

## General Introduction to Sangharakshita's Seminars

### Hidden Treasure

From the mid-seventies through to the mid-eighties, Urgyen Sangharakshita led many seminars on a wide range of texts for invited groups of [Order members](#) and [Mitrans](#). These seminars were highly formative for the FWBO/Tiratna as Sangharakshita opened up for the still very young community what it might mean to live a life in the Dharma.

The seminars were all recorded and later transcribed. Some of these transcriptions have been carefully checked and edited and are [now available in book form](#). However, a great deal of material has so far remained unchecked and unedited and we want to make it available to people who wish to deepen their understanding of Sangharakshita's presentation of the Dharma.

How should one approach reading a seminar transcription from so long ago? Maybe the first thing to do is to vividly imagine the context. What year is it? Who is present? We then step into a world in which Sangharakshita is directly communicating the Dharma. Sometimes he is explaining a text, at other times he is responding to questions and we can see how the emergence of Dharma teachings in this context was a collaborative process, the teaching being drawn out by the questions people asked. Sometimes those questions were less to do with the text and arose more from the contemporary situation of the emerging new Buddhist movement.

Reading through the transcripts can be a bit like working as a miner, sifting through silt and rubble to find the real jewels. Sometimes the discussion is just a bit dull. Sometimes we see Sangharakshita trying to engage with the confusion of ideas many of us brought to Buddhism, confusion which can be reflected in the texts themselves. With brilliant flashes of clarity and understanding, we see him giving teachings in response that have since become an integral part of the Tiratna Dharma landscape.

Not all Sangharakshita's ways of seeing things are palatable to modern tastes and outlook. At times some of the views captured in these transcripts express attitudes and ideas [Tiratna has acknowledged as unhelpful](#) and which form no part of our teaching today. In encountering all of the ideas contained in over seventeen million words of Dharma investigation and exchange, we are each challenged to test what is said in the fire of our own practice and experience; and to talk over 'knotty points' with friends and teachers to better clarify our own understanding and, where we wish to, to decide to disagree.

We hope that over the next years more seminars will be checked and edited for a wider readership. In the meantime we hope that what you find here will inspire, stimulate, encourage - and challenge you in your practice of the Dharma and in understanding more deeply the approach of Urgyen Sangharakshita.

*Sangharakshita's Literary Executors and the Adhithana Dharma Team*

## DISCLAIMER

This transcript has not been checked by Sangharakshita, and may contain mistakes and mishearings. Checked and reprinted copies of all seminars will be available as part of the [Complete Works Project](#).

## THE FIVE SPIRITUAL FACULTIES

A seminar on "The Way to Wisdom" by Dr Edward Conze (Wheel Publications, No 65/66) held at Padmaloka on the weekend of 28th/29th October, 1978. Those present: Ven. Sangharakshita, Surata, John Wakeman, Suvajra, Andy Skilton, Mahamati, Mark Bowden, Susiddhi, Jos Hincks.

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Sangarakshita: All right then, "The Way to Wisdom", which, as I said, is a short but quite concentrated text, an essay by Dr Edward Conze on the Five Spiritual Faculties, and not all that many pages but probably it will keep us well occupied and busy for all the time that we have at our disposal. All right, let's start: let's read a paragraph at a time going round the circle clockwise. So maybe Jos could read the first paragraph.

Text: Spiritual progress depends we do feel and think. (Page 1)

S: I think there should probably be a comma after "do" - "everything we do, feel and think." I think that's really the meaning. So this introductory paragraph really sums it all up very well: it tells us what spiritual progress depends on. Usually people have got a very, you know, vague, not to say wishy-washy, idea about spiritual progress and what it consists in, but here we are given a very clear criterion indeed. We're told it depends on the emergence of five cardinal virtues, five "Indriyas," as the footnote says, "variously translated by 'faculties', 'controlling faculties', or 'spiritual faculties'." So spiritual progress consists in the emergence of these five - that is to say, faith, vigour, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom - which is very specific indeed. And then it contrasts, or Dr Conze contrasts, these five spiritual faculties or five cardinal virtues with the sense-based instincts and impulses. And this is quite important, that spiritual progress takes place when, instead of being dominated, instead of being shaped, in everything that we do, feel and think by our sense-based instincts and impulses, we start depending more and more upon the

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five spiritual faculties; they become more and more emergent, they come more and more definitely into operation, they gradually take over. So we should try to see, as it were, what the present situation is, because you know, we're not always very, you know, clear about it. We're not usually very clear what is actually dominating and shaping everything we do, feel and think; we're often unaware of our own motivations. So according to what it is said here, "The conduct of the ordinary worldling," - 'worldling' you understand, probably Dr Conze has at the back of his mind the Pali 'puthujjana', that is to say a person who is not an 'Arya', anyone who falls short of Stream Entry, is called a worldling - he just goes round and round in the cycle of existence, the Wheel of Life. And he's governed by these sense-based instincts and impulses. Now we just need to reflect upon this and to realize the extent to which we are governed by these sense-based instincts and impulses. Now what do you think these are anyway, these instincts and impulses? Well take a very, very common one: food, the, you know, that is absolutely basic, the instinct or the impulse, if you like, to eat. Three times a day you eat. So your life is virtually shaped by that, by the fact that you have to eat. If you make an appointment with somebody at the back of your mind there is the thought, "Well, I've got to leave time for lunch, I've got to leave time for tea." (Laughter) It's there all

the time, isn't it? Or, if you're going out, "Will I have time to eat first, or shall I eat when I come back?" That thought interweaves with every other thought. And if you haven't had anything to eat for a day, or even two or three days, I think the thought of food is absolutely uppermost. So not only that, but one of the reasons why you have to work is to earn so that you can eat; maybe that's the main reason. If you didn't have to eat your life would be completely different you know. If you fed as it were on the air that you inhale you probably wouldn't feel such a strong need to have a job and to earn

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money, because food is the basic thing that you have to work and earn for. And then you wouldn't need things like kitchens and cooking implements and cups and saucers and plates and you wouldn't need gas stoves or fuel. No shopping. So just... you know... you can see there- fore the extent to which you're... everything we do and feel and think is somehow linked wi~h the fact that we have to eat, with that part- icular instinct, and this is why, you know, fasting is considered quite an important spiritual practice; it just gives us a holiday from eating, even if it's only for a day. And I know from my own experience of fasting, especially when I did slightly longer fasts in India - say a week or ten days - you f8el so free; there's as it were so little you have to do. It's almost as though you've got - well, if not infinite time, but certainly an enormous amount of time on your hands if you're not having to think about food or about eating or about meals or even about cooking. It really does occupy in a way quite a disproportionate amount of our... you know, time and energy.

So this is just one very basic simple example, you know, that we usually, we usually overlook, of a sense-based instinct and impulse, and there are you know all sorts of others there's no need to go into in detail. There's what for instance I sometimes call the 'X Factor'.

- I don't know if any of you have heard me talk about this but it comes up in this sort of way: that suppose you ask somebody to do something and they say they're not able to do it, but you know they're - but maybe they give reasons but you know they're not giving the real reason. The 'X Factor' is some factor at the back of their mind which is in- fluencing them deeply but of which they're hardly aware and it's usually a factor of this sort. Yes, and I sometimes say the 'X Factor' is more often than not the sex factor. (Laughter) maybe they promised their girlfriend that they'll go out with her that evening, but they don't want to say so: "I can't come because that's what I promised." It's

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that 'X Factor'. They'll say almost anything other than that: "Well, I'm busy," or "I don't feel too well tonight," or whatever it might be. But there is that factor at the back of their mind very often dominating and shaping everything that they do and feel and think, and again just like the food. And in this way there are so many things; they can be on sort of higher and higher levels. You can get for instance some people who might be so interested, say, in something like books. Yes, if they visit any new town or new city or even a new village, what's the first thing they look for? A bookehop! (Laughter) fflaybe that is unconsciously influencing them the whole time because that's what they're interested in.

So in this sort of way the ordinary worldling, as Conze calls him, is governed by his sense-based instincts and impulses and we don't realize this. I mean the id~als we profess usually have a quite minimal, a quit~ peripheral, you know, effect on our conduct, on our life. But what is really - 'dominating' is not too strong a word - what is really dominating and

shaping everything we do and feel and think are these sense-based instincts and impulses. So we need to be very well aware of ourselves and just to see what is happening. Otherwise we can so easily deceive ourselves and rationalize.

So these instincts and impulses are sense-based and there are five physical senses. They're based therefore on the five physical senses; and also on what Buddhists call the sixth sense, which is the ordinary mind. And, as it were corresponding to them, or, you know, functioning as their counterparts, are the Five Spiritual Faculties of faith, vigour, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. So you see the sort of analogy between them. Normally we're under the domination of our five physical senses plus the mind, but, as we make spiritual progress, these five other faculties, or senses if you like, come into operation, come into play and gradually take over so that our lives, instead of being governed by sense-based instincts and impulses, are governed by these

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five higher spiritual faculties and this is the sign of spiritual progress. When we become aware that we're less and less swayed by the senses and the lower mind and more and more influenced by the five spiritual faculties then we can be sure that, you know, spiritual progress is actually occurring. So this way of putting it in a way presents the whole situation very neatly and very clearly and in a way that we can really understand. So, "As we progress, new, spiritual forces gradually take over\* until in the end the five cardinal virtues dominate and shape everything we do, feel and think." So one can therefore, you know, think of spiritual life itself entirely in terms of the five cardinal virtues or the five spiritual faculties and quite a lot of early Buddhist literature does just that. You may remember that in Conze's "Buddhist Texts Through the Ages" the selections from the Pali Scriptures are arranged under these five headings, of faith, vigour, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, because you've really got it all there. So anyway, any questions on that; is that clear?

Susiddhi: I'm a wee bit worried about the word 'instincts'. It's obviously not, you know, what's called biological instincts you're speaking about. Do the biological instincts come before the senses?

S: Biological instincts seem to come before the senses because they are - well, psychologists don't agree about them but at least in a sort of popular non-technical sense one can say that they are innate. When the baby is born it's as though even before he has any sense experience those instincts are there. I mean he cries for food before he's got any experience of food. So, you know, they're very deeply rooted indeed; the Buddhist would say that you've got those senses because you've got those instincts. Yes... I mean under the law of karma because you wanted that particular sort of experience, therefore you were born or reborn into a body equipped with those particular senses which could give you the sort of satisfaction that you wanted.

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That's why you're born into a body at all - and a gross physical body at that. If your desires had been more refined, well, you would have been born in a more refined environment with a more refined, as it were, physical body, in a heavenly world or even in extreme cases, in

the opposite case, in an animal body, in the animal world. But, I mean, 'instincts and impulses' we can say, you know, cover everything that is sort of blind and unconscious and unaware of itself: a sort of basic irresistible urge that you're hardly aware of

Susiddhi: I get the feeling that what happens is that a baby starts with a few very strong instincts but when it develops senses these have to spread out into very, very many, and different, different desires and impulses.

S: Because basically the baby's only instinct or desire or whatever is just for nourishment. There's food, comfort, warmth, something to support it, physical security, yes, those things are very simple. And then as you say as it gets older and becomes more and more aware of - well, maybe 'aware' isn't the right word - conscious - but what's going on around it - its instincts, its desires, its needs start diversifying and therefore multiplying and it's as though a more and more complicated net is spun and you are there right at the centre of all that as though in a sort of cocoon, and eventually you create your world around yourself in that way, the network of your desires. So, I mean, if you look at it, your world is made up of the ways in which you satisfy your desires. Yes, when you feel at home somewhere it's the place where you're quite familiar with the ways of fulfilling your desires. (Laughter) You know where all the shops are. (Laughter) Yes, you know where the Post Office is. These are all desires, you know, of one kind or another - more or less reasonable, more or less, you know, crudely instinctual. So that's where you feel at home, where you know exactly where to lay your hand on anything that you may happen to want; and that's why you

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may feel quite uncomfortable in a completely new situation. You might... for instance, supposing you're in some strange new centre or community you don't know where they keep their bread. (Laughter) It will give you a sort of uneasy feeling, won't it? You know you won't feel quite settled, you'll feel sort of almost alienated in that situation. But if you, or if someone says, "Oh, make yourself at home, the bread's in that cupboard, you'll find tea over there, jam..." (Laughter) And gradually as you settle somewhere you feel, you start making arrangements for the satisfaction of your own most basic needs, whatever they may be. If you're interested in books, well, you'll quickly find the nearest bookshop, and in that way, all around you, you know within various distances there are all these various sources of satisfaction, you know, for your needs, and they, for all effective purposes, make up your world.

There are these little pin points with these little threads stretching between and they make a particular pattern according to the nature of your needs, and that's your world, yes. In the case of some people, well, if they arrive in any new place, what's the first thing they look for? The pubs! They know where the pubs are, that's their world: those five or six, or seven or eight, or nine or ten pubs in the locality. They feel at home then when they've found them and they know what sort of beer is sold in each one and what sort of company, what sort of people go there, yes, whether they can have a game of billiards or not, etc, etc. And so, in any place, if there's a certain, if there's any particular need which you haven't found the means of satisfying, then you don't feel quite easy, quite settled, quite at home, you're not completely in your world.

And also, you know, just to carry this a stage further, what happens when you die is... well, your senses aren't there any longer, yes, the instruments through which you fulfill your

desires aren't there anymore; the world is no longer there, so that sort of network, that framework

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within which you satisfy your desires is no longer there, and if you haven't been prepared for this, by meditation and so on, you can feel completely disorientated and this is what the Tibetan Book of the Dead and other sources, you know, tell us. You're in a sort of empty space with no signposts, you've got desires still but, you know, carried over from your previous life, but you've no senses... (?) So you are in quite a confused sort of state, you can understand that well.

Mahamati: Perhaps one gets a taste of that on a much lesser level when one goes away on a solitary retreat, you haven't got the normal ways of satisfying your desires.

