, you are part of this whole mysterious universe, an essential part. You cannot be substituted by anybody else. The universe needs you as you are and loves you as you are.

Once you start trusting you start opening up. In distrust one closes -- naturally, in defence one closes, one is afraid to be vulnerable. In trust one opens up; there is nothing to fear, this is our home. The trees and the stars and the sun and the moon are all part of our family, our brothers and sisters.

Saint Francis used to call trees brothers. Even his donkey he used to call 'Brother Donkey.' Cats he used to call sisters.

The universe is a family. The experience is possible only when you trust -- and after that, bliss is inevitable. Without it misery is our fate, it cannot be avoided. With it bliss is natural, it comes of its own accord.

The journey towards oneself needs great patience. But we have become so impatient. Particularly in this century man has lost the unhurried way of life. He is always in a hurry, he wants everything immediately. He thinks that everything is like instant coffee.

But there are a few things which need great patience. Not that they cannot happen immediately -- the paradox is that if you are patient enough they can happen immediately, instantly. But if you are in a hurry it will take an infinite time for them to happen, or they may not happen at all. The impatient one may not ever get them and the patient one can get them immediately.

So this is to be understood from the very beginning of the journey, that it depends on you. If you are impatient the journey becomes very long; if you are patient the journey becomes very short. If you are absolutely patient, if you can say, "I am ready to wait forever," there may be no need to journey at all. Just sitting silently, doing nothing, spring comes and the grass grows by itself. It may happen like that!

(To an Indian sannyasin) Remember a few things ... the most important is meditation -- that is the very soul of my sannyas. So find time, space, and make it a point to meditate. In the beginning it is difficult, but remain patient; all that is needed is patience. And remain hopeful, optimistic, because it is only a question of time.

It is as if you sow seeds; you can't expect the sprouts the next day. They will take their time, they will come only in their own time. They don't follow your expectations, they follow a certain law of their own. They have their intrinsic law, their own nature. They will wait for the right season, maybe for the clouds to come, for the rain, maybe for the Spring.

Every man has the seeds of meditation but one cannot predict when they will start growing. One has to be patient and one has to go on meditating without any concern as to whether one is succeeding or not. And one day, suddenly, out of nowhere it starts happening. It always happens like a miracle. It does not grow gradually, it is always a sudden phenomenon. It is like water: you heat it, you go on heating it; only at a certain degree does it evaporate. At ninety-nine degrees it is still water -- hot water but still water. At one hundred degrees suddenly it is no longer water. And that's how meditation functions.

So don't lose heart. That is one of the basic reasons why people start meditation and don't succeed. Many START but after just a few days they think 'We are not succeeding.' It is not a

question of succeeding or failing. Just go on doing it irrespective of what is happening -- just as every day you take a bath, you go to sleep. You don't bother about whether you are succeeding or not, whether you are gaining something or not. A bath is good in itself, it has intrinsic value.

Soon meditation becomes like an inner bath. You feel better, you feel more centered, more rooted, more grounded. And if one can keep waiting, one day suddenly it comes like an explosion, like lightning, and from that moment you are no more the same. From that moment you do not need to do meditation; then you are in meditation whatsoever you are doing. Then breathing is meditation, walking is meditation, sitting is meditation, eating is meditation. Then meditation simply becomes your very nature. So that is the most important thing to remember: meditate.

And the second thing is: spread what is happening here, because India is missing it. India is lagging behind. I feel sorry that India is behaving in a very stupid way. It seems that only when the whole world is turned on will Indians start ... but by that time it will be too late.

So help Indians to understand what is happening here. Right now all they are doing is trying to misunderstand as much as they can, doing hard work to misunderstand; they are putting great energy into it.

People like you can be of immense help. So for yourself, meditation; and for others, help them to understand. I would like many many Indians to enter on the path.

Love is the only golden experience of life. Everything else is valueless. Value comes out of love. The more you love, the more value your life has. The more you love, the more the world starts changing into a golden experience. When your love is absolute the world is solid gold. Then all that is ordinary disappears into an extraordinary beauty, indefinable, unexplainable.

Sannyas is a process of alchemy. The effort is to change whatsoever is gross in you into the subtle, whatsoever is matter in you into consciousness, to change dust into divinity. It is a transformation of the baser metals into gold. It is not a formality. I am not teaching a formal religion, it is absolutely informal. I mean business! You have to go through a great change.

There are ups and downs, agonies and ecstasies on the way; you have to pass through both. And you have to remain alert not to be attached to anything, because if you become attached to anything on the way you will never reach the goal. Remain detached and go on moving.

One day, one arrives. And the strangest thing is that one arrives where in the first place one never left. One arrives at one's own nature. The goal is the source and the source is the goal. That's how life becomes a complete circle, a fulfillment, a contentment.

There is nothing more valuable than meditation because it leads you to your inner treasure, it leads you to the inner kingdom of god. It transforms you totally, from the world of beggars to the world of kings.

Here ordinarily even kings are beggars. Anyone who has not tasted meditation is bound to be a beggar. He may be a rich beggar, that is possible. He may have much money and power and prestige, but deep down he is as poor as anybody else, maybe more so. But the meditator is really rich. He may not have anything or he may have the whole world, that makes no difference. His inner world has been revealed to him.

The moment you know your inner beauty all desires disappear, because then there is nothing worth desiring. You already have it, you already have more than you can ever

imagine.

Worshippers are many, the world is full of them. Churches, mosques, temples, synagogues, are all full of worshippers, but I don't call them worshippers. Their worship is only ritual. They are simply following a tradition. They are worshipping symbols. Their heart is not full of love, they don't really have a thirst for god; they are simply performing a social duty. Maybe they have become addicted to it, if they don't do it they feel something is missing.

It is like smoking or drinking: one becomes addicted. The ritual becomes part of your mechanical life. If you don't do it, it haunts you for the whole day. So people do their prayers, they worship, they go to the temples, but it is all superficial. It does not transform them. If the worship is real it is bound to create a new being out of you. It is going to be a rebirth.

