

Vessantara: We'll start with Dave who had a question about the Cathars and martyrdom.

Dave Living. You've answered part of this question before really... From the example of the destruction of the Cathars, do you think they failed to escape a Christian moral influence by courting martyrdom instead of meeting the problem with more imagination as well as courage. And also the bit that you've answered already - could the FWBO learn from the destruction? I suppose you could say 'foresight'.

S.: Just take that bit by bit. What was the first bit?

Dave: From the example of the destruction of the Cathars, do you think they failed to escape a Christian moral influence by courting martyrdom instead....?

S.: I'm not sure that they courted martyrdom. I think, from what I remember from my reading, that it was more that, they found it very difficult to avoid it. (Laughter) No, I don't think it would be correct to say that they courted it, if one means by that that they deliberately provoked people to martyr them, as some of the early Christians clearly did do. So what follows after that?

Dave: Instead of perhaps meeting the problem with more imagination? Could they have had a bit more imagination, as well as courage?

S.: It's very difficult to say, because it was a very long and complicated story. There were all sorts of, not only religious, but political factors involved. What more they could have done, it's very difficult to say. The Pope, of course, was against them. He wanted to exterminate them. He called upon the nobles of northern France to come down and seize their lands because they were heretics, which those nobles did - many of them of course were Normans. They were, you know, quite good fighters. What we may call -the 'lay Cathars', did put up a resistance. It was only what were called the 'Perfecti' - they didn't offer any resistance. They were of course, of the minority. The attitude of some of the 'lay Cathars' or semi-Cathars, was ambiguous sometimes, because as I've said, there were all sorts of political factors also involved. In what sense or in what way they were lacking in imagination is, I think, too big and too wide a question really to answer. But it is interesting that that time the whole of what is now, southern France was strongly influenced by Catharism - that there was a very high percentage of Cathar sympathizers throughout that area and they were very well-organized. One might say with the benefit of hindsight, that they ought to have been able to see what was coming but even if they had been able to see what was coming it's very difficult to say what they could have done even then, because they were, in Europe as a whole, a minority. So I think one couldn't really say anything useful here without really analyzing the whole situation in some depth and in some detail. But what was the next point after that?

Dave: Well there was just what the FWBO could learn from their destruction, I suppose?

S.: I think the main lesson is one, I think, I've already pointed out which is that the Cathars were wiped out for all practical purposes. But it is extraordinary how the memory of the Cathars at least survives and Catharism is being made a subject of study now. The Church was not able to stamp out Catharism completely by any means.

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It's doubtful whether there is any sort of survival of the original historical Catharism - that, I think is extremely doubtful, but there do seem to be groups here and there in France who are inspired by the Cathars and their beliefs and their literature, customs, history is being made nowadays, the subject of wuite in- tnesive study. So one can't say that the Catholic Church did entirely succeed in wiping them out. It could be that the fact that there was a Cathar movement in southern Europe, and that they did - many of them, die for their beliefs - provides people with an inspiration which may be in some ways about as valuable as the actual survival of the Cathars itself would have been. I mean, had they survived, who knows, what would have happened. They might have degenerated; they might have become corrupt. As it is, they remain a shining example. Was that all?

Dave: Yes, that's all. I was just wondering whether they could have emigrated at all?

S.: They could have done had they lived later. Because later on in Europe, in the 16th, 17th and 18th

centuries, many persecuted minority religious groups did emigrate. They emigrated to the New World, but the New World was not discovered by Columbus until 1492. So that was about 200 years too late for the Cathars. But bodies similar to the Cathars in certain respects did emigrate to the New World once it was discovered. I mean, think of the instance of the.. well, I was going to instance the Puritans but they weren't really very similar to the Cathars. One could instance other more radical sects. One could think of a very much later period of course. I think the last century and maybe even this, you know, the Dukhobors, who emigrated to Canada mainly, I think from Russia. There were other groups of that sort. So emigration was not really an option for them.

Devamitra: Since we're on the subject of the Cathars, could I just ask why it is that you've taken such a strong interest personally in their history, because it seems that your interest is more than just for the purposes of an object lesson for the FWBO?

S.: I can't really say that I've taken a very special interest in them. It's more that I happened to mention them because I've taken an interest in quite a number of other groups. But I have perhaps been interested in holding them up to the FWBO as a sort of awful warning, of what might happen if you're not able to combine, you know, the harmlessness of the dove and the wisdom of the serpent. But I've probably given less attention to the Cathars than to some other religious or spiritual traditions and groups. But I've probably not talked about those others.

Mark McClelland: In the discussion our group had about asceticism, we saw that the original Greek term 'ascesis' was a very positive term which meant 'training'. Do you think that we could resurrect this term in its original sense? And in the light of this original definition, do you see any practices or 'asceticisms' which you think would be beneficial for Order members to undertake? And lastly, do you see asceticism as a quality of the true Individual?

S.: Ah, so there are three questions there. What was the first one?

Mark: The first one was, do you think that we could resurrect this term 'ascesis'?

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S.: The history of words would seem to be irreversible. It would be a good thing if we could resurrect the original meaning of the term. I think it's quite unfortunate that the original meaning of the term has been lost sight of. And as you say, the original meaning of the term was 'exercise' or 'training'. We do perhaps need a word of that sort with a sort of religious or spiritual connotation. But I'm afraid that if you tried to use the word 'asceticism', in your revised or resurrected meaning in ordinary discourse, people would be almost certain to misunderstand you, however much you tried to make yourself clear. But perhaps we should try, nonetheless, because I think we need a word of that sort because we need that particular concept. We need that particular idea in connection with the religious or spiritual life and I think it would be very helpful if we did have that. There's quite a number of words which have degenerated in meaning in the course of the centuries. I mentioned a few evenings ago, the word, 'intellect', which had degenerated very much since the Middle Ages. I doubt very much whether one would in fact be able to resurrect the original meaning of the word 'intellect'.

The word 'imagination' - a word which is used in a very equivocal sense nowadays - so some of us have taken to using the word 'imaginal' or 'imaginal faculty' or 'imaginal world', instead. But I can't think offhand of any word the original meaning of which, after the meaning had been debased, had been restored. I can't think of any example, but nonetheless, there's no reason perhaps, why we shouldn't try. So what was the second part of the question?

Mark: The second part was: In the light of this original definition, do you see any practices or 'asceticisms' which you think could be beneficial for Order members to undertake?