S: Yes, hmmm. But even on solitary retreat you do provide for the most basic need of all which is food. It's significant that you do, almost unconsciously, because obviously it isn't really a viable alternative, for any length of time, to do without food. At least you take a minimum of food with you... and, you know, a few simple cooking arrangements you do make. And of course there's shelter. So even on retreat you're not completely free from needs and the satisfaction of needs, but you do certainly cut it down very much. And especially you cut down the need for people because you're on your own and that maybe is one of our biggest needs on different levels, you know, well, I mean, instinctual, emotional and so on. Alright, let's go on.

Text: Faith is called... volitional, emotional and social. (Page 1)

S: So faith is called "the seed"; this is a quotation from, I think, the Suttas Nipata - and without it the plant of spiritual life cannot start at all. Faith is the seed, faith is the starting point. "Without faith one can, as a matter of fact, do nothing worthwhile at all." Do you see this? I'm not going too much into, you know, the meaning of faith, but without faith one can do nothing worthwhile at all. One could say one can't do anything at all. He says "nothing worthwhile at all,"

well, you can have a sort of bad faith which can cause you to do a lot

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of harm. So why do you think this is; how is it that faith is the seed and that without it one can't really do anything worthwhile? Siddhi: You're not emotionally involved and so there's no power.

S: Hmm, yes, yes. It's because of the emotional nature of faith really. I mean, he does mention four factors - intellectual, volitional, emotional and social - but predominately faith is an emotional thing, isn't it? It's a matter of feeling. It's what keeps you moving, keeps you going, keeps you striving. And this is true, he says, "not only of Buddhism, but of all religions." Would you agree with that? That it's true of all religions?

Mahamati: Is he sort of thinking of that faith gives one... one has

some ideal other than just sort of blindly following the senses, instincts?

S: Well, not only gives you an ideal. It's a question of - well, again we've no other word than 'faith' - in that ideal. You can sort of entertain an ideal as an abstract intellectual conviction but unless you've got faith you won't really do anything about it, unless you're emotionally moved by it. So, in a very sort of broad general way, it seems as though faith is the capacity for being emotionally moved and stirred by something that transcends the senses and even the rational mind, at least for the time being. And one could say that certainly there is something of that in all religions. Maybe it isn't always skilful, or very illumined, you know, from a Buddhist point of view, but something of that kind is there. And Dr Conze says, "and even the pseudo-religion of modern times, such as Communism." Why do you think he calls communism a pseudo-religion?

Suvajra: Well, perhaps everybody is trying to aspire towards a greater ideal.

S: Hmm. But why is that pseudo? What makes it a pseudo-religion?

J-ohn: There's no spiritual element.

S: There's no spiritual element. It's as though it stirs up something

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of an emotional nature very similar - at least, you know, to outward appearances - to religious faith, but it doesn't actually direct it to a definitely spiritual, something of a transcendental goal. So, in that sense, it's a... you know, in that sense, Communism is a pseudo-religion. You could also say that there is something murky about the faith itself because it can be mixed up with various negative factors, especially hatred, envy, and so on, but again you could say that of Christian faith. Hmm, that is often mixed up with negative emotional factors too - from a Buddhist Point of view. So perhaps there isn't such a clear-cut distinction between the you know the religions and the pseudo-religions. I mean, perhaps Buddhism would, you know, put Christianity also in the pseudo-

religions in this respect if you want to be quite strict. rather Susiddhi: You mean more guilt is a more negative thing than hate.

S: Well, even hate, if you consider that Christian faith or faith in Christianity usually involves a very negative attitude towards other beliefs, other religions. I mean, this is something I've experienced in India, you know. I might, say, meet a Christian and if I happened to say that I was a Buddhist that usually the reaction was "Oh, that's interesting." But a reaction of suspicion, resentment, annoyance, - irritation, that was the standard reaction.

Susiddhi: Isn't that a cultural thing?

S: Hmm?

Susiddhi: Isn't that a cultural thing, you know, that the people who were spreading themselves throughout the world and taking Christianity with them regarded themselves as a



bit above everyone else?

S: Oh yes - because they regarded Christianity as above other religions, as the one true faith, and themselves as its representatives.

Susiddhi: I thought it was the other way round actually: that they were the top men in the world, so their faith was top faith. I mean, Christianity is not the only religion as regards itself as the one true....

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S: No, they... What they used to tell people in India in the old days, you know, - it doesn't quite hold good now - was, they used to say, "Look, who are the most powerful people in the world? It's the Europeans. And among the Europeans? It's the British. And why?" (Thumps Table) "Why, because Cod is pleased with them! And why is Cod pleased with them? Because they're Christians, they're following the right path. Yes, therefore Cod has blessed them. Yes, blessed them with wealth, blessed them with, you know, fine houses and motor cars. This is all Cod's blessing. And you in India, what have you got? You've got nothing! Why? Cod is angry with you because you worship idols~" And this, for illiterate Indians, you know, can be quite a powerful argument because, you know, even in India people are not all that highly spiritual; they do have this tendency to associate religiosity with spirit - with material, with mundane well-being, just as the Jews did in the Old Testament, that material prosperity is a sign of divine approval, yes. So they also think, "Well, yes, there must be something in this, you know. We're poor, wretched people; maybe Cod is angry with us, Look, these people so have all these things; maybe Cod is pleased with them." Here you've got just this very simple faith in Cod. Well, it may, well, you know, seem very plausible to you what the missionaries --ay, hmm. So they definitely do think I don't know whether they still say - maybe American missionaries still say this - they were certainly saying it when I was there fourteen, fifteen years ago - that, you know, "We're Cod's own country, Cod favours us above all the other countries because we're the most religious, the most Christian, the most pious." So material prosperity is annexed to the 'right faith', hmm. So they, they believe that, yes, they are culturally superior, economically superior. Why? Because they started off, you know, with the right religion, they were religiously superior.

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Tape One. Side Two

S: But, of course, you know, this is beginning to be a bit doubted now because, you know, the Arabs are becoming the really, you know, the really righteous people, as it were, yes. (Laughter) And maybe some people will start thinking, you know, "well, maybe there's something in that. You know, maybe Allah has blessed them in some special way. I mean, Cod is the ruler of all; Cod knows what is going to happen. Why did Cod put the oil" (Laughter) "in the Arab countries especially, all those countries which were going to become Moslem, yes? He knew! Yes, it was all part of his grand design, yes, that these countries which became Moslem, they were so good and faithful he'd have a reward in store for them, without them knowing it. They would discover oil, yes, and become the richest and most

powerful people, or at least among the richest and most powerful people, you know, in the whole world."

You know, to simple-minded people this argument, this sort of argument is quite appealing, yes. If you start off with the idea of a God, and God as the ruler and governor of the Universe and the Creator, it sounds quite plausible, doesn't it, if you grant those assumptions?

Anyway, we got onto that from pseudo-religion. So I would say therefore that, you know, Buddhism would even say perhaps, it's not just Communism that is a pseudo-religion but, you know, even Christianity to the extent that Christian faith is not completely pure and, you know, often contains, you know, very negative emotional elements or negative emotional factors where other religions are concerned. This is quite an important point - that Buddhism itself does believe that, yes, there is a difference between right and wrong view, and a Buddhist will certainly think that in holding wrong, in holding right views he's better off, or even if you like, to the point of holding wrong views. He'd certainly think that it's better to hold right views rather than wrong views. But on the other hand he wouldn't have a negative attitude

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toward the person holding the wrong views. He'd like to talk with him, to discuss, to persuade, but not get so angry and so furious as to want to send him to the stake, which is what the Christians did. That's the difference. I mean, surely every religion will believe it's in the right. I mean, it cannot do other than that. So in a sense you could say there's nothing wrong in believing that you're right and even believing that others are wrong, because you both can't be right if the propositions, you know, are contradictory. But the difference comes in that Buddhism is so sort of devoutly convinced of the - what shall I say - the value of the individual that it cannot contemplate any violation of that. And it's so deeply convinced that the individual must understand and see things for himself that it cannot contemplate any way of changing somebody's opinion, even a wrong opinion, other than by plain and simple discussion in a friendly sort of way. There's no question of just forcing him just to say, "Oh, I believe in Buddhism". That has no value whatever in the eyes of the Buddhist. A Buddhist may believe as strongly, in a way, as any Christian that what he teaches is right, or what he believes is right and what others believe is wrong, but he'll go about convincing others in a completely different way, hmm, Which means really that even the way in which he believes that he is right is different, because it's as though the Christian sort of psychological security is bound up with his being right, but the Buddhist apparently is not, because the Buddhist won't get upset and irritated if others disbelieve what he believes. He won't mind because, you know, he gives first place to the individual, hmm. So even if somebody else rejects Buddhism and disagrees with what, you know, he believes in as a Buddhist he won't get sort of alarmed or upset or irritated, he'll just see another individual just trying to work things out in his own way even though he as a Buddhist may think he's quite mistaken. He won't see some sinner or someone who is deliberately flouting the Will of God or

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rejecting, you know, God's revelation. He'll just see some other individual who is trying in his own way to get to the bottom of it all and make sense of it all. And he'll just feel like talking with him and discussing and just trying to help him clarify his mind - I mean the Buddhist hopes in the direction of Buddhism, but if not, never mind, you don't get upset and irritated. That's the difference.

Alright then, let's go on to these four factors because, as Conz says, ... 'this faith is much more than the mere acceptance of beliefs. It requires the combination of four factors - intellectual, volitional, emotional and social.' OK, let's go on and do that; read that whole paragraph.

Text: Intellectually, faith is.... other aspects of faith. (pages 1-2)

S: Let's go into that a bit. "Intellectually, faith is an assent to a doctrine" - should be 'doctrines' I think "which are not...(Text)

factual evidence." He's making it very clear, isn't he? "Doctrines which are not substantiated by immediately available direct factual evidence." Hmm. Supposing, for instance, you had never seen, let's say, an artichoke before and you refused to believe there was any such vegetable, and I said, "Well, no, there is such a thing." You might say "Well, prove it." Or I could go out into the garden, I could pick one, because we've got some there, and I could bring it back and I'd show it to you. So that is immediately available, yes. I don't say, "Well, I'll show you next week or next year or after you're dead." (Laughter) It's immediately available, direct - because you can see it for yourself - factual - it's concrete not abstract or theoretical - evidence - because you can't refuse to accept it then. Hmm. But the doctrines of religions are not like that. (Laughter) You see what I mean? Yes. "Faith is assent\*...(Text) ...factual evidence." You can't just prove it or demonstrate it or show it to be true just like that, just like going and picking the artichoke and then showing it to somebody. "To be a matter... of faith, a belief must go beyond the available evidence..."

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Hmm. If there is sufficient evidence then it's no longer a matter of belief, it's a matter of knowledge, one might say. But, "To be a matter... (Text) ...and trusting acceptance." That's quite important. 'Patient', because he's prepared to maintain that attitude of faith; 'trusting', - how can one paraphrase 'trusting'? you've got a sort of confidence in the credentials, the good intentions, of those who are asking him to accept certain things on faith. And he does accept, there's a genuine sort of opening of himself to those things which are the objects of faith. So, "Faith, taken in this... (Text) ...or perplexity." You see the difference between these two? First of all, dull unawareness of the things which are worth believing in. You know, you can see this state in people, yes, very often they say, "Oh, I... there's nothing to believe in." They adopt this sort of cynical, so-called worldly kind of attitude. They even, they, in fact, they even go so far to say, "Well, no one really believes in anything; it's all self-interest, it's just self-motivation, nothing beyond that." And a dull unaware... er, doubt and perplexity. You might be, you know, confronted by a number of alternative beliefs, you might not know which one to accept, and therefore there might be doubt or perplexity. Or you might have, you know, some reason almost for disbelieving, of some kind or other, which makes it difficult for you to accept that particular thing. And again, there's doubt and perplexity or

doubt of perplexity. So, "In any kind... (Text) ...or Teachers." Hmm. You can't start off knowing everything, you have to take some things on trust. This is, it seems, I wouldn't say, a condition of religion, it's a condition of life. I think it's quite important in a way to point this out. It's not as though religions are the only things that demand belief, are the only things which require faith. Your life requires faith at every step. Alright, supposing you set out for this place, for this weekend, maybe you caught a train; you had that complete faith that the trains would be running - it's sometimes shown to be unjustified. You

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know. You have that faith that you will get there. You have that faith that you're going to continue living, that you aren't going to have a heart attack on the way, there isn't going to be a collision. The tickets will be on sale, yes. This is all a matter of faith - you don't know. You can even ring up, you know, from your home, I mean, enquiring whether the trains are running. The answer is 'yes', but there's no guarantee that something won't happen to stop them running by the time you get to the station. I mean, a strike - anyone can call a strike in half-an-hour, that's plenty of time (Laughter) nowadays in which to hold a strike or for some other things to go wrong in, yes.

So it's... our whole life is grounded on faith on every step. A more or less reasonable faith, not on absolute knowledge. It's very rarely based on knowledge, hmm. So I think this is something which needs to be borne in mind, it's not that religions only demand faith, that life itself demands faith. You can't live without faith. If you have too much of a sceptical, anxious, disbelieving attitude that wants to know the reasons for everything and be sure of everything in advance before you do it, you will cripple and inhibit yourself. There are some things which you just can't know in advance, can't be sure of, you have to take a chance, in other words you have to have faith. So, "In any kind of religion," as in life in general, "some assumptions... (Text) ...Teachers." The difference is of course is that what you take on trust pertains to realm of experience, you know, other than that of this world. When you have faith, you know, within the context of life, it's faith with regard to, as it were, other things on the same level. But when you have faith with regard to spiritual things, it's with regard, you know, to things existing on a different level, about which you are told by Scriptures or Teachers.

But there's no real difference in principle. "Generally speaking... (Text) ...face to face'." Where does that quotation come from? John Wakeman: Saint Paul.

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S: Saint Paul, yes. So St Paul says, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." What does he mean by 'now'? When is 'now'?

John: The time when you have faith.

S: No. Well, yes, but he's not quite thinking that. Anyway he's thinking of this life. And 'then', when is 'then'?