I am not interested in rituals. I don't teach that you should do a particular prayer, that parrotlike you should repeat certain formulas in Arabic, in Hebrew, in Sanskrit -- in some dead language, long-forgotten. I don't teach any gibberish. I simply teach you to love the beauty of existence that surrounds you. That is true worship because god is manifest; in thousands of ways he is available. In the trees, in the flowers, in the birds, in the mountains, in the sun, in the moon, in people, in animals, feel him. Rather than believing, feel the beauty of existence, feel the splendour of the universe, the splendour of a night full of stars.

If that cannot create awe in you then nothing can create awe in you. No Bible, no Koran, no Geeta is going to help. If a beautiful sunset cannot help you to bow down on your knees, then no temple, no church, is going to help you. If a distant call of a cuckoo has no magic for you then you are dead, then worship cannot happen to you. Worship is possible only when the heart is throbbing with life.

Love life, and out of that love, slowly slowly you will find a gratitude arising -- that gratitude is worship -- a prayer arising, a silent prayer, a prayer of thankfulness for all that some unknown force has done for you and is constantly doing for you.

Fingers Pointing to the Moon

Chapter #7

Chapter title: Dissolving

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THE WHOLE SPRING BURSTS FORTH WITHIN YOU

Your path is to efface yourself totally, to annihilate yourself totally, to become more and more a nobody, a nonentity.

Sannyas is fulfilled only when you are a nothingness, because in that nothingness all becomes possible. In that nothingness the whole descends in you. Only nothingness can manage to have the whole inside it, only nothingness is enough to contain the whole. That's the meaning of surrender: being nobody.

It is hard in the beginning because we have lived according to the dictates of the ego for so long that it has become absolutely mechanical; we go on living robot-like to its dictates. Only in the beginning it is hard. Once you start getting out of the ego a little, once a few glimpses start happening to you then there is no problem; then you know the beauty and the benediction of being nobody. With just a little taste things become very simple and easy, then life becomes very smooth. Then to become ordinary is so blissful. Then not to be becomes such a rejoicing, and it brings so many flowers. The whole spring bursts forth within you.

But we have to create that space. It is difficult in the beginning but not impossible. And the function of the master is to help you when it is difficult and hard-going. Once it becomes smooth then there is no problem, no help is needed.

SANNYAS MEANS KNOWING THE TRUTH BEFORE DEATH KNOCKS AT YOUR DOOR

- (to Surrenda) What is the meaning of your name?
- For me, it's surrender.
- Surrender? (a pause) Mm mm! Is it Dutch?
- No. A little girl told me her name -- it was Surrenda. It was the most beautiful name I ever heard, so I gave it to myself.
- Mm mm. That's good. So let it be Surrenda, Ma Surrenda. It does not mean surrender, but

let it mean surrender! (laughter)

You must have heard wrongly. Surendra is the right word. Surendra means the goddess of goddesses. But there is no need to be worried about it. All meanings are arbitrary, so I accept your meaning. Let it be surrender.

And surrender is certainly beautiful. There is nothing more beautiful than surrender, because it is only in surrender that you will know who you are. Otherwise people go on believing in their egos. Surrender means surrendering the ego, the false self, the pseudo self. And when the pseudo is surrendered the real surfaces, then the real is discovered. To discover the real, the surrender is the essential process, the surrender of all that is false. And the ego is the most false thing in existence.

It is the most illusory thing. It exists only in our heads and nowhere else. It is not even a shadow, because a shadow needs some substance, a shadow has to be a shadow of something. The ego is not even a shadow. It is just a false idea propounded by the society. But one can believe in it. And if you believe in it, it becomes a reality -- for you, at least. You can destroy your whole life serving something which does not exist at all. And one comes to know it only when death knocks on the door. But then it is too late.

Sannyas means knowing the truth before death knocks on your door so that something can be done, so that you can be prepared, you can be ready for the eternal journey.

THE MOMENT EGO IS DROPPED ALL FIGHT DISAPPEARS

Sannyas means going beyond all fight. It is relaxation. It is a state of rest and peace. It cannot be achieved through fight, it can be achieved only by renouncing fight. It is a let-go.

There are two kinds of fighters in the world: a few fight with others, a few fight with themselves. Those who fight with others are thought to be warriors, the soldiers, the great generals. And those who fight with themselves are thought to be saints, mahatmas, ascetics.

I am creating a new kind of religious quality here, that of non-fighting. There is no need to push the river, relax with the whole, let it possess you. The moment you drop your ego all fight disappears. Fight only feeds the ego. It never leads you anywhere, it simply goes on puffing up your ego. There are worldly egos and there are other-worldly egos, but they are all egos.

My sannyasin has to be utterly egoless. Only then will he be able to feel the tremendous harmony of existence. One certainly becomes victorious, not through fight but surrender.

Meditate over this paradox because this paradox contains the most secret key.

EACH SANNYASIN HAS TO BECOME A BLESSING TO HIMSELF AND A BLESSING TO THE WHOLE EXISTENCE

Life can be either a rotten, stinking phenomenon or it can be an explosion of great fragrance. It is the same energy. What we do with our energy all depends on us. If we allow our energy to remain confined in the mind, moving in a vicious circle, going around in circles, then sooner or later we start feeling rotten, bored, meaningless. All poetry disappears, all beauty disappears, all joy disappears. One simply starts wondering why life exists at all, what the purpose of it all is. There is no answer, and the question becomes heavier every day. It becomes like a rock on your chest.

It is killing millions of people. Of course they go on living somehow, dragging, waiting for death to deliver them from life, hoping that death will come and they will finally be delivered. This is not because of life, it is because of us.

We could have lived in a totally different way, we could have changed the whole gestalt.

We could have lived without the mind, we could have lived through meditation, through no-mind. And then great fragrance, great meaning, great joy happens on its own accord, because when you are a no-mind you are in deep harmony with existence. The conflict disappears. When you are a no-mind you are no more, hence there is nobody to fight. A deep let-go comes naturally -- and in that let-go is the meeting. Call it the meeting of man and god or part and whole, but the dewdrop disappears in the dewdrop. Then life is vast, has tremendous significance. Then life is a constant joy, a continuum of celebration.

And that's my message: each sannyasin has to become a celebration, a fragrance, a song, a beauty, a grace, a blessing to himself and also a blessing to the whole existence.

SEE THE POINT AND DROP IT!