S.: Well, that's quite a broad question if one speaks of 'asceticisms' in the plural; then one is speaking of exercises or trainings and everything that we do is supposed to be an exercise or a training. Meditation is an 'asceticism' in that sense. It's not an asceticism in the corrupt sense of the term - to try to get up at 6 O'Clock or 7 O'Clock in the morning and meditate. It's simply a training. And in the same way, silence is a training. Ethics is a training. Communication exercises are a training; ever~ing is a training. So I think it isn't really a question of introducing new forms of asceticism, if we mean by asceticism, training. Well, we've got quite enough training to be getting on with already, so far as I can see. So the question -- part three - what was that?

Mark: And the last part was: To what extent do you see asceticism as a quality of the true Individual?

S.: Well, clearly, the true Individual must train. In a way, the question answers itself, because the true Individual wants to develop. You don't develop automatically, you have to make an effort. And you have to make a systematic effort, a regular effort, a methodical effort, and that's what you mean by training. So if you don't train, you're not a true Individual. If you do train, you are a true Individual, at least to that extent. So I think it's not so much that training is an attribute of a true Individual - the true Individual is essentially one who trains, or is an ascetic in that sense. But I don't think you could really use the term 'ascetic' as synonymous with a true Individual. Again one could try, but you'd probably encounter a lot of resistance because in the course of centuries, the word 'asceticism', the word 'ascetic', has acquired such a - well I was going to say negative connotation - it's not really negative - but a connotation which is not exactly

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in accord with modern modes of thought, let us say. If you speak of 'asceticism', you think of things like hairshirts and things of that sort. You don't think of a young athlete about to run a race. You think of a miserable old man, you know, crouched in his cell and probably whipping himself. (Laughter)

It seems strange that it is so difficult to undo the meaning that words acquire, but it's as though you can't undo history.

Pranasiddhi: Do you think the word 'discipline', has these connotations?

S.: I think for a lot of people it does have these negative connotations. I think it need not. And perhaps the connotations of the word 'discipline', are not quite so negative, as the connotations of the word 'asceticism'. I think for the majority of people nowadays, and I'm not perhaps so much in touch with people outside the FWBO as most of you are - I think for most of them, the word 'discipline' has rather a horrid sound. I don't know whether one wants to offer any comment on that?

Pranasiddhi: I think you have to be careful using it.

Ric Cooney: It's still used in its original context in places which should give it more hope.

S.: I can't say offhand what was the strict original sense of the term. This was of course, a Latin term. A disciple is one who is under discipline, isn't he? We speak of a 'discipline', meaning a particular branch of study. In that sense, the term is used quite positively or at least in a neutral sort of way. We speak of 'academic discipline' or 'the academic disciplines'.

Pranasiddhi: It's even spoken of in an athlete - has to be disciplined and so on.

S.: But then again, that is verging on a slightly negative connotation. You've got to give up something. He's got to 'put himself through it'. He's got to be hard on himself.

Pranasiddhi: Perhaps you can't avoid it. You've got rather those connotations - if you want to succeed you have to, you know, - it might require an element. ...

S.: But what I was just trying to find out was whether in the world outside the FWBO, the word 'discipline' has such a negative connotation that one should not in fact, use it - one should try to avoid it, or when speaking of the Buddhist life, or the spiritual life, generally.

Padmavajra: I've had people actually ask me questions about "Oh, isn't this a kind of discipline?" - definitely with something negative in mind. I've had that quite recently. And it is because they think in terms of having to give up things.

S.: Also don't forget - another meaning of the word 'discipline' is simply 'the whip', that the monk uses - the medieval Christian monk uses to chastise himself. That is called the 'discipline' - the whip itself is so termed. And 'to discipline oneself' - again using the word this time as a verb, means to use the 'discipline' or the whip on yourself. So there is quite a range of connotations here, I mean, largely unpleasant.

Phil Miller: But I think there are a lot of people who do admire people that have discipline - that are strong willed.

S.: But that is the whole point. It is not that we'd be expecting people to admire us for our disciplined lives, we would be trying to persuade them to adopt that sort of life for themselves. So should one under those circumstances, speak of the life that one is leading as a disciplined life? They might prefer to lead a rather untidy chaotic, disorganized life. Anyway, let's go on.

Vessantara: Steve has a question about Paganism that Abhaya is going to read Out.

Abhaya: You spoke about Christian intolerance and persecution and how it destroyed the whole Pagan culture of western Europe. That was in the last lecture, I believe. And in the lecture before that, you said Buddhism could become widespread in England only if there was, first of all, a revival of Paganism. And you defined Paganism as an abandonment of Christianity. That is to say, orthodox church Christian ethical values....

S.: Yes, again, there's several questions here. Let's take that first part first. Not so much the question but the assumption, the initial assumption.

Abhaya: Ah, because he's not asked the question yet. (Laughter) So do you want me to ask his question first?

S.: No, just go back to that initial assumption.

Abhaya: You spoke about Christian intolerance and persecution and how it destroyed the whole of Pagan culture of western Europe.

S.: I'm not sure if I'd put it as sweepingly as that. It would be an exaggeration to say that Christianity destroyed the whole Pagan culture of Europe. It destroyed quite a lot of it, but it did at the same time preserve quite a lot of it. I mean, I'm thinking especially of say, manuscripts of Classical literature preserved in the monasteries. They did preserve a certain amount of that literature. I mean, so much of it as they could use or which was not in direct conflict with Christianity or which in some cases illustrated the enormities of Paganism in an instructive sort of way. So yes, certainly Christianity destroyed the whole sort of unified fabric of Pagan civilization and culture, but it did preserve certain important fragments of that culture, in the form of works of literature, sometimes works of art, almost by accident, and even buildings to some extent. But I don't know whether one should, can really be grateful to them for that because they really did destroy so very much more than they did preserve. Nonetheless, they did preserve something, and the only point I really wanted to make was that one mustn't be too sweeping in one's statements. It wasn't a total destruction of Pagan culture by Christianity. So go on now to the question:

Abhaya: In the last lecture but one, you said that Buddhism could become widespread in England only if there was first of all a revival of Paganism. And you defined Paganism there as an abandonment of Christian, that is to say orthodox Church Christian ethical attitudes.