Voices: After death.

S: After death. So there's a bit of difference here, you know, as regard Buddhism, because Buddhism teaches that faith isn't, you know, provisional just in that sense, in the sense that it's provisional until such time that you're dead and you stand in front of God. No, it's provisional until such time that you have your own personal experience, which you can have in this life as a result of your own efforts. So there is some difference here, yes.

Irahmati: It's quite sort of pessimistic, the point of view, I mean that, St Paul's view that you can only see through a glass darkly.

S: Yes. I mean, according to Buddhism too there is a difference between seeing through a glass darkly and seeing face to face but it's a distinction which does or which can obtain within this life itself. You don't have to wait until you die. If you have to wait until you die then the whole thing becomes so uncertain, because there's no possibility of verification because nobody can come, nobody apparently comes back, yes, to say, "Well, yes, this is what happened." Well, one or two stories about people. There is a story which has been shown to be legendary, of how St Bruno, the founder of the Carthusian Order, became a monk. This is about, I think, in the eleventh century. Apparently there was a quite well-known respectable ecclesiastic and he died. And he was in his coffin right in the middle of the big cathedral to which he was attached. And suddenly, to everybody's consternation, he sat up and he said, "I am indicted in front of the throne of God." And he fell back. So they were so upset so they just fled. (Laughter) Anyway, they came

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back the next day to, you know, continue the funeral service, and in the middle of the service the second time he sat up, and said, "I am judged in front of the throne of God." Again, consternation; they all ran away. The third day they came back, again tried to get on with the funeral, and he sat up for the third time, and he said, "I am condemned in front of the throne of God." So there was general horror and they threw his body onto a dunghill (Laughter) because he'd gone to Hell, yes.

So there are a few stories like that, but, you know, they don't really amount to very much, yes. So one hasn't really got very much to go on, if one has to rely on that sort of thing. But Buddhists do make the point, or Buddhism makes the point that you can verify in this life.

End of Tape One. Side Two

Tape Two, Side One

S: If Buddhism says, for instance, that hatred doesn't cease by hatred, it only ceases by love, well, you can verify that. And, you know, there is nothing that is really a part of Buddhism that you can't verify. ~ne could even reverse that and say if you can't verify it, you know, in this very life itself, it's not part of the essential teaching of Buddhism, yes. I mean, this comes up with regard to things like karma and rebirth; in a way you can't verify that, you know, with regard to the whole span of successive lives in the course of this life. Unless, of course, you had a recollection of previous lives which would be completely convincing to you. But it

would be very difficult to convince others. At least you'd be convinced because you'd been able to see for yourself that your experience of recollection of previous lives was exactly the same as and continuous with your recollection of past lives, er, past years in this life itself; there'd be no difference at all for you and you'd know it wasn't fantasy in the same way that you know your recollection of last week isn't fantasy, yes. So there is this difference in this respect

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between Buddhism and Christianity. The Buddhist Scriptures and Buddhist Teachers ask you to have faith in a very provisional, provisional sense, until such time as you have your own experience and you can have that in this life itself. Whereas, in the case of Christianity, it seems you have to wait for verification until after death.