One has to go beyond all countries and lands and races and churches and religions. We have to lose all our boundaries, only then can we know the unbounded. People are Christians and Hindus and Jews and Mohammedans and Indians and Germans and British. These people cannot know god, they are too attached to small boundaries. A sannyasin declares that 'I belong to no boundaries,' that 'I belong to the unbounded,' that 'The whole earth is mine, and not only this earth but all the earths that exist elsewhere too,' that 'This whole universe is mine,' that 'I am universal,' that 'I am not ready to be confined in any prison, howsoever beautiful it is, howsoever easy and comfortable it is. I am going to be in the infinite whatsoever the cost.'

One has to leave all small territories, small identities. One should not be British and should not be French and should not be Indian. To be a man is enough.

In fact when you move a little higher even that idea drops. One is neither man nor woman, one is simply consciousness. And that is the ultimate goal. When all identities have disappeared, when you don't have any boundaries, then you are free, liberated, then you are as vast as the universe itself. And only in that vastness is contentment, because in that vastness is freedom. Otherwise we are imprisoned. We have made so many prisons, that we are feeling suffocated. But still we go on clinging to the walls which are creating the suffocation because we have been told that those are not walls, we have been told they are very precious; one should be proud of being British or Japanese or Chinese, Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan. One should be proud!

We have been told to be proud of prisons. That nonsense has to be dropped -- and not slowly. See the point and drop it. Let the seeing itself be the dropping. That's what I call sannyas. It is a sudden understanding. A sudden seeing which immediately becomes your life.

GO BEYOND PARROTLIKE TENDENCIES

(to Sittich) You have a very beautiful name and yet a very dangerous one too. So I have to add something to it. This will be your name: Sw Veet Sittich. Veet means going beyond; Sittich means a parrot. I am not against parrots (laughter) ... parrots are beautiful people, but people should not be parrots! Because if people are parrots they become scholars, they become pundits, they become priests.

Parrots are perfectly good. They are neither scholars nor priests, nor pundits, they are simply people and good people. And they don't believe what they repeat.

The danger with man is that if he repeats something constantly he starts believing in it, he becomes auto-hypnotized by it. No parrot ever believes what he repeats. He knows it is a

repetition, he knows it is just to satisfy the foolish owner. So he goes on doing all kinds of things, whatsoever is expected. He is simply obliging.

A parrot is neither a Christian nor a Hindu nor a Mohammedan, but if you teach him Christianity he will repeat Christianity, if you teach him Hindu mantras he will repeat Hindu mantras. He is not serious about it. But man becomes very serious. If you go on repeating Christian formulas you will become a Christian. You will forget that the only way to be a Christian is to be a Christ, there is no other way. The only way to be a Buddhist is to be a Buddha, there is no other way. You cannot imitate, you cannot go on repeating, parrotlike. You can't just be a mechanical reproduction, you have to experience on your own.

So love parrots but don't be a parrot. Go beyond parrotlike tendencies. They are very deeply rooted in humanity. The whole humanity functions in a parrotlike way; we all function as conditioned beings. Somebody is conditioned as a Communist and somebody is conditioned as a Catholic. One person is conditioned by the Vatican, another is conditioned by the Kremlin -- but it is the same, it makes no difference.

A sannyasin has to become unconditioned and has to remain unconditioned. I don't want to re-condition you. My whole effort here is to simply uncondition you and then leave it to you. Then you can live out of that unconditioned state of your consciousness and your life will be a benediction.

My function here is to help you unlearn, simply unlearn, to negate all that has been forced upon you whatsoever it is -- Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Communist, whatsoever it is -- to unburden you. And then I don't want to teach you anything, I want you to live in that state of unconditioned consciousness. To function out of that state is such an ecstatic experience, so beautiful, so tremendously beautiful and so divine, one cannot imagine it. To know, one has to experience it.

GOD IS SO VAST HE CANNOT BE REDUCED INTO AN IDEOLOGY

There are many gods -- Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan. There are as many gods as there are religions, sects and subjects, and there are three thousand ideologies about god in the world, so there are three thousand concepts about god. All are false, because god is so vast that you cannot reduce him to an ideology. God is so infinite that you cannot make an image of him. God is so mysterious that no word, no concept, no theory, is adequate enough to explain it.

Everything that man has done to explain god has been destructive. Rather than making the world more religious, it has made the world less religious, because all those ideas are so inadequate that they can only satisfy fools.

If you have a little intelligence then no religion can satisfy you -- just a little intelligence, not much! Then no religion can satisfy you. All religions have flaws, and such stupidities have been perpetuated.

For example, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ... now that is a very essential thing. If you are to be a Christian you have to believe in it. If you don't believe in it you are not a true Christian. So there is only one way: if you want to be a true Christian you have to say goodbye to all intelligence! You have to be simply stupid, only then can you be a good Christian. And the same is true about all religions -- such foolish ideas. But that is bound to happen.

The real mystics have remained utterly silent about god. Buddha, whenever he was asked, smiled but never answered. He would not say yes, he would not say no, he would simply smile. It would be a very knowing smile, a very inviting smile, very seductive -- but he

would smile. He would ask you to be with him, to sit in silence with him, to share in his meditations, and maybe some day you would find the answer. But he had not given the answer himself. To me he seems to be one of the most honest persons who has ever walked on the earth, because nothing can be said about god, only silence... because the true god is known only in silence.

So drop all ideas of god and become more and more silent, and one day it is bound to happen: when the silence is total he comes so silently, so invisibly, that you are in for a great surprise. You don't hear his footsteps. One moment he was not there, the next moment he is there and you are overflowing with him. And you are no more the same person, and neither is the world the same.

FROM MIND TO NO-MIND

The god of meditation is the only true god. All other gods are inventions -- inventions of crafty priests, inventions of greedy minds, inventions out of fear. The only true god, which is not an invention, is experienced through meditation, because meditation requires you first to drop all thoughts; thoughts about god are also included in it.

When all thoughts and all desires have been dropped, then whatsoever you have come to know is not part of your mind because we have put the mind aside from the very beginning. Now there is nobody to create anything. Now you will know that which is. Otherwise the mind always goes on projecting.

Meditation means functioning from a state of no-mind. And sannyas is the journey from mind to no-mind.