S.: Ethical attitudes, yes, though that is putting it only in negative terms. And that by itself is not enough. I have elaborated on this elsewhere because I have been asked this very question - I'm not sure where or when - I did elaborate upon it. But what I did say was that by Paganism, I meant in this connection, not Paganism in any specific sort of cultic sense. I wasn't thinking particularly

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of say, Classical Paganism or Teutonic Paganism. By Paganism, I meant something more like 'unspoiled human nature' or 'healthy, happy, human nature' undeformed by traditional orthodox Christian ethical concepts. Do you see what I mean? This is what I'm talking about.

Abhaya: Yes. That's his first question. What did you mean by Paganism?

S.: Yes, so I meant something more than simply the absence of Christian ethical standards. I wasn't implying of course, the complete absence of ethical standards, but, in a way, a more natural

ethical standard. One which was closer actually to the realities of human life and human experience. There was something more?

Abhaya: And then the second part was: Do you think a Pagan attitude is developing in our western post-Christian culture?

S.: No I don't. I think some people would like to think that. I think we're being deformed in other ways, in some respects perhaps, even in other ways. It would be nice to think that as people freed themselves from traditional Christian ethical attitudes at least some of those attitudes - I'm not prepared to say that they were all bad or all wrong - but as they freed themselves from such Christian attitudes, that were having a negative influence on them, it would be really nice to think that their natural straight-forward humanity just blossomed. But that just isn't happening. I mean, all sorts of new factors have arisen. I mean, not to mention anything else, there is this whole question that confronts us - the question of Nuclear war. That in itself has changed the whole ethical situation dramatically. So I'm afraid no, I think the mere subsidence let's say, of Christianity and its ethical standards doesn't mean that healthily pagan attitudes have automatically taken their place. If anything, in some cases, well almost more deleterious attitudes have taken their place. I mean, the Nazis were Pagan in a sense - but well, what sort of Paganism was that? Was it any improvement on Christianity? On Catholicism? I mean some of the Nazis at least looked or professed to look to the old Pagan gods. They even revived some Pagan festivals didn't they? They had an ambiguous attitude towards Christianity, as in fact, Christianity, I mean the Catholic Church, had an ambiguous attitude towards Nazism. But I think it would be naive to suppose that the abolition of Christianity would sort of leave you with a pure clean sweet-smiling humanity. No, unfortunately not; because there are many negative things in the modern world apart from poor old Christianity, now on its last legs.

Devamitra: Could you explain a bit more in what way the possibility of nuclear war has affected our ethical attitudes?

S.: Well I think the mere fact that nuclear weapons exist, means that there's been a failure of ethics on a very great scale somewhere, or with regard to some people. The mere fact that communities could produce those weapons with their quite terrible potential. I mean, that surely that represents a tremendous ethical failure - that people would even think in terms of using them. I mean, some of the things that one reads in this connection are really quite horrifying. People are doing calculations sort of quite cold-bloodedly as to whether it would be necessary in certain circumstances to kill 150 million people or only 100 million. I mean, this does represent a deterioration of ethical attitudes in certain respects.

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Devamitra: But how could that be related to the decline of Christianity specifically?

S.: I'm not saying it is related to that. I'm only saying that the decline of Christianity and its ethical standards doesn't necessarily mean that we automatically have better ethical standards in place of those of Christianity. I mean, one can even have quite monstrous thoughts or ideas. I mean, just to be as it were, completely unorthodox - well you could argue - an intelligent Roman Catholic could argue that events have shown that the Catholic Church was quite right in trying to shut up Galileo. You see what I mean? Because - not that it was not only Galileo's fault or that he was the only scientist around at that time, but look what it has led to! An apologist for the Catholic Church might argue, well, if the Church had been allowed to sit on scientists in the way it did on Galileo, well, we wouldn't be in the predicament nowadays you know, that we are. We might have the Inquisition, but what's the Inquisition compared with the possibility of nuclear holocaust, huh? It could be argued - I mean if one wanted to just argue for the sake of argument, or at least to put a different point of view.

Pranasiddhi: In this whole question, doesn't one also have to bear in mind that pre-Christian pagans were by no means, perfect themselves?

S.: There is that too. I mean, one reads really horrible things about the morals of ancient Rome. Maybe one shouldn't attach too much importance, say, to the "Satires of Juvenal". He was making a few points of his own in a rather heavy handed sort of way. But it wasn't that all was sweetness and light before the advent of Christianity, certainly not! If one thinks of what used to go on in the Coliseum in Rome. In certain respects Christianity was an advance on all that, an improvement on all

that. You know Pagan culture wasn't all beautiful Greek statues and young men walking around in flowing white garments and things of that sort. There were some also quite dreadful things. There was slavery also, for another thing.

Phil Miller: What do you think also on the subject of the chemical weapons and the biological weapons, you know, in respect to nuclear weapons? I mean, they've been banished and I suppose they've built arsenals of them too.

S.: Well, I gather that a number of countries do have their weapons and I gather that it's quite an easy matter to use them and they they're very inexpensive to produce. Absolutely no comparison with the cost of producing nuclear armaments. So no one's really interested in producing them. partly because you don't need much of them to be effective and partly because there's no money in it. I'm afraid that actually is the position, so nobody talks about those things. I'm afraid there's a certain amount of commercial cynicism involved. And it does seem that sometimes that the danger from the other side are almost deliberately exaggerated to increase the need for the certain weapons, and therefore to ensure that certain people, certain firms, certain corporations, go on making their profits and of course, certain people continue in their jobs. I mean, these factors also are involved. But you know from an ethical point of view, well, there's no improvement. One couldn't regard chemical and bacteriological weapons as an improvement on swords and cannon any more than one can regard nuclear weapons as an improvement.

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So again, the main point I'm making in the course of all this discussion is that the fact that Christian ethical values have declined and in some cases happily declined or fortunately declined - doesn't mean that we've automatically adopted superior ethical values. It would be rather naive to assume that.

Phil Shann: It makes me wonder whether there is a happy healthy, human state outside the spiritual life; whether there is actually a distinction...?