"(fluch time... (Text) . . .-ature of reality." And, of course that wisdom becomes strong with the support of meditation and, you know, your whole spiritual practice and spiritual life. "Until then... (Text).. .inx~uitkx~ °.of our difficulties." I'm not quite satisfied with this or with this subdivision actually; I think it distorts things a little bit. I would stick to the traditional sort of - what shall I say? - traditional classification and, you know, speak in terms of faith in the Three Jewels, beginning with the Buddha, and I'd lump number one and two, at least, - maybe number four also - under the Dharma. And then that gives importance to, to the Buddha. Otherwise the Buddha here is simply included along with the Three Jewels under number three, yes. But it is in a way essentially the Buddha you have faith in. In other words, you have faith in the possibility of enlightenment. That means that you have faith that the Buddha is Enlightened and that faith means that you know it's provisional. You believe that you too can gain Enlightenment if you follow the Buddha's instruction. So, in as much as it is Enlightenment for yourself, which is mainly what you are concerned about as a Buddhist, your faith is mainly in the Buddha as an Enlightened being of the kind which you too can become. And faith in this doctrine or that doctrine is quite secondary, because that's only the means to that goal, So I think here Dr Conze somewhat distorts the overall picture by relegating the Buddha, and faith in the Buddha, to this relatively unimportant position. Do you see what I mean?

~~~~~ati: It seems to be quite a distance from the actual way that it seems to work, in a way the sort of belief in karma and rebirth....

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S: You don't actually start - I don't know whether he intends to represent these for us as a sort of logical sequence - but one doesn't actually start off like that. You know, one might never believe in karma and rebirth, yes, I mean, sometimes people used to ask me in the old days whether it's necessary to believe in karma and rebirth in order to be a Buddhist. So I'd say yes and no: if you are prepared to gain Enlightenment in this very life, you don't need to believe in karma and rebirth, yes, that can look after itself. Presumably, when you're Enlightened, you'll know the truth of the matter for yourself, hmm. I mean, maybe for some people it is

helpful to think in terms of a whole series of lives, and karma, your own karma, extending from life to life in accordance with your own deeds. And maybe it is quite encouraging to think of yourself as slowly following the Path, progressing little by little over scores and hundreds and thousands of lives. For some people that's very convincing, very appealing, and very helpful. But suppose you can't believe that, supposing you're of a doubting, enquiring, sceptical kind of mind; you can't accept as much as you might like to - this whole series of lives, karma and rebirth - but you can still gain Enlightenment in this life. The only thing that prevents you from being a Buddhist is if you don't believe that you can develop more and more and more as a human being in this life itself. That's the only thing that you have to believe as a Buddhist that is, which is indispensable. You must believe that you can grow. And, if you want to call yourself a Buddhist and grow in that particular kind of way, well, obviously you believe in the Buddha as an example of that growth; the Buddha represents what a man can be, what a human being can be, and therefore what you can be. So you have faith in Him in that sense.

And also there's the sense, it's also motivation; it's not just a doctrinal belief in the Buddha, you feel inspired by the Buddha. I mean, when you read the life, especially maybe a poetic life, you feel very attracted by that, there's a definite emotion that you have in response to that life, and that all also is faith. You feel that there's something very beautiful about that life, you know, very attractive, appealing, inspiring, uplifting, and you feel some sort of even, you know, - distant though it may be - kinship with that and you feel: Yes, I could be like that; that's an ideal for me. So this is your primary faith and it's provisional until such time as you become like that, or at least more like that, and then it won't be provisional any longer, then you won't weep, you won't be peering through the glass darkly, you'll be seeing face to face. In fact, more than that, not even seeing face to face, yours will be the face, (Laughter) just like in the mirror, and - see! it's you!

So I think Dr Conze here relegates the Buddha rather to secondary, not to say tertiary, place. It's not quite in accordance with tradition and gives maybe a bit too much importance to the doctrinal side of things.

So, the belief in karma and rebirth, hmm. Did you find karma and rebirth easy to believe in? Does it seem, you know (j.7 ) or not?

A Voice: ) find it easy at all.

Susiddhi: It's sensible; I wouldn't say it's easy to believe in it.

~ There's also the question: Is it really all that matter a question of belief? Do you see what I mean?

Surata: It seems pretty logical to me: it's just like an extension of the sort of thing that you, the things you do, have consequences in the future, sort of thing.

S: Hmmm, yes. I didn't mean....

Surata: It's just like..(' °?~ )

S: I didn't mean in quite that way though, but in the sense that: Is there not some evidence,

you know? I mean, is it that it's not so much a matter of belief? Because it does seem that there is some evidence and therefore one can believe it on rational grounds at least tentatively as it were.

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Suvajra: Er, what is the evidence?

S: Well, evidence in the form of alleged recollections of previous lives which have been checked up on and apparently verified. And there is a growing literature of this sort, you know. But what perhaps is interesting is that though there is this literature, there are some people, even though they might be Buddhists—and, you know, quite into their own growth and development, not very interested in checking up on it. I mean, here is what purports to be evidence, so one might think people would rush off to, to read it, to go through it, and to see whether there is anything in it, but apparently not. Apparently it's either, it's something you are either interested in and believe, or you're not interested in it, you don't believe, and you don't particularly want to find out whether it's true or not, even. Yes, do you see what I mean? It's almost as though it's outside your sphere of interest. In a way perhaps it is, if, you know, you've got enough faith to keep you going in terms of development without that, well, maybe you just don't need it. You've got your motivation, you don't need to look for a second one, maybe it's something of that sort.

Mahamati: I find it completely rational - karma and rebirth - and when I come across, say, a Moslem or a Christian who talks in terms of just one life and heaven and hell afterwards, I find it just completely absurd.

S: Yes. One might say there's no complete, as it were, a priori proof for karma and rebirth and all that, but certainly it's more rational than believing in just one life with no before and no after. I mean, it might be difficult to explain karma and rebirth but it's much more difficult to explain all those other theories. (Laughter) You have to fall back entirely on, on revelation and authority. That, for instance,

that your soul was created the instant your mother conceived you, especially by God - that takes some swallowing, doesn't it? (Laughter) Or, if you don't believe, you know, in the Christian view, or the Buddhist view, or

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the Moslem view, you've got to believe that it all came about entirely by accident, which takes a bit of swallowing too, doesn't it? So there are those views, none of them from the logical point of view - very satisfactory, but I think one could say, you know, modestly, that the Buddhist point of view, which includes to some extent the Hindu, about karma and rebirth is at least the least unsatisfactory. You may not be completely happy with it but you couldn't possibly be happy with these other solutions or these other explanations.



1~ahamati: The general lack of interest in rebirth, it's almost a sort of cultural thing, just sort of complete blindness and complete disinterest.

S: Yes, it could be. But interest seems to be growing, you know, judging by a few books that have been published lately. I've just received one from America, a very good anthology of extracts from the writings of people all over the world, in the West as well as in the East, on the subject of rebirth. And it's certainly surprising how many people have believed in it even in the West - but certainly in an underground sort of way. And there weren't very many people during the middle Ages who believed in it, you know, because the Church suppressed that belief as heresy, but since those days it seems to have been gradually and steadily growing; all sorts of prominent people seem to believe in it: you know, writers, scientists, politicians, poets, and so on, even military men.

John W: I think there tends to be a sort of slight underlying feeling that there is something slightly creepy about it, you know, into spiritual and that sort of thing.

5: There could be that, because it came in with the Theosophists and, you know, whatever good work the Theosophists might have done, there were certain rather cranky and eccentric aspects of the Theosophical movement so maybe for a lot of people belief in karma and reincarnation, you know, have come to be associated with that sort of thing. I remember Christmas

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Humphries telling me once that he'd known in the course of his life at least seven women who believed that they were the reincarnations of Cleopatra! (Laughter) So one doesn't feel like being associated with women of that sort, does one? And Christmas Humphries believes he lived in Ancient Egypt and he was the captain of pharaoh's guard, according to the autobiography! (Laughter) I don't know whether Mrs Humphries believed that she was Cleopatra (Laughter) but she also believed that she was something pretty distinguished in Egyptian times. As far as I remember reading his autobiography, she was a princess at that time (Laughter) and they had an ill

starred relationship. (Laughter) So you know when these sort of stories when are dished up, you know, karma and rebirth are mentioned, you can

imagine sort of, you know, logical people rather shying away from all that can't you? Maybe that is one of the reasons. There's... It's been a vehicle of so much personal fantasy that people just don't want to be associated with it, which is unfortunate. Just like, you know, there is so much wrong nature that's been associated with religion, people don't like to use the word 'religion' or to think in those terms, you know, quite understandably. So maybe it means putting this belief in karma and rebirth on a much more solid, sensible, practical sort of basis and getting away from all these fantasies and wish-fulfillments and, sort of, --you know, what one can only describe as occult snobbery, Andy S: The question very rarely seems to come up actually at classes or things like that.

S: Pardon? It does? It doesn't?

Andy S: The question very rarely seems to come up.

S: Hmm. Again this is something~Christmas Humphreys mentioned to me. He said that, when he started the Buddhist Society, that the majority of people who came into it, and I think they must have had some association with Theosophy, came into it because they were attracted by the teaching of karma and rebirth. But, he said, now - and this was talking to me

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about fifteen years ago now - he said hardly anybody seems to come in, you know, for that sort of reason, People don't seem so interested in karma and rebirth. ~nd he was rather, you know, regretful about that. But maybe it is because, you know, there are other motivations, which is not a bad thing in a way. Maybe in the case of people in the Friends the motivation is the desire to grow; Buddhism means just that, and quite

rightly means that - in this life, here and now. So karma and rebirth, has whether you believe in it or don't believe in it,/become something peri

pheral. You're not, your life is not based on that, your life as a Buddhist is not based on that. You don't believe in a little bit of effort in this life, a little bit of effort in the next, and then a little bit more in the next, like many Buddhists do in the East. You've got this life, as much as possible even gain Enlightenment in this life~ and you're not thinking in terms of future lives, you want to do as much as you can here and now. And you believe - if you have any belief on the subject - that the future will look after itself if you do the right thing here and now. So, in a way, you do believe in the law of karma then. If you get so far, you don't need to bother about the future if you look after the present. In a way, that is believing in the law of karma. But a lot of people, no doubt, don't even think about it to that extent - they might even go so far as to deny it - but they'd still be getting on with their, you know, personal development here and now, which is the main thing.

Mahamati: But is believing in the law of karma without thinking about rebirth, I mean, more than just: through positive action one can change oneself - it's that sort of...

S: Yes, because clearly one must believe in the law of psychological cause and effect - that, if you do undertake a certain practice, then it will have a certain effect. In other words, there is a law in accordance with which those effects will accrue to one and one can call that the

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law of karma, but it's the law of karma operating within the present lifetime, even perhaps within the space of a few months, weeks, days, or even hours. But it is in principle the same

law, the same law that those People believe in who envisage it as extending, you know, to cover a whole series of lives.

Alright then;" (2) the acceptance of the basic teachings about the nature of reality, such as conditioned co-production, emptiness, etc." I mean, if you believe that only the enlightened person sees things as they really are, and if you are aware that you at present don't see things as they really are because you aren't enlightened, it means you have to take on trust whatever the enlightened person says about the way things are, or about reality. So, if the person whom you believe says reality is void, is *~unyata*, there is such a thing as conditioned co-production, that is the way things really are, well, you accept that until such time as you can verify from your own personal spiritual vision and insight that it is in fact so. But these are of course very basic things indeed, there aren't many things of this order. There's conditioned co-production, there's emptiness, there's also the three characteristics of conditioned existence, yes. So, one believes those teachings which pertain to ultimate reality, because you believe that the fully enlightened person,

- which is what you want to be, sees things in that way, and you believe that you will see them in that way when you are enlightened. meanwhile, you accept on trust, in faith, that that is the way things are and you proceed accordingly. But clearly there is a number of things that you know this doesn't include. I mean it doesn't pertain to matters of mundane fact which can be verified, you know. The Buddha might have made a mistake about geography just because he was misinformed. It might be in the Scriptures, that mistake, but you don't have to accept it, it doesn't pertain to ultimate reality.

- Then confidence in the 'three refuges', the Buddha, the Dharma, the

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Sangha. As I said, that confidence or faith in the Buddha is the main one, then the confidence or faith in the Dharma, and then in the Order, which presumably comes under Dr Conze's 'socially' - yes, number four, hmmm. Also, you know, the... he, he says originally, "It requires the combination of four factors - intellectual, volitional, emotional and social." He treats even the Three Jewels under this heading of 'intellectual', hmm, yes, as though it's an intellectual assent to the Three Jewels, rather than an emotional response to them, you see what I mean? But that is what one is primarily what one is concerned with in the case of the Buddha, you know, - it's your emotional response to the, that actual concrete example of an enlightened human being, not merely an intellectual assent to the fact that, yes, he is enlightened.

Alright then, "(4) a belief... (Text) ...our difficulties." This really comes under Dharma, doesn't it, yes. "I shall say... (Text) ...of faith." So really, under 'intellectual', one is concerned with faith in or assent to doctrines, I say doctrines, about the nature of ultimate reality, yes. The intellectual factor doesn't really cover, doesn't really, in a sense, apply to your faith in the Buddha, it's much more an intellectual thing.

Suaiddhi: I think: isn't it an intellectual thing to accept that that was done once, that someone attained that perfection once, then what are you going to do about it goes into the emotional...

5: That's true, but I think also you've got to have some sort of emotional feeling for what has been attained before you really start doing anything about it.

Susiddhi: But I think you've got to intellectually accept that it was possible and probably did happen before you even an emotional...

S: I think this probably depends on whether you're a doctrine follower or a faith follower, yes. (Laughter) I think a faith follower will be inspired by the Buddha as an enlightened human being, without even thinking whether it's possible or not, Do you see what I mean? Whereas the

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doctrine follower probably, as you say, is first of all convinced of the abstract possibility of someone becoming Enlightened, and then becomes convinced or at least develops faith in the fact that the Buddha has gained that Enlightenment, and starts responding or warming to, you know, the figure of the Buddha as Enlightened, yes.

(Ishamati: Even perhaps the doctrine follower has some unconscious urge,

emotional response, to the Buddha in order for him to accept it intellectually.

L~: Yes, there is that possibility too. It can't be on purely abstract theoretical grounds. Maybe it's just a question of you do get both there, but in the case of the doctrine follower intellectual considerations predominate, at least for the time being; whereas, in the case of the faith follower, it's the emotional, you know, considerations that are predominant. Alright, let's go on then: two, next paragraph.

Text: In this sceptical age... (Text) ...calculating mentality. (Pages 2-3) (Laughter)

S: Hmm, yes, that's very well put. Anyway, he starts off by saying,

"In this... (Text) ...side of faith." He seems quite aware, in a way, of his own shortcomings. (Laughter) "S'raddha Latin cor, 'the heart'" - one would never have thought so, would one? - "and faith... ...the intellect." This just puts it in a nutshell in a very simple way; "faith is far more a matter of the heart than of the intellect. It is, as Prof Radhakrishnan," - another intellectual - "incisively puts it... ..a given ideal." That sounds much more intellectual to me than, than of the heart, as it were. I don't think that really helps very much. It's very abstract, isn't it? "~triving after... ..given ideal." Hmm. No. That won't really do in this context.

Andy: It sounds like an act of the will.

S: Yes. "Volitionally, - that is in terms of will - "faith act of will." Yes. Where there's faith, there will be will in the true sense, not sort of will in a forced sense. "It combines... calculating

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mentality." So this example of the man of faith, the person who swims across the river, is meant as an analogy with the spiritual person, but it can be taken quite literally too, yes, can't it? Because, as I said, faith is needed in the ordinary affairs of life, and, you know, you know there's a great difference between the person with faith and therefore with courage and will in the ordinary affairs of life, and one who hasn't got them. You can tell that sometimes when people give, - I mean even something like money, something as, you know, as primitive as that, if I can use the word 'primitive' in this connection, but basic perhaps I should say, yes, You know, some people just give because they've got, you know, a sort of faith, and a will, therefore, is there. But others start, you know, calculating whether it's worthwhile and whether the recipient is worthy and whether they can afford it. But the person with faith and, therefore, will doesn't think like this; he gives. And, you know, different people have got these different attitudes in ordinary worldly affairs. You can easily distinguish the people with more faith and more will, therefore more courage, enterprise, initiative, all those sort of things, less timidity, less cowardice, less fear, less wavering, hmm. So you can see from this what a sort of extremely creative and powerful thing faith is, and the way in which it is linked with volition. You will and you can, yes. Where there's faith there are these two attitudes: I will and I can. This is, of course, one could say, also faith in oneself; you could even say there's no faith without faith in oneself. So, even when you have faith in the Buddha, you have faith in the Buddha as an enlightened human being, but, you know, you're a human being, and so to have faith in the Buddha is to have faith in humanity, to have faith in humanity is to have faith in yourself. So to have faith that a human being has gained Enlightenment is to have faith that a human being can gain Enlightenment and if you're a human being it means that you have faith that you can gain Enlightenment. So faith in the Buddha really is inseparable from

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faith in yourself. If you have faith in the Buddha, you have faith in yourself, if you don't have faith in yourself, you don't have faith in the Buddha. If you have faith in yourself without having faith in the Buddha, so to speak, that's just egotism, because you just accept what you are now, it's not a question of future higher potential. Mahamati: Could you say it again? What's egotism: if you have faith in the Buddha but not faith in yourself?

3: No: faith in yourself but not faith in the Buddha.

Mahamati: Oh, yes.

S: because then you don't have faith in something higher than yourself into which you can grow. That's what I meant. You just sort of accept yourself as you are now on your relatively undeveloped level. It's a horizontal faith, you might say, not a vertical faith. You have faith in what you can do on your present level of development but you don't have faith that you can develop to a higher level, yes... Alright, onto three then. Text: 3. Emotionally, faith is... (Text) ...true gain. (Page ~)

S: Bit of mean calculation here, I think. (Laughter)

Text: And if there... (Text) ...our radiance? (Page 3)

S: That's all very well but then, even though he's supposed to be talking about what faith is emotionally, he seems to have got very quickly onto this intellectual level, yes. Do you see what I mean?

(\ mahamati: I seem to get in quite a state myself when (

~: So here is faith in the Buddha? I mean, if, as I've said, you know, Buddhist faith is primarily faith in the Buddha, well, it's that which gives you your attitude of serenity and lucidity and freedom from worry about the necessities of life, loss of reputation, and so on... Not reasonings about karma and emptiness and not-self. It's the ideal, faith in the ideal, which keeps you in that state of, you know, extreme emotional positivity so that you don't worry, and you're free from intellectual worries too. So, anyway, I agree with what he says here, but I think

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you know, about faith being an attitude of serenity and its opposite being worry, but I think this is true you know about all of faith in the Buddha, you know, from a Buddhist point of view, and also therefore faith in oneself... It's also interesting that if you have faith, you cease to worry about the necessities of life, that's true, because you're not bothered so much, are you, because you're sort of happy and buoyant, you know, faith is an extremely, you know, emotionally positive state, hmm. You're not bothered about loss of reputation or death or unhappy rebirth. In a way you're not bothered about rebirth at all you could say. You're

not bothered about the impression he may make on an audience, that you may make on an audience, because you're not thinking about yourself, you're imbued with the ideal, you're full of that, you're emotionally positive, you're not dependent on the applause of the audience or the approval, you know, you're just talking to them, happily... So Dr Conze ought to have gone on to write something like, "It is fairly obvious that the burden of life must be greatly lightened by the recollection of the glorious figure of the Buddha," something like that, yes, rather than by belief in karma, emptiness or not-self. If you have the Buddha, you have all those things too because, you know, they represent the way in which the Buddha sees things. All the things that he says here, I mean, are quite true, but --it's not faith in the sense of belief in those doctrines which are operative here so much as faith in the Buddha... Alright, onto number four; socially.

Text: 4. Socially, and that is more difficult to understand, ~: That's odd, isn't it?

Text faith involves... (Text) . . . capacity for renunciation. (Pages 3-4)

S: Yes, that's quite important. I thought for a moment that he wasn't really going to mention the Sangha, but anyway it does come in towards

the end of the, the paragraph. I wouldn't include the Buddha here under 'socially' at all, I'd include the Buddha more under 'emotionally', yes,

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and include only the Sangha here. And of course there must be a break with the normal social environment and the transition to that, you know, that spiritual environment which is constituted, you know, by the Sangha...

"The spiritual man community of the saints," - the Arya Sangha -

"to the family relatives and friends." I think we must be a bit careful about this mother and father imagery. (Murmurs of agreement) Do you see what I mean? There was a programme on the radio, in fact two programmes, recently called "The Cod-mongers", and these programmes dealt with five religious sects, dealt with the Children of Cod, with the Hare Krishna movement, with Divine Light, with Scientology, - that's five, isn't it?

A Voice: Four

Mahamati: (... ? ...) include the Moonies.

S: Oh yes, that's right, the Moonies or Moonites, the followers of the Reverend Sun floon. So there were two Hindu, two Christian, and the jci-entologists. I was rather pleased Buddhism wasn't included. And in the first programme the compiler, or presenter, of the programme analysed the five needs which these sects met. First of all, there was a need for a family, a group within which you could feel warm, cosy, accepted, loved, and it was clearly a group not what we would call a spiritual community. And then an experience, an experience in much the same way that I've spoken of experience in the talk I gave on "Enlightenment as Experience and as Non-Experience". So that's the second need, an experience or at least the promise of an experience. (Laughter) And then, three, a complete set of all the answers, yes. And then, four, - they didn't put it in this way, but this is really what it was - a complete list of 'dos' and 'don'ts', a completely authoritative guidance as to how to live your life even down to the last detail.

~usiddhi: The father aspect.

S: And fifthly, separately, this loving father figure who was the, you know, the great guru figure of the whole movement, yes, who was a father

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figure - they used the expression 'a father figure', yes. So there's this sort of danger when we use this imagery. I know it has a spiritual meaning, but it can be taken psychologically, the Buddha being your father, the Prajnaparamita being your mother. I think we have to be quite careful about that and even about the brother and sister bit, I think we have to be careful about that. You want a spiritual family, not a substitute social family, do you see what I mean?

Susiddhi: An idealized family.

3: Not even an idealized family. Not even a good, happy family in the ordinary sense. You want something more than that, a spiritual community which goes far beyond the healthy group, yes. I'm not saying the group is bad, certainly the healthy group isn't, and you could say, yes, there is a place, there is a level on which you need the healthy positive group you know, even within the Friends there is room for that, that is a definite, you know, acknowledged and accepted level, but you mustn't confuse that with the spiritual community; that goes even farther. So, "It is with these more invisible forces" you notice he speaks of forces rather than persons - "that one must learn to establish satisfactory social relations." Well, they're more than social, perhaps you should say socio-spiritual or even just spiritual, hmmm. "In carrying out.... ...for renunciation." Yes, renunciation of the existing biological family, renunciation of the group, even the positive group, if you want to make that transition to the spiritual community, yes. And you must be quite clear what sort of level you're operating on or what sort of context within which you're operating. Enjoy the positive group by all means, you need to do that sometimes just by way of a bit of refreshment and relaxation, but don't sort of kid yourself that, you know, you're immersed in the spiritual community at that moment. You're not, it's just the healthy, happy, positive group. The spiritual community is something other. They may be the same people, you know, at different times,