THE VERY GOING IS A TRANSFORMATION

God is not for the cowards, although cowardly people tend to be religious because they are so afraid; they think that god is a good shelter, a good investment. But god is not a shelter and not an investment either. God is risk, god is danger, god is adventure. Hence the real god is not to be found in the churches and the temples and the mosques. You can find the real god only when you drop all that is familiar and known, all that gives you the feeling of security and safety, and you go into the uncharted sea.

The very going is a transformation. The very going means trust. Leaving all securities, all safeties, is real sannyas. To live in insecurity is to really live -- others only die.

RELIGIOUSNESS IS THE GREATEST ADVENTURE

Sannyas means courage more than anything else, because it is a declaration of your individuality, a declaration of freedom, a declaration that you will not be any more part of the mob madness, the mob psychology. It is a declaration that you are becoming universal; you will not belong to any country, to any church, to any race, to any religion. You will be religious but you will not be Mohammedan, Hindu or Christian. You will love Jesus and Buddha and Mohammed because you will be religious, but you will not belong to any dogma or creed and you will not belong to any state, any nation, because all these boundaries are false, all these divisions are ugly. The earth is one, and sannyas is a declaration of the oneness of humanity.

It certainly needs courage. It also needs courage because it is getting rid of tradition, of the past, of history. It is trying to live in the present according to your own light, not being dominated by the dead, not being dominated by history. To be free of history is such a

tremendous joy. But it is a risk also, because then you are left alone, then you don't have any guidelines, any maps to follow. But that's the beauty of it too: when you don't have any guidelines your own consciousness rises to take the challenge. When you don't have the map you start exploring on your own. Then life becomes an adventure. And religiousness is the greatest adventure, the adventure for god.

ONLY IN DANGER ALL THE RUBBISH DROPS

Only the courageous ones can be initiated into the inner journey, because it is moving from the known into the unknown. Only the courageous ones have been called. Yes, sometimes a few cowards also come with the courageous ones (laughter) ... but they escape. They can't stay here -- it is dangerous.

So remember it: don't escape! (laughter) But I trust Germans, so I hope you will fulfill your name.

The only way to live life truly is to live dangerously, because only in danger all that is rubbish drops and all that is intrinsic and essential grows, because danger becomes a challenge. And it is only in great, challenging situations that your potential becomes actual. If there is no challenge your potential remains asleep.

We are providing every kind of challenge here. The fortunate ones are those who don't miss those challenges; the unfortunate ones are those who go on missing them. So accept all the challenges. Even if you are trembling within, in spite of all the trembling, accept the challenge. And the challenge will give you a new kind of being. It will give you a spine of steel, it will make you a man of steel.

And every sannyasin has to be a man of steel. I don't mean that every sannyasin has to be Joseph Stalin! -- Stalin means man of steel.

EACH MOMENT DIE TO THE PAST

Adventurousness is one of the most essential qualities for those who want to live life in its totality. And to live one's life in totality is to be religious, to live it whole is to be holy.

Life is a great adventure, but people are so afraid that they cling to the familiar, to the known, to the well-defined, to the logical. They never go beyond the boundary of the mind. If you live in the mind you are living in a grave. If you go beyond the mind you are really born, you have come out of the grave.

One can live each moment with such intensity, with such adventure, that each moment becomes a great gift of god because it brings so much joy, so much ecstasy. But one has to be ready to go on dropping the past. One should not allow the past to be accumulated. That becomes a prison wall around you.

Each moment die to the past and remain fresh, and your life will be a great adventure. And it is only for the adventurous people to know what truth is. The non-adventurous live in comfortable lies.

Unless you are a rebel you will not attain to fragrance. It is only through rebelling against all the rotten traditions that one becomes fragrant. Tradition stinks, and if you remain part of it you continually stink.

The past is dead, it is a corpse, and to live clinging to the past is disgusting. But that's what millions of people are doing. We have to get rid of the past. You are, only when you are free of the past; for the first time you are, for the first time you are an authentic individual. And that authenticity brings fragrance. Your heart opens up into a beautiful flower, you

become a lotus.

THE MIND HAS TO CEASE FOR THE TRUTH TO BE

Knowledge that is borrowed from others is untrue, knowledge that is gathered from scriptures is untrue. It may have come from a very original source, from a Jesus, from a A Lao Tzu, from a Zarathustra -- it does not matter, because truth is untransferable. There is no way to express it. So whatsoever information you gather from scriptures, and from others is all rubbish. One has to unlearn it. Slowly slowly one has to unburden oneself.

When your being is totally unburdened, when your slate is completely clean, when there is no writing on you, then suddenly an invisible writing starts appearing. Your own being becomes your scripture. Then for the first time you come across the Bible, the book of the books, then for the first time you read the Vedas, never before that. This can happen only through meditation; not by studies, not by logical, intellectual understanding, but by becoming more and more thoughtless, alert, silent. You can only be on the receiving end inside.

But if you are full of knowledge it is difficult: your knowledge will hinder it. It won't allow it to happen. Your mind will go on continuously fabricating, manufacturing. The mind has to cease, completely cease for the truth to be. One has to become again ignorant, innocent, childlike. Then something immensely beautiful starts growing in you. Call it wisdom, call it true knowledge, call it realization or whatsoever you will, but remember one thing: true knowledge has to happen within you; it is always yours, it is never borrowed, it cannot be learned from others.

You have to dig deep within yourself -- it is already there.

THE MOMENT WE ARE IN STEP WITH LIFE, LIFE IS GOD

Life is something tremendously beautiful but we are unaware of it, we are blind to it. It is glory, but we are not sensitive enough to feel it.

Life is perfect but our sensitivity is almost nil; hence the whole problem is how to create more sensitivity, how to become more alive, how to be more open, vulnerable, so that we can feel the life that surrounds us. The moment we are in step with life, life is god, and there is no other god.

And life knows no death, no birth. It is eternal, and we are part of that eternity. But we have gathered much rust around our mirrorlike being so that it reflects nothing. Our mind is like a layer of dust on our consciousness; hence nothing is reflected and we cannot see that which is. We only see the dust; we only see our thoughts, our desires, our memories, our dreams -- and they are not the reality. Unless all this dust is cleaned away we will not be able to reflect that which is.

The whole process of sannyas is that of cleansing, that of dropping all rust, all dust. As one becomes more and more silent, peaceful, alert, sensitive, life becomes more glorious, more beautiful, more blissful. It is a great gift. But we are wasting time and opportunity, we are not approaching that which has been given to us. We don't deserve it.