S.: Well, in a way, the happy, healthy, human individual is a figment of one's imagination, because one doesn't actually encounter, or one perhaps hardly encounters anybody who has not been in some way, conditioned, positively or negatively, by the country in which he has been brought up. In the 18th century, they were found of speculating what would happen if you put a child on a desert island and let him grow up by himself - sort of thing - they just left him enough food and all that. What sort of human being you'd have? But in a way we don't know, because we're not able to bring up a child in that way. You could try but you couldn't by the very nature of the experiment succeed. You'd have to have some contact with him. And you might say, well, you couldn't speak to him; you couldn't look at him, but that itself would condition him in a particular way, and so on and so forth. So actually the concept of the happy healthy human individual who has not been conditioned by any sort of culture is a sort of figment of one's imagination, in a way, as a sort of hypothetical construct, which we just use for purposes of communication and ex- position and so on, but it doesn't actually exist. And I think can't exist on the ordinary psychological level. It can only exist on the spiritual level or it can only exist as a result of spiritual life and spiritual training and spiritual development. It's nice to think of him as having existed once upon a time. But I mean, you may mier occasionally encounter someone who is somewhat like that, who has grown up in some remote part of the world or who has grown up under exceptionally positive conditions, but suceople are quite rare.

Phil Shann: So from this I gather that we shouldn't romanticize Pagan culture?

S.: No, I think we shouldn't. There were certain very positive elements in it, elements which were positive at the time and elements which we can draw on ourselves, but I think it would be a great mistake to paint a glowing picture of a noble Paganism; even of noble Classical paganism contrasted with a very dark picture, say, of Medieval Christianity. I think that wouldn't be quite fair or historically correct. But I sometimes do feel that on balance probably, in many important respects, Classical culture was preferable. But no doubt Pagan culture - that is Classical Pagan culture, had some very black spots and Medieval Christianity, had a few bright spots.

Vessantara: Was that all of Steve's question?

Abhaya: Well, he said there was a third part. Can the FWBO help in this respect to bring about the former Pagan attitude? You see what he means?

S.: Yes, well, if one means by that, can the FWBO help in resolving whatever in our Christian conditioning - our Christian ethical conditioning, is negative, or has had a negative effect on us -well, the answer clearly is yes. And if the FWBO can help in replacing those relatively negative or unskilful ethical Christian values

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by ethical values of a more positive nature derived from Buddhism - but which would be practised - perhaps even outside the strictly Buddhist circles - then again the answer is clearly yes.

Jonathan Brazier: This question arises from a consideration of the amount of time and energy we have available for the spiritual life and it struck me that no other activity seems to take up so much time as sleeping. And since this is not usually a creative use of our energies, any reduction in the amount of time we spend sleeping would clearly give more time and energy for the spiritual life. So the question I wanted to ask is what is the Buddhist view of the nature of sleep? And following on from that, if it is the mind's defence against Reality? Or the unconscious assimilation of the day's events? Can we take it that an Enlightened being would not therefore need to sleep at all? Or that as one becomes more integrated, one would need less sleep?

S.: Let's take those questions bit by bit. What was the first part?

Jonathan: The first question was what is the Buddhist view of the nature of sleep?

S.: I can't remember any specifically Buddhist view. I'm not sure that that question is discussed in Buddhist psychology, say, in the Abhidharma. The only thing that does come to my mind in this connection is the 'Tibetan book of the Dead' and the analogy which is established between well, - in Tibetan Buddhism generally perhaps - between the dream state and the Bardo state and between the dream state and the Bardo state and even the Sambhoga-kaya. There is a sort of correlation there. So perhaps the fact that there is that sort of correlation does throw some light on the nature of the dream state. The dream state is a sort of Bardo in the sense that comes 'in between' and Bardo means 'in between' two waking states. And the Bardo - the intermediate state after death - is intermediate because it comes in between two lifetimes. And perhaps there is an analogy because it may be - this is certainly the belief of some people - it may be that just as in the Bardo state, after death, you have the opportunity of assimilating, even digesting experiences of the previous life, in the same way, in the dream state, you do have an opportunity of assimilating and digesting the experiences of the day.

It does seem that a sort of sorting out operation does go on and that perhaps it is important that that does go on. It's well-known that it is very difficult for people to do without sleep; if you deprive someone of sleep by artificial means - that is to say, forcibly, you can within a very short period, drive that person insane. And that may be partly because there is so great an input of impressions and experiences into the brain, let's say or the system, that since it's not given any rest or any opportunity to assimilate and digest, it simply breaks down. So it would seem that we can't really completely do without sleep. But of course, I've mentioned the dream state - but of course there is the state of deep sleep in which there is apparently no dreaming. It seems that the system needs just to rest sometimes; apart from the question of assimilating and digesting impressions and experiences. So some time is required for that. If one looks at what one knows of the life of the Buddha, one does see that the Buddha require relatively little sleep. The Buddha spent much of the night awake. And according to some accounts, the Buddha spent part of the night conversing with devas and even instructing them. I have suggested somewhere that - that almost corresponds to the dream state, because devas are sort of archetypes. They are sort of in a way, spiritual experiences on the archetypal plane. So it could be that what in us is the dream state, in the Buddha is that kind of experience.

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And in any case the Buddha does not lose his awareness, even during that so-called 'sleep state'. It would seem, according to some accounts, that the Buddha definitely rested. He did lie down. He did seem to need rest. A physical body needed rest. Whether his mind needed a rest, that's another matter. Whether he even needed to assimilate and digest the impressions of the day, that's a different matter because inasmuch as an Enlightened being perceives differently, perhaps he takes impressions and experiences in a different kind of way. A way that perhaps - one can only speculate - doesn't require sorting out in a way that is necessary in our case. I think the long and the short of this is that we're not necessarily to look in the sleep state, especially the dream state, as wasted time. I think one can influence the dream state. I think it's possible to sort of continue your spiritual life in and through the dream state. One can for instance, become more aware, even in the dream state itself; be aware that one is dreaming, even some- times shape one's dreams. But you can influence your dream by what you do, what you think about, what you read even, immediately before going to bed or before going to sleep and you can have quite inter- esting experiences in dreams which are of some spiritual significance. I mean some people do have very significant experiences - experiences which are spiritually very significant. You don't have the distraction of sense impressions. You're free, for the time being from immediate sense impressions. So you are in some ways, open to spiritual experiences of a kind. And many people do have spiritual experiences in or from the dream state. But unless they're very striking, one doesn't always remember. I mean, just as one doesn't always remember what happens in dreams, for obvious and understandable reasons. But what I'm saying is one shouldn't therefore, write off the time that you spend in sleep as necessarily simply time lost from the spiritual point of view. It does seem you do need some rest. You also it seems, do need at least for the time being to assimilate and digest your experience. But in addition you can have, in the dream state experiences which are quite positive and valuable from the spiritual point of view and you can even encourage experiences of that sort. Of course, that is not to say that you should allow yourself to sleep unnecessarily! One hopes one is not leaving scope for that sort of rationalization. Also it seems that people's sleep needs, vary, just as their sleep cycles vary. Broadly speaking, I think as you get older you tend to need less sleep. I also have read somewhere that people who are engaged in purely intellectual activity, especially people like scientists and mathematicians, need less sleep. And people who are engaged in creative work, it would seem, according to some studies I have read, - that artists and poets require more sleep. It could be because they are more active on that subliminal or perhaps even archetypal sort of level than are the scientists and mathematicians.