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operating on different wavelengths, yes, It's not that there is one set of people necessarily - and I'm talking about the 'Friends now - that make up the positive group and another completely different set making up the spiritual community. No, it isn't quite so, you know, cut and dried as that; the same people may function in different ways at different times, operate more in one way than in another. Sometimes it may be difficult to tell whether they're functioning as positive group or spiritual community, it may seem a bit borderline, or maybe some people, you know, are taking the existing situation as a group situation, others are



taking it as a spiritual community situation, yes, do you see what I mean? But certainly that renunciation is required. You need actually to move from one to the other, at least in your own mind, and to be aware of what level you're operating on and not to mix up the two.

Also, 'Some measure... (Text) ...a spiritual life.' I think he's

putting it a bit strongly, I think because he's been very much of a loner. At the beginning of the paragraph it's almost as though he sees the alternatives as the social group or being on your own, but then he does bring in the spiritual community towards the end. But I think his own experience is more of being on his own, outside the social group, rather than of being in the spiritual community away from the social group. I

-- think he has had actually probably hardly any experience of the spiritual community at all.

Mahamati: I thought initially that when he said invisible forces I

thought... you know... I always thought that (?) saw spiritual friends as quite visible and quite tangible.

S: Hmm. Yes. Though, on the other hand, you can think of the invisible aspect, not quite in his way - as forces - but you can be very much in touch with other members of the spiritual community even when you're not in contact with them physically, like, you know, if you're on a solitary retreat and you do, say, if you're an order member, metta bhavana practice

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on the right night, you know, you can feel very much in touch, ye's, as though you really are there and they are there with you, you're not separate. So it doesn't hav~ to be physical, though it is in a way personal, in a manner of speaking.

Alright, that's socially. Let's go on to the next paragraph.

Text: This concludes... (Text) ...which is beneficial. (Page 4)

S: So, "Like other spiritual qualities... ...can be cultivated.'1 It's a gift in respect of temperament, though I'd mention here not so much the - what does he call it? - the personality type dominated by greed, so much as the faith follower. The faith follower seems to be a person with a temperamental inclination to believe, to have faith. So he starts off in a way with an advantage. But faith is an integral part of th~ spirit- ual life; I mean, according to the

Abhidharma, according to "Mind in Buddhist Psychology", for instance, faith is present in all wholesome states of ~t~ consciousness, yes, because all wholesome states of consciousness, all skilful states, are upward-striving states. And how can you strive upwards unless you have faith in something higher? So faith enters in all the time, yes. But, you know, looking at it just in ordinary terms, you're either a person who finds it easy to believe or a person who finds it difficult, but in either case you need to cultivate faith. (Laughter)

One could, of course, even question Buddhaghosa's parallel, if one

can, you know, do anything as temerarious as questioning, you know, Buddhaghosa. Because faith is not really a conditioned thing in the way that he seems to suggest, it's faith ultimately in the transcendental and there can hardly be a temperamental disposition to that. So that's why I say, even if you have the gift of faith, you still need to cultivate faith as a virtue. The gift of faith isn't enough; it could be not so much faith as just credulity. You could even say that credulity is the near enemy of faith.

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John: When you say cultivate faith as a virtue, how do you mean in practical terms?

S: Well, the whole emotional side of the spiritual life, say by reading the life of the Buddha, you know, by performing the puja; in this way one would, you know, develop one's faith, one's feeling for the spiritual ideal in other words as distinct simply from one's understanding of it. Alright, the next paragraph.

Text: As regards social... (Text) ..in the near future. (Page 5)

S: I'm not so sure I believe what he says at the beginning about "As regards social conditions, there are ages of faith and ages of unbelief." Hmm. He's probably thinking of the Christian ages of faith. I don't think the present age is an age of unbelief, it's just that the objects of belief differ, yes. You see what I mean? Whether there can be an age of belief in the sense of belief in the transcendental is very, very doubtful, you know, for the reasons which I mentioned before - that, you know, belief in the transcendental, faith in the transcendental, by, you know, its very nature, can't be, so to speak, a conditioned thing. It can't be something that you're born with or you just imbibe from the general atmosphere. Socially speaking, yes, I mean, the middle Ages in Europe were ages of faith in the sense that you believed in God, you believed in the Pope, but, you know, what sort of real faith was that? And, you know, at present you don't believe in those things unless you're still a Catholic. But you believe in lots of other things: you believe in the power of science for instance - you don't really know very much about science but you've got a sort of unlimited faith in it. (Laughter) Do you see what I mean? Hmm. So maybe in certain respects this is not an age of faith but in certain other respects it is. I've mentioned in a lecture that say a hundred years ago everybody in Russia was an Orthodox Christian and believed in that, now they're mostly orthodox marxists and they believe in that, but it's still the same sort of passive sort of

acquiescent belief which perhaps you can hardly dignify with the name of faith in the

Buddhist sense. I mean, what he says about the distractions

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from the sensory world multiplying, I mean, that's all very true, ye's; about the citizen being exposed to a great variety of conflicting view- points, well you found that in the Buddha's time too - there are those six philosophers or those six different teachers going around. Admittedly you know it's even greater now. Well\* I don't believe that, you know, that institutions of uncontested authority have disappeared. It's the scientific institutions which give us our faith now; I mean they are of uncontested authority by and large. He sounds a bit hopeless: "It is largely a matter of temperament whether we believe that matters will improve in the near future." Well, perhaps it is, but perhaps that isn't- the whole story.

Alright, let's go on.

Text: As a virtue... (Text) ...discussing opinions. (page s)

S: No, this is going to be a rather long paragraph and also uie've not got much time, in fact we haven't really got any time left. But let's do a bit more, just discuss it bit by bit. "As a virtue... discussing opinions." To what extent do you think that is true: that faith is strength~ned and built up by self-discipline~

Mahamati: I think it's very true.

S: You think it's very true, yes....

~~hamati: You go through with your practice.

S: Hmm, through your practice, yes...

(nahamati: You get results and that inspires one.

S: Yes

Surata: You also get verifications through discussing op~nions, don't you?

S: Do you get clarification?

Surata: Yes.

S: Yes, if it's of the right sort and of the right people.

Andy: Just through contact, just contact with other members of the Sangha.

Susid~hi: Is it not strengthened by awareness?

S: It's strengthened by awareness, yes, of the object of faith, as it

were, if you see more clearly the virtues of the Buddha, yes.

Susiddhi: No, but I mean, strengthened by... at the beginning you have certain things which you have confidence in and you try to build on them; you're aware of doing certain practices or trying to... even being aware, and you're trying to be aware of the effect of being aware.

S: Right.

Susiddhi: And the other practices... and it sort of...

S: See the results of them.

Susiddhi: ...builds on what you had to begin with.

S: Hmm. Alright, carry on then.

Text: Intellectual difficulties... (Text) ...one's character. (Page 5)

S: Yes, "Doubts are inevitable," you know, "but how one deals with them depends on one's character." You can entertain them, turn them over in your mind, make much of them, or you can just say: well, there are these doubts, never mind, I'll carry on nonetheless, because you've got more faith at the same time. Alright, carry on.

Text: The first of our... (Text) ...in 1961. (Page 5)

S: The book I referred to is the new enlarged edition of that, which has just come out and which I've just received.

Text: Yet, although belief... (Text) ...our convictions least of all. (Pages 5-7)

~: Yes. This is why I said that faith is necessary, you know, even in

ordinary life. We can't have certainty, we can't have knowledge, we rely on faith all the time, hmm. He gives some examples of that.

Text: Employees in gaining wealth... (Text) ...his property. (Page 7)

S: Yes, you risk because you have faith and not knowledge, yes.

Text: Employee~ in taking li~e .will not run out. (Page 7) (Laughter)

Susiddhi: Conze's shining through there, isn't he?

S: So you see there is this question of faith in it all. You know, as I said, you can't, you know,

move a step without faith, and that implies

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the risk. Someone was reminding me the other day that I, that he, many years ago had asked me what was the antidote to moha-- you've heard of the klesa, moha, bewilderment and mental confusion - and I said: commitment, yes. And I vaguely remember - this is quite a few years ago - and he's said that then he had asked: how can you be sure when taking, you know, when committing yourself, that you're not taking a risk? And I said: you can't. (Laughter) You've always got to take a risk. And that is true, you know. And the two - the taking of the risk and the having of faith - they go hand in hand. It's because of faith that you take risks, you have to take risks because you have faith and not knowledge. So you cannot go through life without faith, you cannot go through life without risks. You mustn't go through life with credulity; then you'll just be the dupe of anybody you happen to encounter. You mustn't go through your recklessly; your life will soon come to an end. But certainly with faith and with a willingness to take risks, otherwise you don't get anywhere and you won't grow, you won't even be willing to commit yourself. Because you'll be so careful of making mistakes that you'll rule out the mistakes by not doing anything at all. You're so afraid of living that you'll virtually commit suicide. Or rather, you're so afraid of death that you commit suicide. Anyway, I think we'd better leave it there for this morning; we've done quite a chunk and you know there is some tea downstairs.

End of Tape Two, Side Two

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Tape Three, Side One

S: Alright then, let's carry on reading.

Text: One has the choice... (Text) but still just audible. (pages 7-8)

S: What he says in the first sentence is interesting. "One has the

choice to minimize them." People don't usually realize this, that one doesn't have a choice. Perhaps you don't have a choice as to whether

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you should actually have intellectual doubts or not - they almost inevitably arise - but there is the question of your attitude towards them; that's a different thing. You can either just sort of

leave them as they are or you can make them bigger by dwelling on them or you can minimize them by, you know, by paying them as little attention as possible. It's up to you. And also he says, ~"It seems not unreasonable that one should blame the difficulties of the teaching on one's own distance from the truth, one's own intellectual and moral imperfections." So if you say that a teaching is difficult, difficult is a subjective term, it doesn't tell you anything about the teaching, you know, the teaching is neither easy nor difficult. I mean, difficult refers to your understanding of the teaching, hmm. So if you say that the teaching is difficult that's not really quite correct. You should say the teaching is difficult to understand, and then the question arises, well, difficult for whom?

-Difficult for me, if it's for me to understand. -Well, why is that?

-Well, I'm not particularly bright. (Laughter) Well, that's the reason because there are other people who seem to understand it quite well, i.e. the sages of the past at least. It's just my own dullness and denseness and obtuseness that makes me unable to see very easily or very clearly. So one should have more of that sort of attitude rather than sort of dismiss out of hand something you can't understand or have difficulty in understanding, merely because you can't understand it. Jo, "It seems not unreasonable that one should blame the difficulties of the teaching on one's own distance from the truth, one's own intellectual and moral imperfections." And then he goes on to say, "How can one a mere month ago?" Well, what were you doing, say, on this day, a month ago? Well, you know, it's Saturday; four Saturdays ago what were you doing? (Laughter) See? If you had a regular programme - for instance supposing on Saturdays you always go to a certain class, well, you'll know - well, Saturday, I must have gone to a certain class, But you may not actually remember, yes, and even then, you know, if you've been in the habit of r

going to a class every Saturday, all your memories are blurred. It becomes a single memory, one Saturday on which you've gone, as it were,

with slight variations, and you can't tell, yes; they don't stand out distinctly. I mean, I know, that this is the case; I find it with seminars. I can remember that I've said something on a seminar, but which one? (Laughter) Well, there you are. Whether it was one, you know, six months ago or two years ago it's as though there is just a seminar, there's one sort of great seminar which lasts months and months. (Laughter)

on which one says all sorts of things. But one no longer remembers, you

know, the distinct separate events of each particular seminar.

So a lot of our life is like that. We don't remember clearly and distinctly day by day, much less still hour by hour, even month by month. You know, as you get older you might look back and be not sure what you did in a particular year, or whether, for instance, you went to a certain place in 1952 or '53 or '54; yes, the recollections might be blurred to that extent. Is it any wonder we can't remember our previous lives? We don't usually remember the first year of life, the first two years of life. We don't even remember our dreams. We know that we had dreams - well, our friends will tell us that they were awake at the time, that our eyeballs

were moving, we must have been having dreams. We might even have been talking in our sleep, quite audibly, and others might have heard, but we don't remember. Maybe when we woke up we remembered the whole series of dreams; five minutes later we've forgotten them all. So is it surprising that we, you know, that we had past lives, you know, which we no longer remember? Is it surprising that we don't remember, we're very forgetful creatures? Otherwise, it's... when people object, "Oh, we don't remember our previous lives," as though that means there could not have been any, it's almost as though that they assume that your memory is so brilliant and pure and clear that you remember every single event of

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of every single day, but you don't remember your past-lives so you could not have had any. But it isn't like that at all. The greater part of what we've experienced, I bet 99% of it, if not far more, we've forgotten. So is it surprising that we should have forgotten previous lives, hmmm? So, "If one hesitates to accept, as not immediately obvious, the doctrine that this world is the result of ignorance and of the craving of non-existent individuals for non-existent objects," - which is of course the Buddha's teaching - "is this not due... all day long?" A typical Conzean statement. "Doubts are effectively worthy of knowledge." This is something that, you know, that people often forget: we need in a way to become worthy of knowledge, more receptive, more open to it. "It is a condition the benefit of the doubt." I mean, sometimes people's attitude towards a teacher is, you know, that of the prosecution lawyer who has got the witness in the witness box. (Laughter) It's like that. "Otherwise one can learn... just audible." That's quite a good way of putting it in a way - you know, the voice, the words of the sages are still audible but there's such a hullabaloo going on nowadays you have to listen very carefully, you can just catch them, just catch the sound of those words.... Alright, carry on then.

Text: One last word... (Text) ...with their presence. (Page B)

S: This is quite important, yes. "One last word who believe differently." This is true, more true one might say within the Western and specifically Christian context. Buddhists, and Hindus even, aren't bothered in that sort of way. If you go, say, to a Buddhist country and you say that you're a Christian or a Moslem or, you know, something other than Buddhist, they don't find that a trial to their faith, no, not at all. But I've certainly noticed myself that if, you know, I say that I'm a Buddhist to people who are Christian it seems to have quite an unsettling

sort of effect. So, "We are easily tempted to wish this irritant removed," - I'm afraid this just applies to Christians and ex-Christians - "to coerce

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others doubts within oneself." This is very true. So what religion you think probably doubts

itself the most? Well, the one that is most intolerant - and tie all know which one that is, yes. That's almost a sort of yardstick. The ages of faith were the ages of great doubt. "We

can the same thing." This is, of course, what many Hindus do and what many people who nowadays even in the West; this also avoids the issue. You're afraid to believe differently from other people. You want the support of other people; in other words, you're afraid of standing on your own feet; you're afraid of taking the risk of forming your own judgments and possible being wrong; there's safety in numbers. So you start saying or thinking: k~sll, I won't be different, it does'n't matter, it's all the same under different clothes, under different names. And this is what the Hindu usually says. In his case it seems more to pre- serve the social status quo in the form of the caste system. But in the West it's more that people won't take the risk of thinking for themselves and possibly being wrong - but if you all think alike, well, it seems incredible that you should all be wrong, yes, that way you should all be right! (Laughter) One person might make a mistake, but could everybody be mistaken, everybody believes the same thing, yes! I believe what everybody else believes so others can't oossibly be mistaken, I can't be mistaken. There's a sort of comfort in that. You see how it works? This is the psychological basis of a great deal of, you know, what is called Universalism, such as you saw exhibited in connection with the Festival of Mind and ~ody. I mean the basis of that seems to be, the official basis, that: we all believe the same thing and so we all get together on that common platform. We're all manifestations of the New Age. (Laughter) But some of the people, some of the Order embers and Friends who were around remarked on the fact that they noticed that niany of tho words which we use in the friend were used by these other ~roups - Enlightenment, development, you know, etc, etc, creativity - but they

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seemed to use them, they aaid, in quite a diff~rent sort of cay from the way in which we use them. But the common terminology tended to obscure that difference and give other people outside the impression that we were all talking about the same' thing, whereas they were actually using the same words, we were talking about quite different things in at least some cases. But, I mean, this is a manifestation of group mentality. You're afraid of thinking for yourself, you're afraid of being wrong and therefore of being different - the more people there are who think as you are, or who think as you do, the more likelihood there is that you are right, hmm. That is how people think, that is their group thinking, that is their group mentality.

Susiddhi: The group try to absorb elements which escape from it.

S: If it cannot suppress them it will try to absorb them. So actually you... I used to say this in India because I came up against this with Hindus. Hindus used to say: We are very tolerant; Hinduism is the most tolerant of all religions; we acct everything as teaching basically the same thing that Hinduism teaches. So I used to say this is not tolerance, this is intolerance. TolerancL means acceptance of difference and accepting the fact that other people have the right to think differently from you. But if you tell them,against their wish as it were,that: No, you are mistaken in thinking you are thinking something different from me, you re thinking wxactly the same thing as me,-that is a form of coercion, yes. You're coercing them, you're



forcing their thought into your mold. So, you know, intolerance has got these different forms. You can either try to crush the person who thinks differently from you or you can deny that there is any difference between you. Both are forms of intolerance. Tolerance means that you recognize there is a difference which you haven't as yet been able to overcome but you accept that that person has got the right to think differently and that you've got the right to discuss and argue with him and try to convince him and convert him, he's got the same

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right to do that with you. But you recognize his right to think for himself as an individual even though he comes to different conclusions from what you've come to. So you've no right either to suppress him by force or to forcibly sort of conscript his thought and to say it's the same as your thought; that is also in effect denying his right to think for himself. That is really very invidious because it also puts you or you try to put yourself into a superior position, yes - that you're so tolerant whereas he is so intolerant. Well, he insists on thinking differently, he won't see the oneness of things, he's not universal. And I've been told this by Hindus - "Oh, Buddhism is so narrow-minded. Buddhists - why do they insist on difference all the time? Why can't they see the

- glorious unity of everything - that God and No-God, Self and Not-self, it's all the same. Why can't Buddhists see this? Why are they so narrow-minded? Why do they insist that these things are different? Hindus are very broad-minded, you know, Hindus are very tolerant. You're very tolerant so of course we are superior to you." That's their attitude which is very, very false. So to tell someone that he doesn't know what he is thinking is as bad as to tell him he doesn't feel what he is feeling, yes. So supposing somebody says, you know, "I'm feeling really angry," and the other person says, "Oh no, no, no, you're not feeling angry, you couldn't be angry, it's not anger, no, I'm sure it's not. I just don't get that sort of vibe off you.... etc, etc...." - they deny your feeling. And then supposing you say, "Well, I think differently from you. I'm sorry. You believe in God, I don't." "No, no, no, it's not different."

You think exactly the same as me. Actually you do believe in God but you call it No-God - it's just the same thing." (Laughter) So really you are denying the other person, you're really denying him as an individual. You're not allowing him to think for himself or to feel for himself so it's all very insidious and very unpleasant and pretending to be a sort of virtue. You get so much of this in India, not so much of it in this

country. Here you tend to get more the outright suppression and intolerance. But in India among Hindus you get this pseudo-tolerance which is in fact a very insidious form of intolerance, so I'm glad that Dr Conze mentions this: "We can, of course... ..their presence."

Accept the fact that others do think differently from what we do. I mean, if you accept them as individuals different from you, in this sense, in the relative truth, you have to accept that they feel and think perhaps differently from what you do and you must tolerate that. Not tolerate that in the sense of regarding it as regrettable necessity, but in a way be glad of it. Even if they're wrong, never mind, they're thinking for themselves as individuals - I mean assuming that they are thinking and not just accepting, you know, what they've been told by someone in a position merely of group authority.

Anyway, this is all under the heading of faith. Alright, just quickly look back over that little chapter and see whether there's any point that needs any further clarification or discussion.

Surata: Are these four factors Conze's, or are they traditional Buddhist?

S: They seem to be Conze's.

(?) Surata: I don't find them personally very satisfactory.

S: It's as I said. I'd much rather we just started with the Buddha and then go on to the Dharma and then the Sangha in the traditional way, yes. Social comes under Sangha, emotional comes under Buddha, and intellectual comes under Dharma.

A Voice: What about volitional?

S: Volitional under emotional.

mahamati: Conze, on this point when he talks about the rebirth doctrine, assumes two things must.... The first one is that behind the natural causality there is an invisible chain of moral causality. I didn't sort of, I hadn't thought that there was sort of a difference, like to, sort of, a natural causality, which is the law of karma.

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S: Well, strictly speaking, according to Abhidharma at least, there are five trends of cause-effect relationship or, you know, relationships of conditionality, one of which is karma. Do you remember this - the five niyamas? So it isn't so much as behind natural causality, there's another you know, it's more, which is karmic, it's more, well, there is this general law of conditionality, and it, you find it existing in these five different forms in fact. That is to say that the physical inorganic, the physical organic, the mental or psychological, the karmic, and what is called the Dharmic which one might call the spiritual.

Mahamati: It just made the moral causality sound like something rather mysterious, like under ...(?)... God or something like that.

S: Yes, right. I think one could also say that one mustn't look at the law of karma too mechanically, hmm. I prefer to look at it, you know, more in, not that you do something and some almost arbitrary way there is a certain effect or result which nature or the karmic law has attached to that, yes. It seems to me that the, the result, you know, grows quite naturally out of the cause itself, not something, you know, it's not some- thing which accrues to it, as it were, from the outside, yes, hmmm. You know, for instance, in the case of an ordinary crime, say against the civil law, you might be punished but the punishment might be quite arbitrary, it might even change from time to time, or from place to place. It doesn't sort of naturally sort of grow out of the offence itself, yes. But I think in the case of offences against the moral law, as it were, the results do grow out of the offence itself and are inseparable from it as it were, yes. Do you see what I mean? Supposing for instance you become an alcoholic. So the, you know, your sufferings, or the sufferings which eventually befall you as a result of your

alcoholism aren't a sort of punishment suddenly inflicted out of the blue upon you for the sin of being an alcoholic. You know, they're just something which emerge from the offence itself and in fact are indistinguishable from it, you know,

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stage by stage, yesq I see it much more like that. In other words, not as anything very mysterious at all, not... it's clearly not something hiding behind the natural, you know, sequence of causation, you know, on the level of which you, you actually lift up the drink and put it to your lips and swallow it; there's not a law of karma mysteriously lurking behind that simple action to make sure you suffer for it, no. Because, you know, what happens there is this greed, there's this thirst, meta- phorical as well as literal, on account of which you become addicted.