THE HEART LEADS YOU SLOWLY SLOWLY TOWARDS THE OTHER SHORE

The heart is always pure; there is no way to make it impure.
And the head is always impure; there is no way to make it pure.

And these are the alternative ways to live: one either can live in the head or one can live

in the heart. If you live in the head you may be successful in life, you may become very rich, powerful socially, politically, you may become very respectable, world-famous. But deep down you will be all tears and nothing else because you will see the futility of all that you have attained; you have wasted such a precious life for rubbish. Death takes everything away.

This is the criterion: anything that can be taken away by death is not worth bothering about much. Anything that cannot be taken away by death -- that is something to create, to discover. One can sacrifice everything for it, it is worth sacrificing for.

The heart cannot give you any outward success but it can give you a deep inner peace, a great joy, a blissfulness, a blessedness, a benediction, and it can slowly slowly lead you towards the other shore, towards god.

When you are absolutely pure the ego disappears. You are, and yet you are not. In one sense you are not, not as you have always been; in another sense you are and for the first time you are. But you are no more an ego, confined in the body-mind complex.

You are infinite.

You are as vast as god.

You are one with god. Only the door of the heart can become the door of god's temple. Move from the head to the heart.

WHEN YOU ARE NOT GOD IS

It is only in the experience of blissfulness that one feels one is no longer human, one is divine. The moment your heart is dancing with bliss you are like god.

In misery you are far away from god. Nothing keeps people from god as much as misery does, because misery closes you, misery makes you more and more self-centered, self-conscious. And to be self-conscious is not to be conscious, those two things are totally different. When one is conscious there is no self; when one is self-conscious there is no consciousness. When one is self-centered one cannot look towards the vast existence that surrounds one. One lives an encapsulated life, without windows and without doors; one is hiding in a black hole. How can one connect, commune with god?

It is only when you are singing and dancing, when there is laughter and joy and celebration, that from your black hole you come out under the sky full of stars. Only in moments of bliss you do forget that you are. And those are the most important moments, when you forget that you are, because when you are not, god is.

A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO REACH THE TARGET

We have to create a space within ourselves, a pure space which contains nothing. We are too full of rubbish. All this rubbish has to be removed, thrown out. We have to empty ourselves totally. Once you are utterly empty you are in for a great surprise. The moment the emptiness is perfect, the gestalt changes; it is no more emptiness. You are full of something which you had never known, never tasted, before. You are full of god.

So on the one hand you become empty of your mind, your ego, memories thoughts, desires, and on the other hand you become full of god. And to be full of god is to be full of bliss, to be full of god is to be full of life. To be full of god is to be full of eternity.

That's the ultimate goal that everybody is seeking, knowingly or unknowingly. Sannyas is a conscious effort to reach the target. It is within your reach -- just a little effort is needed.

WE CAN RECEIVE GOD'S GIFT ONLY WHEN UTTERLY EMPTY

All that is great is always a gift of god. It is never our achievement, in fact it happens only when we are utterly absent. Love happens when you are absent, truth happens when you are absent, bliss happens when you are absent. When you are too full of yourself nothing happens. Then gifts go on coming but you are not ready to receive them. The ego is very non-receptive. We can receive god's gifts only when we are utterly empty; the emptier you are the better.

The whole process of sannyas is nothing but emptying you of yourself. Then gifts go on coming. So much happens, and without any effort, that it seems unbelievable, incredible. One becomes aware for the first time how generous existence is. God is not miserly. He gives, and he gives so much. He is willing to give everything, but we are not ready to receive. We don't have any space to receive his gifts.

So start emptying yourself and you will be moving on the right way.

CONSECRATED TO THE MIRACULOUS

There is a flowering inside. Roses bloom inside, and roses which are imperishable, roses which are not gross, which are made of grace. Gravitation has no effect on them. They come from the beyond, they descend on you, they shower on you. But one has to be receptive; one has to become an absolute nonentity, a nobody, a nothingness. Only in that nothingness do those roses bloom. One becomes a garden, one becomes a paradise. The word 'paradise' means a walled garden.

It is within our capacity. If we miss it then we are responsible, nobody else. Missing it simply means that we kept ourselves engaged in futile things, we wasted our energies in trivia.

A sannyasin has to be very discriminating, very alert, so that no energy is wasted. And you will be surprised: almost ninety per cent of our energy is a sheer wastage; if you watch your life you will be able to see that there is much which is non-essential, which can be dropped. You go on doing it out of habit; otherwise there is no reason for it.

The essential is very small. And when you do only the essential and the non-essential is dropped you accumulate great energy, you become a reservoir of energy. Out of that energy roses bloom.

So two things have to be remembered: one has to become a nobody, utterly empty of the ego, and then one has to accumulate one's energy so that one's emptiness becomes a lake of energy. Then the impossible becomes possible. Then all beauty is yours, and all grace and all truth and all freedom.

Consecrated to god is exactly the definition of sannyas. One starts living not for the ego but for the whole, one starts living as a vehicle of god, one becomes just like a hollow bamboo so that god can transform one into a flute. One empties oneself of oneself.

That's all that needs to be done: one has to empty oneself of oneself. And when one is empty something mysterious starts happening, unexplainable. Something from the beyond starts descending in you, some unknown force starts singing through you, dancing through you.

That unknown force is god. God is not a person; it is only a name for all that is mysterious, for all that is beyond comprehension, for all that intellect is incapable of understanding. And to be consecrated to the miraculous, to the mysterious, is the only way to live a beautiful, graceful life. Otherwise people are only dragging themselves. Their life is not a dance, it cannot be.

Unless god dances in you there is no possibility of any dance. Unless god rejoices in you

there is no possibility of rejoicing.

Remove yourself so that you don't come in between you and god. Put the ego, the very idea of I, aside and be utterly empty, receptive. And the moment your emptiness is total, the whole starts showering millions of joys, millions of flowers upon you. The splendor is infinite.

On our path nothing else is to be done, only one thing -- that we should be nothings, nobodies, nonentities.