Susiddhi: Could I ask something connected with this same thing? It's very common in the Friends, to hear someone saying something like: "I was really buzzing after the Puja. I didn't get to sleep for two hours!" I wondered if you've got any comments on whether that 'buzzing' state - that state of having more energy than you can handle, is healthy or unhealthy? And maybe any practical suggestions how we could use it because I've experienced it myself and I've heard so many other people saying things like that?

S.: Well, what is happening? I mean when one uses a word like 'buzzing' which is obviously very idiomatic - it suggests that in a sense, you have so~e~~ sort of feeling of what is happening, but you

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don't really know what is happening. You don't have really much understanding of what is happening. So I wouldn't like to sort of comment on this buzzing (Laughter) before being clear as to what it actually involves. I assume that it is not to be taken too literally. Well, what actually happens?

Susiddhi: Well, I've tried to put it into more sensible words and what I came up with is that I had more energy than I could handle. I had more energy that I was used to having and I didn't have the ability to

S.: Yes, alright - so puja in that case is an activity that stimulates energy. So far so good, huh? If that is the case, it would suggest that puja is not somethin~ in which you should engage just before you intend to go to bed and go to sleep. Because the two things are contradictory. If you find yourself with~ a great deal of energy as a result of engaging in puja, well, either you should do something with that energy, direct it into some useful channel, or you should just stay with it and experience it and appreciate it. Experience yourself, appreciate yourself, as a more 'energyful' person. It would seem that the last thing you should do would be to go to bed. On the other hand, you might be basically tired, so you find yourself almost in a situation of conflict. You're very stimulated, you're full of energy, at the same time you're tired, but you can't sleep. It would seem to me that you need to sort

of sort out your schedules in a better sort of way. And perhaps have your puja in the morning, huh? Your big puja in the morning, so that you get up from the puja as I say, 'buzzing' with this energy and you go straight into your co'op or whatever and you just get on with the day's work. And perhaps - I mean, I'm only hypothesizing here but it is a possibility that you shouldn't - if you get such a great big buzz off doing puja, do it straight before going to bed. You should meditate instead because meditation is more conducive to sleep (Laughter). I don't mean that, as it were, cynically, but if you have a successful meditation, you illuminate thought processes, and that makes it easier, once you've got up from the meditation, to go to sleep, because your mind has been calmed. You know quite well that you can't go to sleep if you're thinking about something, or worrying about something or turning something over in your mind. You can't go to sleep then. But if you've been meditating, and all thoughts are stilled, and you don't, after the meditation, get involved in an animated discussion over your final mug of tea - if you do just go straight to bed without speaking, preferably, in that stilled sort of state, you can have a very good night's rest very often. A positive sort of rest, a positive sort of sleep. Do you see what I mean? So I think it's a question of understanding oneself better and of arranging your day and organizing your different activities in a more intelligent sort of way. I sometimes have said that I think sometimes in the FWBO, pujas are held too late at night. People are tired, but on the other hand, pujas do stimulate. I mean often I've had to lead a puja quite late at night and I've seen that everybody's really tired and it just doesn't seem appropriate. It would seem to be more appropriate to sometimes, at least - to have them - the puja, in the morning when people are more fresh and more bright. And when people are more susceptible to the kind of energizing process that the puja does represent for at least some people. So I think one has to study these things more. I'm not suggesting sweeping alterations or changes straight away, but I should study these things more, especially in relation to one's personal needs. Anyway, there is a further question or point, isn't there?

Susiddhi: Well I think you've answered it. I really wanted to know if you can make any practical suggestions, but I think you've done that -

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that the energy is natural so we should do the puja at a time when the energy can be used.

S.: Yes.

Prasanasiddhi: What you can do is like after the puja, read for half an hour or maybe just meditate for an hour or so after the puja. Once the energy goes away, then go to bed, - go to bed when you feel tired.

S.: Yes. It's like having an animated discussion, a very vigorous discussion, just before you go to bed. It's probably not very wise to do that because you won't be able to sleep. So I think one is to be more mindful - bear that in mind. Alright well, I need to go to bed at ten O'clock because I've got to get up at such and such time in the morning - so I shouldn't engage just before I go to bed or during the hour or so before I go to bed, in practices which I find stimulating and which prevent me from sleeping. It's as simple as that I suppose really. I mean, Just as you know, you find yourself susceptible to a certain type of distraction, you don't go to - on the other hand you avoid those places you are likely to encounter that type of distraction. Anyway, what else?

Abhaya: This relates to the section on the Bodhisattva's bisexual nature: And here I've got a question on falling in love: - It's been observed that falling in love is not just a question of sexual gratification, but also maybe of seeking unification with our alienated unconscious feminine side by projecting it onto a woman, thereby becoming emotionally dependent. Do you think that's the whole explanation or is there more to it than that?

S.: I don't think it's the whole explanation in this sense: to begin with at least, I don't think it's a question - assuming that one thinks in terms of projection - I don't think it's entirely a question of projecting in the case of a man - your unconscious femininity. I don't think it's merely as simple as that. I have made this point ~irly recently - it might have been last year - possibly in this very place - but the conclusion to which I've come is this: - that there is after all, quite a lot in each individual which is not conscious; which is unconscious and it is a psychological principle or law that what is unconscious is projected. Or tends to be projected. Now obviously when one falls in love, one projects, but I think it isn't that one simply, in the case of a man, projects one's unconscious femininity. One projects whatever is unconscious. You see what I mean? And one projects that usually, in the case

of a man, onto a woman, because a woman is, as it were, different, 'other' and therefore unknown. Or the unknown. So, you project the unknown within, as it were, onto the unknown without. The fact that you project onto a woman when you're a man doesn't necessarily mean that you're simply projecting your femininity. There are lots of other things that you can project onto a woman. You can even in some cases, project your masculine qualities onto a woman, if you're not conscious of those qualities or you haven't integrated them into your conscious personality. You see what I mean? So it isn't simply a matter of you, as a man, projecting your unconscious femininity, your femininity in the case of a certain man, might be well integrated and you won't need to project it and you might project a fragment of your masculinity which is not integrated and of which you are unconscious. You may project all sorts of things. That's the qualification I'd like to make, at least initially. So the picture is rather more complex, than is sometimes suggested~ So what was the following point? Or was that it?