And then of course the more you drink the less the effects and the more get you have to/the same sort of emotional effect, and then you know you

really do become addicted and then you know various physical sufferings start taking place, mental sufferings also. And you can see the whole process. It's not that you, you know, you complete a whole series of actions end then - wham! - out of the blue, as I said, you get a consequence and which, you know, is quite separate and distinct actually from what you have actually done, not like that at all.... (It's with you; for instance supposing during your lifetime, you know, you become, you become very addicted to certain things, certain sense pleasures - after death, well, there are no senses there, so you can't enjoy those sense pleasures, therefore you suffer. But the suffering is not a punishment inflicted on you because you've been naughty and done something that you shouldn't have done. It's a logical, it's a natural consequence of your actual state that, if you've got a mental addiction to certain, you know, experiences through the senses and the senses are no longer there, well, of course you are going to suffer. No-one's inflicting the suffering upon you from outside, yes, not even an impersonal law, yes. So that in a way it's as misleading to think of the law of karma punishing you as it is to think of God punishing you, yes; you are punishing yourself and the offence and the punishment are really inseparable.

Susiddhi: It's becoming.

- 4B -

S: Becoming.

Susiddhi: Becoming different all the time just by what you do.

S: And you have to live with the consequences, in your own personality, you know, of what you did in the past. I mean, somebody once said that you are not forgiven your offences, or the results of your offences, because in the mean time you have repented, yes. I mean, for instance, supposing as a result of your alcoholism you've completely destroyed your liver,

yes. Well, you might repent of your alcoholism, you might give up drink, but you're left with your bad liver. The fact that you've repented doesn't mean that your liver suddenly becomes alright. But it's not the law of karma punishing you with a bad liver, it's not even the result of what you've done, it is what you've done, hmm. Do you see that? So I think we have to be careful not to personalize this so-called impersonal law of karma, regard it as something acting upon us from outside, quite separate from our actions, hmm. In a way the, you know, the effect is not separate from the cause really, not in that extreme sort of way that is suggested sometimes.

Suvaira: He says, emotionally, faith is an attitude of serenity and lucidity. Why lucidity?

S: Well, if you've got serenity, you know, you're not disturbed, you're balanced. You can see things much more clearly because you see them more objectively, you're not swayed this way and that by your emotions, yes, therefore your whole vision becomes clear and more lucid....

Alright, let's go on to vigour then.

Text: II. Vigour Next to faith... (Text) . . more of it. (Pages 8/9)

S: Alright, let's just that. [re you old enough to remember what "night starvation" was? (Laughter) Oh it's a great advertisement for Ovaltine! If you took Ovaltine at night you wouldn't suffer from "night starvation". (Laughter) Oh yes, you saw this in every paper a few years ago, you know,

- "Are you suffering from night starvation?" Because, you know, surely

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you are - you wake up tired in the morning - so take Ovaltine before you go to sleep!  
Anyway....

So, "Next to faith... ..pali: viriya)." You know, etymologically, the word 'vira', which is hero, is connected with this. A hero is some- one with sort of courageous energy and vigour.<' And of course the English word 'virtue' is connected with, virtue originally meant strength; we still have this when we speak of the... the virtue of, say, herbs. It means their particular strength, their quality, yes, or the virtue in old English poetry, the virtue of the stars, their influence, their power. And also 'virility', which is masculine... energy, masculine vigour. These are all interconnected.

But little need be said about the need for being energetic if one needs to achieve something. "Without vigour . . more of it." Anyway, be careful you don't suffer from spiritual night starvation. Alright, carry on then. All that's sufficiently obvious, isn't it?

Text: The fact that faith... ..0concentrated calm. (page 9)

S: I think we're very familiar with that, aren't we? I think the key sentence here is, "All the five virtues must be regarded as one whole.11 I think that is quite important. Why do you think that is? I mean, why, essentially, are the five virtues to be regarded as one whole?"

Susiddhi: 'Cause they balance out.

S: Yes... There's an even more...

Suvaira: If you have one perfected fully, the others must be perfected fully also.

S: Yes, but a bit, maybe a bit more psychologically, as it were, than that. And who's virtues are they?

Andy: One's own.

~: One's own. So how many person's virtues in that case then? Well,

one person's. So that means that inasmuch as they're all virtues of the same person they form a whole because that person is a whole. If there

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is any imbalance in the virtues there is an imbalance in you, yes. So, inasmuch as ideally you are a whole, the virtues must be regarded as a whole. I mean the virtues should not be allowed autonomy. There is no question of vigour being developed regardless, no question even of faith being developed regardless and so on. They are your virtues, they are part of a whole, which is you; it is not only a question of them hanging together with the other virtues but of hanging together with you, of being an integral part of your spiritual life. They're not ends in themselves. So, essentially, the virtues must be regarded as one whole because you and your spiritual life must be regarded as one whole. So their balance and harmony is almost as important as the virtues themselves, yes... I mean, if you were to have a sort of runaway vigour, it would be almost better than no vigour at all; almost, not quite.

Susiddhi: I think there is an exception to that, and I seem to remember you saying that you can't have too much mindfulness.

S: Yes. Yes, that's right. That is to say, the right kind of mindfulness. That is to say, not an alienated awareness, but, you know, an integrated awareness. You can't have too much of that by definition. So, "They support each other... ..not particularly restful." Do you think it always is just the adrenalin?

Susiddhi: A lot of people seem to feel the need to prove themselves all

the time.

S: In other words, it's psychological and it's neurotic. This was something we thought about a bit in the early days of the Friends because I noticed that in different Buddhist groups you usually had one or two quite high-powered people who keep things moving and did all the work. It was pretty obvious that their basic motivation was quite neurotic. And some people would get into an organization, even a Buddhist group, and at once sort of, you know, rise to a sort of leading position just because of the force of their neurotic energy and their willingness to do things, things

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which maybe other people weren't willing to do. ~o I thought that this

must be guarded against in the case of the Friends. So this is why in the bearers case of the FWBOs all the office-bearers and so on are Order 1 Members, so

that you can't get anybody going as it were straight from the general public into the organization powered simply by his neurotic energy. Those sort of people hopefully get weeded out before they're ever ordained. Either they themselves are weeded out of the movement and they go and offer their services elsewhere or they themselves weed out their neurotic drive, become more calm and restless, less restless, and able to commit themselves and genuinely to work and put their energy. So our workers, that is to say the people who eventually work the FWBOs as office-bearers at least, and ideally all of them - council members and so on - are filtered through the Order. Do you see what I mean? So that it isn't possible for someone with that kind of drive to get into any kind of position and influence within the FWBO. So this is one of the reasons, you know, why we've got the kind of set-up that we do have. It seems to me that, you know, most organizations were run by most unsuitable people who... also the style and personality in the case of the religious groups was quite incompatible with the professed objectives and aims of those groups. Of course, there is a difficulty, you know, that in the meantime a lot of work doesn't get done, hmm, because, I mean, the high-powered people really can work, in the sense of output, they really can. Jo, if you refuse on principle to make use of that energy, well, it's sometimes quite difficult to get things done. But we accepted that and that's one

of the reasons why we didn't really get off the ground for quite a long healthy time. ~e had to wait, as it were, for people's natural energy to emerge

rather than sort of exploit people's neurotic energy, which we thought it wasn't right to do, either for them or, you know, for the movement as a whole, yes. Do you see what I mean, yes? But anyway now we are beginning to reap the results of that policy or that principle and, you know, there

is a lot of healthy non-neurotic energy in the movement and getting things done.

So, Vigour by itself concentrated calm.'1 Has one ever seen

this in oneself-- vigour by itself leading to excitement? You've got so much energy you just get excited and restless (murmurs of agreement) and dissipating all over the place. So what should you do then?

Jos: Sit down and meditate.

S: But is it easy? Because you're in that state that's the last thing you want to do, yes, really. What other things do you think you could do?

Andy: Yoga

S: Yoga, yes. Well, you can just do nothing. That's probably the most effective, in a way: just do nothing, just sit down, do nothing, until

you've calmed down.

SuvaAra: It's been a way to sort of include the Just sitting practice along with your ordinary meditation.

S: Oh yes. But you wouldn't really be doing Just sitting, you'd be just, you know, not... you'd be sitting and not doing anything... Alright,

carry on then.

Text: Similarly, faith alone .mambrino's helmet. (Pages 9/10)

S: He wears this basin on his head.

Text: And yet .slightly pathological (Page 10)

S: Hmm. What would be a corresponding case in this age~ You know,

people don't read these, you know these romances of knight-errantry and take them seriously as Don Quixote did. Well, what sort of thing might they read and take a bit seriously in this sort of way and even start

acting it out, acting upon it? Well, science fiction, it corresponds a bit, doesn't it? I mean, I've read in the papers cases of, there was a

case in America, of someone who'd been reading too much science fiction

or weeing science fiction films, who thought he could fly like- who is it?- Superman or ....

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A Voice: Superman.

S: . . .And, you know, jumped out of a, you know, a window, a skyscraper - fortieth storey or something like that - and of course he couldn't fly and crashed. You find\* you know, small boys sometimes have to act out, you know - it's not too bad in their case, you know; it's just cowboys and Indians. It doesn't depart too far from fact. But, you know, you can easily see the borderline, yes... So faith needs to be corrected, if not by wisdom at least by common sense, at least by a certain amount of reason, hmm. Anyway, Don Quixote is a very good example. I don't think Cooze's interpretation is quite correct - I think there is more to it than that - but we see what he is getting at, I mean, in the case of, you know, Cervante's novel. But you can certainly see that it can be looked at like that - you know, Don Quixote has been reading these romances of knight errantry and his way was completely turned. And he used to see windmills as giants and ragged village wenches as high-born damels in distress, the barber's basin as the helmet of an ancient hero, yes. But you can find people who do have this slightly distorted vision of reality, even if it is in a more humdrum sort of way, can't you, who interpret things differently all the time, you know, as in cases of paranoia. So faith tends to do that. There was a case I read in the newspaper only a few weeks ago - I'm not sure if this was in Britain or it was in the States - but he was an American and his wife who was on tour with their baby child. And he pulled in somewhere for petrol. And for some reason the baby's cradle or carry-cot or whatever they have these days was put on the roof of the car and he drove off forgetting that it was there. So the poor baby fell off and was seriously injured, yes, very seriously injured. So anyway the father, realizing what had happened sometime later, some miles farther on, stopped and sort of went back and found the child very seriously injured, was overjoyed that a miracle had happened, that God had intervened and saved the life of his child, the child wasn't actually dead, yes. ~O, isn't

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this extraordinary, you know. He didn't interpret it as 'my foolishness', and 'due to my foolishness', you know, 'the child has been seriously hurt'. No, 'It's a miracle, God has saved the life of my child, yes.' So you get some Christians, you know, reading into everything the hand of God, or God has intervened, yes.

Andy: It's fantasy rather than faith.

S: Yes, it's fantasy rather than faith, yes. That's why, you know, faith needs this corrective of wisdom, or at least commonsense, otherwise it can just become fantasy, wish-fulfillment. You get a lot of this sort of thing~in these, as it were, theosophical circles, if you know what I mean, yes. For instance, you go walking down the street and you meet someone who looks a bit foreign, he gives you a passing look, and you go and say to someone, "You know, I think I met one of these Oriental masters. I was walking down the



road, he gave me such a look, he gazed into my eyes. I really felt something. I'm sure I met one of the mahatmas from the Himalayas!" You get a lot of that sort of thing in those circles. They want to believe that sort of thing. ~nd, you know, as Dr Conze says, faith in this case becomes slightly pathological.

Anyway, how have we got onto this? We're supposed to be onto vigour. Anyway, we were talking about meditation as an antidote to vigour and then suggested that faith also needed, you know, a counter-balancing factor if it wasn't going to extremes, and that way we get on to vigour. I mean, he's not really saying very much about vigour, is he? ((flurms of agreement) ~ctually, we'll have to supplement him. Right, let's go on then. Text: Mr Blyth claims to the universe. (pages 10/11)

S: Who is this Mr Blyth, do you know? Mr Blyth is an English gentleman who lived in Japan for many years, taught English literature, compiled a number of works on "Zen and English Literature", who was always trying to find out resemblances. So Dr Conze is not very happy about this. Mr Blyth claims that "the Don Quixote of the First Part," - the first part

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of the book - "'is Zen incarnate,'" You know, people have said all sorts of silly things about Zen in this connection. Mr Humphreys says, for instance, that Alice in Wonderland is pure Zen; but it seems more like pure rubbish, you know. (Laughter) Why do you think they say it? You know, why do they make statements like that, do you think?

Wark: Apparent irrationality, I suppose.

S: Apparent irrationality, yes. But why should people be attracted by irrationality? Why should they see Zen as irrationality? I mean, leaving aside the fact that Dr Suzuki misled them a bit to begin with; he presented Zen in, rather in terms of, you know, irrationality, or at least non

irrationality. But why should people take Zen... Andy; It's a projection, a lack of contact (?).

S: It does seem to something like this. For instance, who was the author of Alice in Wonderland?

Susiddhi: Lewis Carroll.

flark: He was a mathematician.

~: Lewis Carroll, yes. He was a mathematician. What could be more logical in a way than that, you know. There is a story about that Queen Victoria read "Alice in Wonderland" and was so delighted she asked for all his works to be sent to her - So she got sent some advanced mathematics and was most disappointed. (Laughter) But it's a bit like that, isn't it, yes. I mean, in the case of Mr Humphreys, well, look, well, you know, he's a judge and a lawyer and

all that kind of, I mean reason, rationality is very strong in him. So there is that sort of attraction to the opposite, you know, without balancing or harmonizing them. There's a sort of compensatory influence for that at work. And also really this, you know, degrades Zen, to look at it as a sort of manifestation of the irrationality. It also sort of docket it and classifies it neatly; you've disposed of it, you've dealt with it, you know what it's all about. We know "Alice in Wonderland" very well, we know "Don Quixote" very well.

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What's Zen? Well, it's just something of the same sort, this zany sort of irrationality... which highly rational, sophisticated people just amuse themselves with as a sort of game....

~ahamati: Maybe there's an attraction of nonsense to people who don't want to stop to think.... who don't want to think clearly at all, who don't want to face up to their own situation clearly and sort of rationalize.

S: Yes. It seems as though, like people who solve crossword puzzles, it's intellectual exercise of people who've got very restless, active minds, but who don't want to use them in any fundamental way, who merely want to keep them occupied, yes. Do you see the difference, yes? You've got this very active, restless, quite powerful mind ticking over the whole time, but you don't want to use it to investigate - Well, who am I? What am I? Why am I in this world? What is the purpose of life? You don't dare, as it were, to face all those issues, so you just occupy yourself with more and more difficult crossword puzzles, chess, maybe with the analysis of the symbolism of English literature, or something of that sort, yes, in all sorts of futile ways. And maybe writing detective stories with very complex plots. Detective stories are written by intellectuals I believe, aren't they? And who reads them? I'm told clergy-men will read detective stories. (Laughter) There was a bishop who was writing them - George Birmingham, Bishop of Birmingham - he was writing

detective series. He was quite well known for that.

m ~ahamati: And Colin Wilson, who wrote 'The Outsider', (...?)

Susiddhi: If "Alice in Wonderland" is pure Zen, that would mean that the chap who wrote it, wrote it deliberately, so he's a Zen master.

S: Right, Well, he's almost saying that here in the case of Don Quixote. "The man who surpasses Knight Errant." Well, he should have said Cervantes, shouldn't he? It's so ridiculous. I mean, you wonder people can make these sort of statements, how - you know, that Don Quixote is the superior of Buddhist sages, including Shakyamuni, and that "Alice in

Wonderland" is pure Zen. Well, what on earth does Zen mean to you? And

it's presented as a sort of broad-mindedness - you know, that you're so broad-minded, so open, so liberal, you see Zen, you know, everywhere - in the classics of English literature, in ordinary life, you know, it's all Zen. Again, you are negating the real Zen. Maybe it's part of your defence against Zen, yes. Still, let's not go to the other extreme. Don Quixote's faith was a rather puerile one, fair enough; he had no judgement, definitely not; his vision was defective, well, that's pretty clear; and Blyth himself admits in the end that Don Quixote lacks the Confucian virtue of prudence, the balance of the powers of the mind." No, prudence is not the balance of the powers of the mind, prudence is usually defined as the suitability of means to end, the capacity to fit the appropriate means to the end: that is prudence. Anyway, I'm not so sure about prudence, but the "balance of the powers of the mind" is certainly not only a Confucian, but also a Buddhist virtue... (Text) ...to the universe." What do you think of that last sentence? Do you completely agree with it? Is the Bhikshu essentially sober and calm? Do you think this could possibly be misunderstood? "Essentially", hmm.

~ (?) John: The sober part could be.

S: The sober part could be. It seems to suggest almost a denial of enthusiasm and ardour and joy, of rapture, hmm. Overflowing energy, compassion. Maybe it's because it is, as he says, it is for, following Buddhaghosa, who is of course a Theravada writer, but you know some of the Tantric sages were certainly not sober and calm. They might have been essentially very calm but hardly sort of sober, at least not in outward manifestation. And "sweetly rational" - that sounds a bit too good to be true, doesn't it, hmm? Rational, yes, but you can also be incisively rational, as well as sweetly rational. "Avoids violence in

pursuit of his aims," - well, certainly he does. "And that his estimate

of his own role in the world does not greatly exceed his actual size in

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relation to the universe." Dr Conze says "does not greatly exceed," as though you can hardly help exaggerating your place in the universe at least a little bit, (Laughter) That's inevitable even in the case of your essentially sober and calm Bhikshu.

Susiddhi: It's a wee bit of a denial of the Bodhisattva ideal.

S: In a way, yes.

Susiddhi: He just underestimates his own role.

S: But Dr Conze hasn't really said vevry much about vigour, has he? So what more could be said about Lhat? Well, if you like, about energy? [flahamati: At the beginning of this section he says that "Without vigour, without strenuous effort, without perseverance\*0.." Perhaps one could say that vigour even sort of flows quite naturally, it's certainly not necessarily tied up with a... certainly not forced effort.

S: Not necessarily?

fl~ahamati: Well, not sort of mentally to do strenuous effort, not going to strain.

S: Yes. This virys is more something like innate vigour, isn't it? It's a natural thing; you're not necessarily having to show it all the time... First look at those sections about vigour in the selections of (...?...) You haven't got those but ( )

Suvaira: He mentions that you maybe have to keep vigour in control by developing calm, but (. ..?) But how do you cultivate vigour?

S: Hmm. Well, how do you think you do? Inaybe you should look first of all and see why vigour is lacking. Is it that you haven't been taking your Ovaltine? (Laughter) Do you see what I mean? Airight\* supposing you do make up your mind that you don't have enough vigour. Well, you can look at vigour or you can look at this whole question in two ways. Well, there's first of all vigour in the ordinary sense - you just don't have enough life - and then spiritual vigour, which is the same thing transported, as it were, to the spiritual plane. So, first one has to

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wee, well, what is the situation. Why do I not have vigour? Or is it true that I do not have vigour? Do you think you could have spiritual vigour without having vigour in the ordinary sense? Hmm? Well, it seems you can. I mean, you can find people - I mean they are more highly developed people - who, even in the absence of physical energy, health, strength, seem to have tremendous spiritual vigour nonetheless, but they are quite exceptional. For most people, I think, certainly what one might call psycho~spiritual vigour is quite difficult to develop except on a basis of ordinary even physical vigour and physical health. So, supposing one finds that, say, I". generally one is lacking in vigour, including spiritual vigour, well, what should one sort of look for, begin with, do you think? Well, is there something basically wrong with your health? Or are you even eating enough? It might be as simple as that. Are you looking after yourself sufficiently well? Alright, supposing that you are, supposing that you've got sufficient physical health, strength, vigour, but, you know, you are lacking in spiritual vigour, ye~. Before we go into that though, let's just look at some definitions or at least one definition of vigour; it might be helpful in this connection. The Akshayamati Sutra says "his vigour consists of his bringing about in him- self the dharmas in which he has faith." Dharmas here meaning mental states. So your vigour consists in your bringing about in yourself the b)harmas, the mental states, qualities, experiences in which you have faith. 30 supposing you don't have that sort of vigour, well, you know, what might be the reason?

-- A Voice: Faith.

S: You don't have the faith. You don't actually have faith in those Dharmas. But if you have faith in those Dharmas, well, well, surely then you will make an effort to bring them into existence, hmm. There's another passage also here: "The king asked" - this is from *ilindapanhs* - "What is the mark of vigour?" Then Na-asena replies, 'Vigour props up and when propped up by vigour, all the wholesome dharmas do not dwindle away.'

- 'Give me a simile.' - 'If a man's house were falling down you would prop it up with a new piece of wood and so supported the house would not collapse.'" So in the first quotation vigour is necessary to bring whole- some dharmas into existence, but in the second quotation it's necessary to keep them in existence and to prevent them from falling down, yes. Because until such time as you gain real insight and become a stream entrant all your wholesome dharmas may fall down, you may regress, so you've got to be making a constant effort. It's not so much like, you know, from, preventing the house from falling down, it's more like the case of juggler keeping a number of coloured balls in the air, yes. If you relax your effort for a moment, an instant, they'll just all fall to the ground. You need to be, you know, panning them constantly, that's what it's like, because that gravitational pull is at work all the time. So you throw that little ball but it comes down each time, but you've got to stay... When you've developed insight, you become a stream entrant, then the balls start staying up; you throw them up and they stay there. (Laughter) Do you see what I mean? So until you've reached that point of stream entry therefore vigour, in the ordinary sense, is always necessary, you can't afford to stop, yes. It's vigour that brings into existence the whole- some dharmas in which you have faith, and it's vigour which continues them in existence, props them up, as it were, and prevents them just from falling, from coming to an end, so that means also the need to be continued, or continuous faith. If that faith isn't there neither will you have the energy to bring the wholesome dharmas into existence, the wholesome dharmas in which you have faith, nor will you have the energy to keep them in existence, to keep them in the air, as it were, without falling to the ground. So faith becomes very, very important, doesn't it? No vigour, you could say, without faith.

Suvaira: What about after the point of Stream Entry? If you don't need

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need this vigour to keep the balls up in the air..g

S: Well, you need it, of course, to develop the further stages beyond, but at least the stage of stream entry itself is now self-perpetuating, you don't fall back beyond that. But if you don't make that further effort you remain just a stream entrant! And that requires further faith, faith in the further possibilities ahead. So if, suppose, you don't have faith. What are you going to do? How are you going to get faith? You know, vigour depends on faith; alright, what does faith depend on?

Inark: Inspiration.

S: Inspir~tion, yes. Where are you going to get that from? Suppose you are flat, dull, dry, uninspir~tid, uninterested, couldn't care less, hmm. Well, where is- it going to come from?

Susiddhi: The Sangha.

S: The Sangha, That's really, you know, where it comes from and that's why you can't really do without the Sangha, and why the %angha is one of the Refu~es, yes. The Buddha, historically speaking, is dead ~nd gone. The Dharma may be very difficult for you to understand. But at least there's the Sangha, at least there is the circle of spiritual friend~, horn. 50 this is why recourse to the Sanyha, the circl of spiritual friends, is very, very important, because that will help keep alive your faith in the sense of your emotional aliveness, with regard to spiritual ideals, you know, when it is in danger of becoming a bit flat and dead, or even of drying up altogether.

Alright, what's another thing that energy depends upon? What is some- thing that stimulates energy? Very mundane? Well, you all know it, but you're probably just not able to think of it at the moment because it's right under your nose, as it were. You've all done it, I hope. mahamati: ffleditation?

S: No, more simple than that, much more simple though, isn't it? ~uch easier.

A Voice: Give us a clue. (Laughter)

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Jr: Well, it's a four-letter word. (Laughter)

Suvaira: Sex. (Laughter)

5: No. Sex is a three-letter wrd.