THE SANNYASIN HAS TO DROP THE COIN ITSELF SO THAT BOTH SIDES ARE DROPPED

There are two things a sannyasin has to go beyond; one is name, the other is fame. They are two sides of the same coin; the name of the coin is the ego. It hankers for name and fame. And the more you feed it, the more hungry it is. Its thirst is unquenchable. It is like throwing butter on the fire to put it out: your butter is not going to put the fire out, it will help it; it will become fuel for it, food for it.

But millions of people live for name and fame. And hiding behind these two is the ego which goes on asking for more and more.

A sannyasin has to drop both. He has to drop the coin itself so both sides of it are dropped. A sannyasin has to live anonymously. He is nobody, he is just a pure nothingness. And in that nothingness miracles happen; even the impossible becomes possible. In that nothingness you become the space which is needed for god to descend in you.

The moment you have achieved this inner nothingness you are ready to be the host to the ultimate guest.

SANNYAS IS FULFILLED WHEN EGO DISAPPEARS

Paula has two meanings; one comes from Latin, the other comes from the Greek. The Latin meaning is 'small', and the Greek meaning is 'rest'. Both are beautiful.

One has to be so small that slowly slowly one disappears, one is no more, one becomes a pure nothingness, a nobody. Sannyas is fulfilled when the ego disappears. The ego is always trying to be big. It is always going on trips, its whole effort is to be big somehow. If it cannot be big, at least it can pretend to be big, at least it can appear to be big.

It is like a balloon which wants to go on becoming bigger and bigger and bigger, and there is nothing in it, just hot air. A small pinprick is enough to finish it: all its greatness disappears in a single moment. A single moment of understanding is enough to kill the whole ego. All its games and trips disappear like dreams, as if they have never been there; they don't leave any trace behind.

And the other meaning, rest, is also tremendously significant. Whenever the ego dies, there is rest. In nothingness rest grows. Rest means to be at ease with oneself and to be at ease with the universe. Rest means to be in a state of total relaxation, with no tension, no strain, no anxiety, no anguish.

Your name defines the whole of sannyas. Begin by becoming smaller and smaller and smaller so that one day nothing is left, only nothing is left. Then the second thing starts growing of its own accord: a great harmony is felt. Suddenly you are in tune with the whole. That is rest. All restlessness disappears with the ego, it dies with the ego -- it is a by-product of the ego.

DROP THE EGO AND ITS MISERIES - IT IS A PARASITE

Bliss is beauty; misery is ugliness. It not only cripples your body, it cripples your very soul. It paralyzes, it poisons, it is very destructive. But people cling to misery because it gives one thing which bliss can never give. That thing is the ego.

Ego thrives on misery. Misery is food for the ego, nourishment. In bliss ego dies, disappears, melts, is no more found. And to be without ego is beauty. To have no ego, just to be a nobody is the ultimate beauty. Think of it, contemplate on it -- just to be a nobody. And as the ego goes all the fuss that it creates disappears, and all that was unnecessary but which appeared very necessary because of the ego is no more needed. Life becomes the essential, not the accidental; life becomes intrinsic; it consists of only that which is absolutely necessary.

That's what I call sannyas. It is not renunciation of the world, it is renunciation of misery. It is rejoicing. It means becoming more and more blissful, more and more dance-full, more and more song-full. Sannyas means making your life a celebration. For that, space is needed.

If you want to dance you will have to remove the furniture. And our beings are so full of furniture, rotten furniture of no use at all, but we just go on keeping it in case we need it sometimes. It leaves no space to dance. In fact it leaves no space for us to enter; our inner being becomes so full of rubbish that we have to live outside. We become so full of ego that we can't enter in. We are even debarred from our own being. Sannyas means seeing clearly that this is being stupid.

In my vision the problem is not of making sinners saints, the problem is of making stupid people a little more intelligent. So it is not a question of sinners versus saints, it is a question of stupidity versus intelligence. That's a great change that I want to bring into the world of religion.

Be more intelligent and look into things and whatsoever seems to be creating misery, drop it -- and don't drop it slowly. The moment you see that it is creating misery, in a single blow cut it off. Even if it hurts -- it may hurt -- so what? It hurts because it has been there for so long. It has become a part of you and now you are cutting it off: it hurts. It is like taking pus out of a wound, it hurts. But that's the only way for the wound to heal: the pus has to be taken out. The ego is the pus and the ego has made us wounds. Rather than being blissful beings, rather than being flowers, it has reduced us to wounds, to crippled, ill people, pathological people.

Drop the ego and drop the miseries on which it lives -- it is a parasite. And start moving more and more into bliss. In the beginning you will feel it is a little difficult. It is just as when one starts dancing; in the beginning it is a little awkward. One needs to learn the art, and then grace comes. Then you can dance as if you don't have any body.

And in fact you don't have any body, any mind. You are neither the body nor the mind but a pure consciousness. That is experienced only when you become a dance, a celebration.

ONLY THAT WHICH IS OF THE SPIRIT IS ABIDING

Beauty is of the outer and grace is of the inner; hence the grace is the real beauty. What we call beauty is superficial. And unless a man is full of grace his beauty is only skin-deep, or maybe not even that. Scratch him a little and his ugliness comes out. He is just painted on the outside, but inside he is boiling with all kinds of scorpions and snakes and monkeys and dogs and cats. Inside he is still in the jungle. There is no peace, no silence, no joy, no grace.

Grace means to feel in harmony with existence, to be in tune with existence. When you feel the tuning ego disappears. Ego is ugly. When there is no ego and you are one with the whole there is grace, and so much that it starts overflowing you.

If there is inner grace, even an ugly body looks beautiful. And if there is no grace inside, even a beautiful body does not look beautiful.

Grace is of the spirit, and only that which is of the spirit is abiding. Only that which is of the spirit is real treasure. It cannot be taken away, it cannot be destroyed. Fire cannot burn it; even death cannot destroy it.

A sannyasin has to be full of grace. I am not against physical beauty; it is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It is beautiful to have a beautiful form but it is nothing compared to the inner beauty, to having a beautiful being. And one can have both, there is no conflict. In fact it is easier to have both together than to have one. Whenever the inner happens, the outer follows, but not vice versa: the outer may be there, the inner is not necessarily going to follow. The inner has to be created through great effort, through meditation, through awareness, through love.