Abhaya: That was it. But I was going to ask then, there is another

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point - that do you think it is as prevalent or as dangerous for men to fall in love with men as it is for - do you think it's as inextricable as mess, so to speak?

S.: Well obviously the consequences are different possibly, in certain respects (Laughter). I mean the practical consequences. But I mean clearly, one needs to consider it just from the psychological point of view. If one takes of course, the view that falling in love represents a projection, then obviously the question arises, if say, a man falls in love with a man, what is being projected and therefore what is unconscious in the one that falls in love? Very often there is of course, an age difference between the one and the other. So if the one who falls in love is older, clearly it's some sort of youthful quality or a quality associated with youthfulness which is being projected and which the person falling in love is perhaps not in contact with or no longer in contact with, or wishes he was in contact with, or something of that sort. Do you see? So I think it is a question of an older man falling in love with the younger one, it's not quite the same thing, just because there is that difference of age, as a man falling in love with a woman, except perhaps in some cases where a very much older man falls in love with a very much younger woman, who then perhaps, sometimes for him, represents his own departed youthfulness, etc. etc. But I think perhaps with the case of men falling in love with men, one would need to make more of a sort of study, of cases perhaps you're likely to come across, before one could generalize very much. I suspect the general psychological pattern is not all that much different. That is my suspicion. And I think within that pattern, there are possible variations and I think in the case of, say, a man falling in love with a man, one variation is when one is older and the other younger. I think there, you do get certain features that are not present when it's a man and a woman and both are roughly the same age. But did you have something in mind when you asked the question? Was there any sort of incipient answer in your mind?

Abhaya: Well, yes, I was wondering whether you thought from your own experience that men associated with men, - there's just a danger of them becoming... there is as great a danger of them becoming emotionally dependent as in the man/woman relationship? Because I've heard it said that actually within the circle of the Friends, it's argued sometimes quite heatedly, about the, shall we say, the homosexual side as opposed to the heterosexual - that it's not so dangerous in the case of

S.: I would say initially, that if it's argued heatedly, I'd automatically be a bit suspicious (Laughter) if you see what I mean? I think also, one can't see either of these Situations - that is to say - man falling in love with a woman or man falling in love with man, in sort of isolation. One can't even see them just in psychological terms because they do occur within a specific social and psychological context.

Say in the case of a man falling in love with a woman, part of that context is the possibility of getting married and establishing a family with everything that that involves. Whereas that is not the case in the case of man falling in love with a man. So one might possibly argue that in the latter case, the context was, and is, potentially more of a sort of cultural nature, and that would have its own sort of elevating effect. I think one will have to be very careful not to overgeneralize here, because one can have obviously quite coarse and quite crude relationships of that kind as of the other kind. I mean, the Greeks for instance, did have a very definite sort of institution almost - they almost institutionalized that sort of love relationship, apparently with excellent results. But I think it's not very easy in modern times to create or recreate that kind of cultural

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ambience. But one can't fail to take into consideration what I've called , in the sort of social and cultural context and that does no doubt make some difference - exactly how, it probably wouldn't be easy to say.

Padmavajra: Within the context of the spiritual community, and within the context of a spiritual friendship, do you think that - what one might call 'falling in love' - or what some might call that - between men, do you think that would have excellent results?

S.: I think that if someone falls in love with somebody else, all you've got is raw material. In a way, it's neither good nor bad; positive nor negative. It's a question of what do you do with it. I think what is important, if this happens within a spiritual community, is - in a way, that you try to keep it just there. I think the natural tendency, whether you fall in love with someone of the same sex or the opposite sex, is usually that you want to have a close physical contact - you want to have sexual contact, etc. etc. And then of course, very often, possessiveness and attachment and all the rest of it can come in. So I think, within the context of the spiritual community, it's probably important to keep the falling-in-love experience, just as an experience. Not that you necessarily cut-off from the person with whom you've fallen in love and don't have anything to do with them, or don't see or don't speak to them. But you sort of stay with the experience of falling in love itself. Because in that case, it's something which is hanging or hovering between you and the other person. If you just stay with that experience of falling in love, it's more easy to see it as your projection and to withdraw it into yourself on the conscious level and in that way integrate it. But if you allow it to run its course, then it's as though you invest in completely in the other person. It becomes fused with your emotional-cum-physical-sexual relationships and you might even in the end, sort of fall out of love and just find yourself left with the physical relationship practically.

Padmavajra: Can I get this clear in my mind? So that would be so that you're speaking of that specifically within the context of men within the spiritual community presumably, if you fall in love with a woman, it wouldn't - you wouldn't have any contact whatsoever - to get that clear.

S.: That is a possible scenario. It's the sort of Dante and Beatrice scenario. It's difficult to generalize because a lot of it depends upon what she feels about your falling in love with her. Whether she falls in love with you. Whether wedding bells are ringing some - shere at the back of her pretty little head; whether she has thoughts of bambinos (Laughter). Or things of that sort. It's very difficult to generalize in this field. But since you adduce the example of a spiritual community, I took that factor as given. You see what I mean? So therefore, I made the point that if you fall in love with a fellow member of the same spiritual community, well, clearly it wouldn't be a spiritual community if because you've fallen in love with him, you just have to refrain from taking any notice of him. Well, where's your communication? So since you said this hypothetical case, it did happen in the spiritual community - therefore I made that particular point. If you happen to fall in love with some young lady living outside your spiritual community, well, it's as if - don't make any attempt to see her or speak to her. Just stay with the feeling or the experience. Take it as something that is as it were, floating in the air. It could go completely towards that, or you could sort of recapture it and reintegrate it into yourself on the conscious level, which would be a much better thing to do. You would

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then be a more complete and whole person. I hope this doesn't sound too idealistic or too sort of im- practically romantic or anything of that sort, but see what I'm getting at? Because where there is projection - if you can't just sort of keep the projected quality sort of just floating as it were, in the air, and don't allow them to latch too firmly onto the other person, so that they become identified with that person, but just sort of keep them floating and gradually reclaim them. That is best.