~~~~~: Work.

5: Work! Work. I'll read you an extr~ct from a letter I got only today which illustrates this point and which you could say put me in mind of it. This is from New Zealand. "Dear Bhante, Some really amazing things have been happening in Auckland over the last two months. At the beginning of September, Jim Sharples" - that's a mitra - "arranged for us as part of our Centre fund-raising to undertake a job with an advertising agency making eight thousand toy jack-in-the-boxes.~ (Laughter) There's one behind you. 11Getting the job done in the required time has needed an all-out effort, but it really seems to have brought good things out of people. Sometimes we've had up to twenty people working at the Centre on the boxes, and most of our regulars have been quite remarkable in the amount of time and energy they've been willing to put into things. We've had several instances of almost completely new people who didn't know much about the FWBO or Buddhism but who have been willing to

throw themselves into the work effort." Etc, etc, etc. They've done it; and he concludes by saying, "The Centre and classes have been quite affected by the general raising of the level of energy as well, and we've been getting excellent attendances." Isn't that interesting? (~urmurs of agreement) Eight thousand of these wretched (Laughter) advertising gimmicks. But, you see, yes, it gets people's energies moving. I mean, that is the main thing, even if it's only making jack-in-the-boxes. At least it gets their energies going and they're working together, yes. There is some kind of fellowship even if not exactly spiritual fellowship. And the energy of the classes goes up: mediation classes, Dharma study classes, they all improve. So, you know, doesn't it seem ridiculous, yes. There was somebody in the community not so long ago not feeling too good and had a few little problems, as it were, but