BLESSED ARE THE IGNORANT

Jesus says: Unless you are like small children you will not enter into my kingdom of god. That's what is meant by innocence. Unlearn the ways of the world, unlearn cleverness, cunningness, diplomacy, politics. Unlearn so that you can be clean, empty, silent, again, so that you can function from a state of not-knowing. That is the greatest thing in life: to function from a state of not-knowing. Then one is living moment to moment; one is not living through the past, through memories, through knowledge. One is encountering reality like a mirror -- reflecting it and acting out of that reflection.

That is the way of sannyas. It means responsibility, not in the moralistic sense but in the sense that one becomes more and more responsive. One does not react, one responds.

Reaction is via the past, through the memory. The mind is there and you are never functioning directly, you are always using mind as a mediator. When the mind is put aside and you function directly, immediately, and there is no mediator, that is response. And to be responsible is to be religious. But only an innocent person can be responsible, only children can be responsible.

Beware of accumulating knowledge. And whenever you see that something has become accumulated, immediately drop it. It is poison -- don't carry it. Keep yourself clean and empty. Keep yourself ignorant and function out of that ignorance. And you will be surprised, because "Blessed are the ignorant for theirs is the kingdom of god."

THE EXPERIENCE OF WONDER AND AWE

Wisdom to me is equivalent to innocence. Not equivalent to knowledge. Wisdom is anti-knowledge; knowledge is anti-innocence. The knowledgeable person becomes less and less innocent. His ego becomes more puffed up. He starts thinking that 'I know' -- and that is the subtlest ego. The innocent person knows that he knows not. And that is the beginning of wisdom: you again become a child.

Drop knowledge, and wisdom is yours. But that price has to be paid; one can't have both. It is better to be a fool and wise than to be very clever and knowledgeable.

Saint Francis used to call himself the fool of god. He is right. By 'fool' he means wise, unknowledgeable.

Sannyas begins in unlearning and ends in total nothingness. When you know nothing you are nothing. When you know nothing the ego evaporates. When you know nothing then the whole existence is full of wonder and awe. The experience of wonder and awe is the

fundamental religious experience. That is truly the encounter with god.

TO GROW BEYOND LUST INTO LOVE

To love needs great strength, not only physical but spiritual too. Weaklings cannot love. They can lust but they cannot love. Love means sacrifice and the first requirement of love is the dropping of the ego. And that is the most difficult thing in life: to become a nobody, to be just a nothingness.

Unless one is ready to be a nobody, a nothingness, love cannot grow. Love needs space, and if ego is filling you, if you are too full of yourself, there is no space for love to grow. We have to uproot the ego totally; hence strength is needed.

But once you put all your energies in a concentrated way it becomes possible. It is within our capacity to grow beyond lust into love.

Lust is something biological; love is spiritual. Lust means using the other as a means; love means that the other has to be respected as an end unto himself, herself. Lust exploits; love gives and gives unconditionally, it gives without any idea of return. But the beauty and the miracle is that the more you give, the more you get. The more you give without any motivation, the more you become full of love.

Suddenly one becomes aware of an inexhaustible source within oneself. You can go on sharing, you can give your love to the whole universe, still you will not be empty. Just be empty of the ego and you will never be empty of love. You can go on giving as much as you want, you can go on overflowing. That's why Jesus says god is love. He makes god and love synonymous. It is true: if you have known love you have known god. If you have not known love then all that you think about god is just nonsense, it has no meaning, no significance. You are simply using words with no content in them.

But if you love, then for the first time 'god' becomes a meaningful word of tremendous import, pregnant with the ultimate significance of life.

THROUGH FIRE THE GOLD BECOMES PURE

It is love that makes one noble -- not birth, but love. Nobody is born noble -- the whole idea of aristocracy is sheer nonsense -- but one can become noble. One has to be very alert, sensitive, creative, only then can one be noble.

It is easy to paint a picture, to create a painting, it is easy to sculpt a statue. The hardest thing to create is your own self, your own being. Even to sculpt out of granite is not that difficult. The greatest problem arises when you start cutting chunks of your being which had been there for many many lives. You have believed in them as if they are part of you; they have almost become your second nature.

One's real being is lost in many unreal things; for example, the ego is one of the greatest problems. It is unreal, but it is covering our reality. It has to be dropped -- and it is the hardest task, very painful, because we have always thought 'This is what I am'. It feels like death.

We are identified with the ego, and with the ego there are many things: anger and hatred and jealousy and possessiveness and greed -- the whole train. The ego functions like an engine and there are many many compartments following it. Once the ego dies the whole train stops.

The ego is the energy of all that is nonsense in us, of all that is stupid in us, of all that stinks in us. And all this has to be cut out.

It is not like dropping your clothes, it is like peeling your skin, it is painful. Hence very few people grow, because very few people are ready to go through pain. But pain is the only way to be born. One has to accept the challenge. It is through the fire that the gold becomes pure and it is through pain that one becomes integrated.

And only when all that is wrong in us has been dropped is nobility born. One really becomes a noble soul. Then one is an aristocrat -- not by birth but through love.

NO VIRTUE IS GREATER THAN THE VIRTUE OF BEING COURAGEOUS

Man can enter into the infinite only if he has courage. Nothing else is more important. No virtue is greater than the virtue of being courageous. If one is not courageous one may be very virtuous, very religious, one may perform all the rituals but one will remain unbridged with god, because all that one will be doing is out of fear. It will not be an exploration, an enquiry into the unknown, it will simply be an effort to make one's life safe and secure. It will be out of cowardliness -- and god is not for cowards. Although religion and the so-called religious people are rooted in fear -- hence they are called god-fearing people -- that is not the true definition of a religious man.

A truly religious man is not god-fearing but god-loving -- and fear and love are poles apart. When there is fear love is impossible. If you love somebody how can you be afraid? Fear exists only when love is absent. Love dispels all fear.

Hence I say that courage is the greatest virtue because it makes you capable of loving the unknown, it helps you to go into the enquiry of the uncharted, without any maps. That very gesture on your part creates integrity. It is a great challenge to accept. To accept it means to be reborn. It is a death, a death of the old pattern, the old person, and the birth of a new way of life.

That's what sannyas is all about: it is rooted in courage. And I teach love for god, love for truth, not fear of god. That is an ugly thing.