Padmavajra: Do you think that in the case of it happening within the spiritual community, between men there's also a possibility of, in a way, reflecting (unclear) .. inspi ration back in the form of friendship towards the person ...?

S.: Well, obviously that depends on the strength and positivity of the context, in the form of that particular spiritual community and the degree of commitment of the individuals concerned to spiritual life and whole question of Kalyana-Mitrata.

Greg Shanks: Are you definitely suggesting that it would be easier in a man to man case to hold that projection there and to integrate it, than in a man/woman relationship?

S.: I'm not necessarily saying that, no. I think what would make it easier would be the fact that one lived in a spiritual community and had definite spiritual ideals. You couldn't do this if you didn't have spiritual ideals because what would be the point? And I think if it is at all easier, say, in the case of another man, then in the case of another woman, I think one relevant fact would be that the woman might well be thinking in terms of a family and home and children and all the rest of it, and a man wouldn't be thinking in those sort of terms. But apart from that, I think probably there wouldn't be too much difference between the two cases.

Greg Shanks: You spoke about this from the man's point of view of falling in love and you said other qualities would be projected because the woman is unknown - it's 'other'- What's the case with the woman to the man? Is the man an 'other', an unknown or is it more complicated?

S.: I think that is one way that a man is more unknown to woman than woman is to man. You don't usually think in those terms. For instance just to give you a little example. One of the sort of things that makes me think in this way - I'm treading very delicately on this spiritual minefield, huh? (Laughter) Some of my women friends within the movement are always anxious to see that my feet are kept on the right path, so they lend me from time to time all sorts of, you know, good books, written by women about women for men. Well, you know, mainly for women but also for men, let us say and one of these books was given to me by someone in London. She was very keen I should read it. It was by Esther Harding - I forget which one it was. You probably haven't read these, but all the women in the movement seem to have read the Esther Harding books. They're quite well-known, much thumbed and bequoted, huh? But anyway, I dutifully read these things, - I mean, I could read almost anything (Laughter) - I dutifully read these things but I found this book in some ways quite interesting. I think it's quite dangerous for women to lend these sort of books to men, especially to me - (Laughter) - they give too much away. For instance, this particular book contained a description of what Esther Harding called the 'anima woman' and this was quite an eye-opener and I after reading the description of the 'anima woman', I said, "Well of course, she's an anima woman, she's an anima woman, she's an anima woman" - naming

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people around the LBC 'and that explains a lot!!' But then there was something else. In the course of the book Esther Harding does, from time to time, mention men. But I got the impression that for Esther Harding, who is an eminent Jungian Psychologist - or was, she's probably dead now - men - well she seemed to see men as a very strange, distant, remote, unreal creatures. She seemed to see them through a sort of haze, a sort of mist - slightly sort of rose-tinted as it were. In the same sort of way that men are supposed to see women, only more so. So I do get the impression that, yes, I mean in this and other ways, that to women, men very often strange and mysterious creatures, that they just don't understand. They behave in all sorts of strange and irrational ways, you know, just like we see women; (Laughter) you know, who are not very logical or very sensible, a bit flighty and unreliable. For instance, they fall in love with you. They say they'd do anything for you. They'd die for you, but they won't marry you. You see how illogical (chuckle), how irrational. They just can't understand it and so on and so forth. But yes, yes, in answer to the question. Yes, I do believe that men are an unknown quantity or an unknown factor to women in much the same way that women are to men and hence the possibility of a mutual projection. Of course, women like to think that they understand men, just as men like to think they understand women. But when there is so much unconscious within oneself, whether one's a man or a woman, it's very unlikely that one will understand the opposite sex. One might understand it in a general, in a textbook sort of way, but not those members of the opposite sex with whom actually one is in contact and especially when one is in intimate contact with them.

Greg Shanks: But again wouldn't it follow from what you say that there'd be less elements, in say a male-male relationship or woman to woman relationship, less elements of the unconscious, less elements to be projected in the sense that ?

S.: It would seem like that, it would seem so, but actually facts don't always fit in with theories. I've known of quite a few Lesbian relationships, well, within the FWBO, and the women discuss these

things with me quite frankly, - but I've got the impression quite definitely, are very different from the corresponding male relationships. They don't seem to correspond at all. In the case of women, who've mutually fallen in love, as far as my observation goes, from talking to some of the women concerned, the mutual projections are even heavier than it is with men. There would seem to be no logical reason for this but this is what I have actually heard. And I have actually even heard the women, including Lesbian women, make this point themselves, which does seem rather strange. But it does seem that a Lesbian relationship is usually a very petty a very 'torrid', sort of thing - that's really the word for it, in a way that relationships between men just aren't. I can't offer any explanation, except possibly the more earthy character of women generally, but that's perhaps seeing it in terms of mythology rather than psychology. I can't offer any sort of rational or logical explanation. It's a phenomenon which so far as I am concerned is still under observation. (Laughter) I mean, also men can often get into a bit of a mess sometimes between themselves. One mustn't overlook that fact or that possibility. I think that one will have to be very careful not to compare one highly idealized type of relationship with another very definitely non-idealized type of relationship - that is not being fair. I mean from what one has seen from a decent distance of the 'gay' world, it doesn't seem to offer much in the way of inspiration.

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I mean, these sort of (inaudible due to static on tape)

the fault of the gays themselves, maybe it's partly for social reasons.

Devamitra: From what you said earlier, the phenomenon of falling in love is not necessarily symptomatic of sexual polarization, is that the case?

S.: "Not necessarily symptomatic of sexual polarization" - what does one mean by sexual polarization?

Devamitra: Well, actually we were really discussing the third precept in the Ten Pillars of Buddhism in our Order meeting the other day, and we were discussing the whole issue of sexual polarization as you describe it in that book in relation to the

S.: When I speak of sexual polarization, I'm thinking of what is essentially the basic polarization, that is between the male sex and the female sex. I mean, there of course, it assumes its, one might say, classic form. And so you can get a sort of sexual polarization between men inasmuch as one is, as it were, more masculine and the other more feminine.

Devamitra: Well, in that case the men are more likely to fall in love with the women as a result of that polarization and the women presumably, possibly with the men on the same basis but what happens say, in the case of a man falling in love with a man? Presumably there can be another kind of basis to that falling in love which has got nothing to do whatsoever with sexual polarization.

S.: Yes, because what one might speak of as psychological, even gender polarization, though usually correlated with biological sexual polarization, is not necessarily so correlated. But clearly, for falling in love to be possible, first of all there must be two people and if it is mutual for each of those two people, there must be something that is unconscious, and the other person must represent something of a sort of unknown factor, for some reason or other or in some way or other. Maybe they belong to a

different race or even a different religion or they're a different colour. Sometimes that provides the element of otherness which provides the basis for the projection - or, you know, a different age.

Dave Living: So there always has to be some polarization of some sort?

S.: Yes. And of course, you might say the strongest and most basic form of polarization is the sexual, especially as between men and women and its associated qualities and so on.

Phil Miller: So is a 'falling in love', a good state to....?

S.: Well, as I said a little while ago, it's raw material. In itself, really it's a psychological fact. You can't really say that it's good or bad. It's natural in the sense that it happens without your volition, though I think actually if you're determined not to fall in love, you can take steps to make sure that you don't.

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I mean, an Order member wrote to me recently, you know, to tell me a few things about himself and he said that he made a vow, say, last year, that during the whole of the year he was not going to fall in love. You see he is quite prone to falling in love and for a whole year he didn't fall in love, because he knew the circumstances. He knew the sort of conditions under which he tended to fall in love, so he avoided them and he took certain positive countermeasures. So he stayed out of love, even that is, so to speak, his natural tendency - to fall in love. So it isn't completely an involuntary thing. Some people go around looking for opportunities for falling in love. They just like the experience. They like being in that sort of woozy state. (Laughter) In that sort of semi-intoxication, as it were. But what was the point I was making? I've forgotten after our detour.

Devamitra: That you don't have to fall in love.

S.: Ah, it's when it does happen - but making the point that it is not entirely involuntary - it is just raw material. And you can make sure of it so to speak, in a positive way, or you can allow it to take its, as it were, natural course with possibly untoward consequences in one way or another.

pranasiddhi: Could one say that - well, this is something I have been thinking about - that quite possibly the sort of falling in love - when one falls in love, one usually experiences a very strong positive emotional sort of element. So I was wondering if this sort of element isn't something that, in a sense, should be a sort of basis of one's spiritual life or one's life generally. But of course, one should go much further...

S.: But the fact that you fall in love and you, as it were, project in that way, and you have that sort of positive emotional experience, shows - that that sort of positive emotional experience or positive emotional state is a possibility for you. So theoretically, there seems to be no reason why you shouldn't stay in that state indefinitely. But it does seem - human nature being what it is - that if anything is likely to blunt the experience of that kind of positive emotional state, it is if you enter into a definite relationship with the other person and that relationship becomes progressively more physical and eventually finds sexual satisfaction. And I think a lot of people find that the positive emotion then becomes sort of drowned in the physical sexuality - that physical experience, or is replaced by a strong emotional attachment. Yes, one might say that one can analyze different stages. Certainly if one looks back, say, to one's adolescence, when you fall in love for the first time or the first two or three times, usually you're so young - and maybe you're so scared - that you don't ever think of doing anything about it. You don't even think of approaching the other person or speaking to them. You're just quite happy to be 'in love'. So it just remains like that as a sort of adolescent experience, and it can be a quite positive and happy sort of experience. You're not looking for anything in return. But as you get older, and more experienced, maybe certain desires and things start making themselves felt. You start wanting some sort of response from that person. You enter into some sort of relationship with them or you get to know them. But then it's as though some strange different change takes place in your experience. Instead of being a purely sort of blissful experience, it becomes shot through with emotions of fear and jealousy and possessiveness. And in that way, though still very intense, it often becomes painful rather than positive. And it can then develop further and you can have all sorts of ups

and downs. Sometimes you're really feeling on

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top of the world, other times you're very down in the dumps, depending on what the other person has done, or not done, or what you think they've done or think they've not done. Eventually you might not see them for a whole day or even for a few hours. You might even go through torment during that time for no good reason whatever, completely irrationally. But that is that sort of state you can get into.

So you don't really want to let your falling in love reach that point. You want to keep it as positive as possible. Otherwise, instead of being in a heavenly dhyanic-like state, (dhyanic in inverted commas), you're in a hell realm sort of state. And that certainly doesn't contribute to your spiritual development. But yes, let me come back to that point - initially at least, when you fall in love, you can be in a very positive energetic state, which it would be good if you could 'keep' -(Again in inverted commas) and not allow it to gradually develop, or decline into something rather different. But the fact that you, can not only fall in love, but experience falling in love and have that very positive energetic sort of experience, shows that you do have sort of potential - that there is a sort of reservoir of very positive energy within you, with which you're usually not in contact. If someone does happen to fall in love, whom you know, you can very often tell by the way that they go around and the way that they hold themselves and the way that they look - the sort of air they have - treading on air. You can almost see their wings, you know, flapping and all that. Doesn't last very long though, because they don't handle it sufficiently skilfully.

Phil Miller: Don't parents experience this with their children and vice versa?

(End of Side A)

S.: with women generally. Put a baby in front of them and they'll sort of fall in love with it. You watch the expressions of their faces. Often women with babies have a silly infatuated sort of expression which is quite strange. I mean, maybe it's not so strange, but you don't usually see men, you know, looking at babies, in that sort of way. Father may be very fond of his child, and very devoted to his child but you don't see that expression - at least not in my experience - of absolute infatuation, that you on the face of the mother and well, sometimes they just a woman who passes a baby's pram in the street and just looks at it and ah, at once you see this infatuated expression, sort of register. It's as though she falls in love with the baby on the spot; though I don't think it's quite 'falling in love' or not at all perhaps, falling in love, in the sense in which we have so far been discussing the term. There's something rather odd which is happening which I haven't sort of fully understood. Is she projecting? I don't know. But certainly she gets a bit infatuated, huh? Fathers and men generally are usually a bit more rational. Anyway, perhaps we'd better have one more question:

Vessantara: Wade has something connected with sex and children.

Wade McKee: When the difficulties of celibacy are discussed, people often point to the fact that they liked~~or needed the pleasure involved with sex. Now to a certain extent this may be true, but - you can't really separate the consequences of sex - children and by extension, families, from sex itself, and I was wondering whether a lot of the problem was an inability or lack of desire to make a decision on the subject of children and families, on the part of the person concerned?

S.: I think there's some truth in that, though just before I go into