ECSTASY -- THE LAST BUS STOP

Love is the only home. Without love a man is homeless. Without love a man is simply driftwood, with no direction, with no sense of meaning in life, with no shelter anywhere. Without love a man remains accidental. He has no intrinsic value. That's why millions of people continuously feel life is utterly empty. Not that life is empty, life is overflowing with joy, but we are not bridged with life. Our hearts are not dancing in tune with existence.

To dance in tune with existence is what I call love. If you are in tune with one person, that is love in a very small way. If you are in tune with many people, that is a little bigger; it becomes friendship. If you are in love with the whole existence, that becomes immensely vast; it is prayer. But the basic note is the same: to be in tune with the other.

And remember, the goal is to be in tune with the whole. So be so much in tune that you disappear; only the harmony remains, only the symphony remains. That symphony is ecstasy. Not ecstasy in the Greek sense...

(turning to his right) What do you mean by 'ecstasy', Mukta? I have heard they say 'bus stop'...?

-- I don't know (she replies in laughter)... I've forgotten!

-- Somebody has informed me that in Greece a bus stop is called 'ecstasis'. (laughter) And in a sense it is a bus stop (more laughter) ... because there is nowhere to go. It is the terminus, the last bus stop!

LIFE IS A MYSTERY TO BE LIVED, NOT A PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

(to Ulrich) This is your new name: Swami Kavyo. Kavyo means poetry. I hope you are not Italian?

-- No.

-- That's very good... because I have heard that in Italian 'kavyo' means guinea pig. (much laughter) Is it true, Lalita? (the translator sitting in the front row.)

-- Yes!

-- That's good. So there is no problem about it. Life should be looked at not as prose but as poetry. That's the religious approach, the approach of the mystic. He looks, not with questions in his eyes, he looks with wonder, he looks with awe. He does not think about existence, he *feels* it. He opens his heart, rather than using his head he throws the doors and windows of his heart open, he allows the sun and the wind and the rain to come in. That's what I mean by poetry.

The mystic is a poet in the ultimate sense. He may not write poetry, that is irrelevant, but he lives in poetry, he is poetry. Where else can you find more poetry than in a Jesus or a Buddha or a A Lao Tzu. Although none of them has written poetry, they lived poetry.

My sannyasins have to become living poetry. Forget all about your head. Become headless and heart-full. There are no problems in life; all problems are fabrications of the mind. Life is a mystery to be lived, not a problem to be solved.

Live it, enjoy it, sing with it, dance with it, sway with it! Don't try to be philosophical, be poetic, and all joy will be yours. And you will be able to attain the ultimate treasure, the kingdom of god. It is available only to the poets.

MEDITATION IS THE MOTHER OF ALL INTELLIGENCE

Meditation is the greatest courage in life because it is going into your aloneness, where nobody can accompany you, where you have to go alone. Not only can nobody accompany you there, even your body will not be there, even your mind will not be there. Your whole identity, your ego, will be absent. All these things will have to be left behind, only then can you go in.

Going in is going through a great identity crisis. That's why very few people try it. It is going through a death. But those who are courageous enough to go through that death fearlessly, joyously, are reborn, are resurrected. They attain to a totally new kind of life. They go beyond time, they become part of eternity. They are no more small, tiny, encaged, imprisoned. They are vast, as vast as god. And only by being vast do you know what god is.

When you can feel stars moving within you, then only do you know your reality. And it is tremendously beautiful. It is so perfect that nobody can imagine anything more perfect than this. No improvement is possible. Then one rejoices, one celebrates. Then life is a sheer dance, a sharing of joy. But first one has to have the courage to die in meditation and be born through meditation.

Meditation is the mother of all intelligence. It is out of meditation that brightness happens. One becomes sharp like a sword. One becomes penetrating like an arrow. One becomes transparent, because meditation means the death of the mind.

Mind is a kind of fog, and when the fog disappears your inner shining, your inner light, your inner moon, shines in its total beauty and brightness.

THE DEATH OF DARKNESS AND THE BIRTH OF LIGHT

God is light. The experience of god is the experience of an inner explosion of light; all darkness simply disappears. The mystics down the ages have been saying about it that it is as if suddenly thousands of suns have arisen in the inner world. The light is so much, so dazzling, that it is almost unbearable in the beginning. Slowly slowly one gets accustomed to it. And as you get accustomed to it, you are not more; only the light remains. When the darkness has gone you are also gone. You are part of darkness; the ego is nothing but condensed darkness.

To experience god is to experience at the same time the death of the ego. It is a death and a resurrection: the death of darkness and the birth of light.

ONLY THROUGH THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE SEED DOES THE TREE APPEAR

God is unbounded, infinite, vast. God is oceanic and we are like dewdrops. We have to learn the art of disappearing into the ocean. It needs guts, because to disappear into the ocean means to die as a dewdrop. Because unless one dies as a dewdrop one cannot be born as the ocean. When the seed dies as a seed a great tree is born. The seed disappears; only through its disappearance does the tree appear.

The ego has to die, only then are you reborn. Sannyas has to be both a death and a birth, dying to the past so that you can live in the present.

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW DAY

Sannyas is the beginning of a new day. It is a new birth. It is becoming discontinuous with your past.

Renounce the past as if it had never existed. Start from abc, fresh. Let it be a sunrise. Only then will you be able to grow. If you carry the whole burden of the past it is crippling, it is paralyzing, it is poisonous.

THE NIGHT IS OVER AND THE SUN HAS RISEN ON THE HORIZON

Jesus says, "Unless you are born again you will not enter into my kingdom of god."

There is a physical birth -- everyone has passed through it -- but it only gives you the body-mind complex. It only gives you an opportunity to be born spiritually. Unless the second birth happens one has not really lived. One was only an opportunity, just a seed, but the seed never became a sprout, never became a great tree. No spring happened for the seed, no flowering, no fragrance.

Sannyas is the process of rebirth. My whole effort here is not to give you a formal kind of religion, not to give you a church -- a dogma to cling to, but to give you a new being, a new humanity, a new consciousness.

One has to pass through two things. The first is a death, the death of the old, the death of the past, the death of the way you have lived up to now. And the second is a rebirth. Start afresh, as if you were born today. It is not only a metaphor, it is so: you are born today. Let this sink deep into your heart so that you can become discontinuous with the past. Then the night is over and the sun has risen on the horizon.