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he discovered a simple cure: he started having a bicycle ride every day. And it did the trick. It got his energies going and then he felt much better. So it seems in a way so incredibly simple, yes. One can so easily let oneself get into this energyless state and therefore vigourless state, and faithless state. I mean, we've really noticed in England the same thing as Puma has written about in the case of New Zealand: that if you get started on work, work does arouse energy. So if you don't have energy, yes, maybe because you haven't enough faith, or maybe for some other reason, well, you know, you can get inspiration from the spiritual community, but you can also go and do some work. That'll get your energy flowing. And, you know, once you've got it flowing, and once you've got it flowing well, you can skilfully direct it into spiritual channels. So it needs a certain amount of tact, as it were, in dealing with yourself. Sometimes you might have to engage in a sort of skilful mundane activity in order to get even your spiritual energies moving because you're not on the spiritual level to begin with, you can't do anything on that level, you're stuck. You have to do something on the mundane level first and lead those energies on the spiritual level. But certainly in the course of the last two or three years, you know, ever since Sukhavati was started up and then, you know, since other projects have been got going in other Centres, people have appreciated the value of work, haven't they? And, you know, it's not surprising that the old Zen master used to say, "A day of no working is a day of no eating." I've seen this is so myself in South-East Asia: the fact that the monks, the bhikkhus, don't work, or even are not allowed to work, is most unfortunate. I've seen quite a few bhikkhus who love to work but the lay people don't let them. They do what they can, but there are certain things they are just not allowed to do, and it's a real pity because they've got the energy and they've got the willingness, but the laity think it's not right that should do those things, they think they should do them for the monks. And also the monks

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shouldn't ever do anything for the laity apart from reciting and Preaching, yes. So a lot of monks have got bottled-up energy which isn't very good for them.

Andy: I've just been working by myself for quite a few weeks and I really

noticed that if I could get into the work I feel quite inspired, contact

with ( ? ..~. If I didn't, the longer I left it without getting into

the work, just giving myself (... ..) I would feel quite bad. 5: So if you're working, you know, without really being into it, you start feeling resentment, you start feeling that the work has been imposed on you from outside, that you're being made to work, yes. And that's a quite unfortunate sort of situation. But in a way you have been made to work but you're making yourself work....

[Jahamati: What's the difference between the physical and the spiritual

element, the mundane and the spiritual?

S: I think in the ultimate sense one can't really say that there is any difference; it's sort of one energy, you know, taking different turnings, or in different degrees of grossness or refinement. When one says that one can't, you know, if one can't do anything on the spiritual level, you just have to, you know, to start off on the material level. What it really seems to mean is, that if your energy is fairly gross, in order to refine it you have to go through intermediate stages of refinement. Do you see what I mean? supposing your energy is really quite gross it's no use trying to make that a very refined energy at once; there is a number of intermediate stages, you have to refine it gradually, yea. and that is really what one means by speaking of, you know, leading energy into, or leading mundane energy into spiritual channels. It really means giving oneself enough time and space to effect that process of gradual refinement which might, which might be quite a lengthy one. You can't bypass those intermediate stages. Maybe you can speed them up but you can't bypass them. But I don't think one can speak in terms of two, you know, quite

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irreducible kinds of different energy. In the same way, one has heard a bit of talk about male and female energy. I regard this as just sort of mythology in a way. I mean, have you heard reference to this sort of thing? In what sort of way? male and female energy.

? Surata: Just sort of accentuating the difference.

~: Hmm.

Jurata: Accentuating the difference between the sexes.

3: But to, do you think there is such a thing as male energy and such a



thing as female energy, or did the people using these terms seem to think

that? n

Andy: People using those terms (...?..)

3: How did they seem to use them? How did they seem to understand them?

Andy: It was something I heard.

S: What do you think they meant?

Susiddhi: Sounds like expressions of energy, male attributes and female attributes, which is a bit misleading anyway.

S: For instance - I've mentioned this before - there was an Order Day at Aryatara, you know, some months ago and it was, for the time being at least, for the earlier part of the proceedings, all men Order members, yes, and they had a meditation and a walking and chanting. And when the walking and chanting was going on two female Order members arrived, and as they opened the door of the shrine, they afterwards reported, they were sort of hit by this blast of male energy, yes. And so they went on to develop this and it was developed by some people afterwards, and some women were saying that they didn't want to operate with male energy but with female energy, yes, that's how the discussion seemed to develop. So I was trying to get into this, or to go into this and to understand, you know, what was this male energy which was different from female energy, or this female energy that was different from male energy, yes.

Andy: Isn't it that there is basically energy, but there are also ether

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qualities in the people themselves which....

S: One could say that. Alright, say take this question of chanting, the walking and chanting, yes. When men do it it's different from what, the way in which women do it. But can one speak of a different energy being used? Is that really accurate? Or put it again another way: if, say, a man meditates and a woman meditates\* are they using different energies? Could one say that? So I came to the conclusion that if there was any difference at all it was simply a difference of, I mean, in the energy itself, yes. It was only a difference of quantity; that male energy meant a more powerful energy and female energy simply meant a weaker energy, that one couldn't really see anything more in it than that. But not a different kind of energy, only a difference of degree.

I mean, some of the women were saying, for instance, that they didn't want to work with men or with male energy, they wanted to work with female energy. That seemed really to mean that they couldn't keep up the same pace as the men; they didn't have the same

amount of energy. It was a question of a "different energy" - that seemed a bit of a rationalization. Actually they had less energy but rationalized it as a different kind of energy. Do you see what I mean?

~ j-usiddhi: I don't think you can claim there are two kinds of energy. I mean, the transformation of Amaravati was, wasn't really a female ....

S: No, it wasn't "female energy" No, it just got up somewhat more energy, I mean, applied to that sort of work, than women usually have. So they got it done in the same way that men would have got it done, there was no difference. So I think one can say, you know, that essentially there is just this one energy, that one can't really divide it into physical or mental, can't really divide into male or female - it is just energy. But it can take various forms, and it has different levels, different degrees,

different manifestations and of course different qualities may be associated with it, but it is in fact just one energy.

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Surate: You know, if one is feeling at rather a low ebb and one comes in contact with someone who had got a lot of energy you tend to sort of really react, don't you? You sort of get very defensive, don't you?

S: Yes.... So, instead of saying that, well, I am weaker, you say I'm different, yes.

Susiddhi: Ah, I feel gentle.

S: Yes. We used to have a lot of this in the Order generally - not as regards men and women but people who were very weak and lacking in energy accusing people who had a lot of energy of being very rough and crude and clumsy and insensitive and unaware. But it was clearly a defence sort of thing, yes. But this is relatively a thing of the past, but we had a lot of it three or four years ago at pundarika, I remember.

Mahamati: Can one explain the difference between a receptive energy and an active energy - if one can talk in those terms. Like, receptive is often associated with females.

S: I'm afraid I must ~ another heresy here: I don't think women are particularly receptive. I think one has to be very careful of slogans and catchwords, yes. Because the female is physiologically receptive it does not mean that the female, ie the human female, is necessarily psychologically or spiritually receptive. She may be - but not because she is a female, yes. Do you see what I mean?

mahamati: I know they're said to be.... One does talk of a feminine and a masculine sort of side of, say, the same process.

S: Yes.

1~ehemati: But you can't really look at that in terms of energy.

S: I don't think so.

A Uoice: In terms of attitude?

5: Yes, but I think the association of the terms, you know, "masculine" and "feminine" with certain attitudes tends to me to be a bit arbitrary and~nOt necessarily gender~linked~ yes. I mean, what I've said about

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receptivity is a case in point. It's almost a cliché that women are more

receptive than men. I don't think this at all. I think this is a sort of metaphorical extension from the fact of their physiological receptivity. But, for instance, are women more receptive to ideas than men are? I doubt it very much. Are they more receptive to inspiration than men are? I doubt it very much. Are they more receptive to spiritual influences than men are? Again, I doubt it very much. You could argue the opposite. But certainly they are not more receptive. So therefore you cannot associate receptivity with gender~linked femininity. I mean, certainly a ~oman may be, a particular woman may be more receptive than a particular man, but not because she is a woman, but just because she is receptive as an individual.

Andy: It becomes a form of projection, doesn't it?

S: It becomes a form of projection, yes.... So I think one has to be quite careful also about this receptive energy and sort of, you know, well what should one call it? - creative energy, active energy. It's almost as if a receptive energy is a contradiction in terms, isn't it? One can just speak of receptivity. Sometimes energy is an unnecessary extra word. END OF TAPE THREE. SIDE TWO

TAPE FOUR. SIDE ONE

We say, we could say, "Well, he's very receptive," or "She's very receptive." You don't have to say they've "got a lot of receptive energy." (Laughter) But there does seem to be a tendency for people to translate things into terms of energy, you know. It's just like this idiom they've got nowadays of "situation", yes. Instead of saying people are starving - there is a "situation of extreme food shortage"t Or even "an extreme food shortaVe situation." So why

bring in the word ~energy"? why not say "He's very receptive," or "Sh~'~ very receptive"? Not that they've got lots of 'receptive energy". why do you think the word "energy" is brought in

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sometimes unnecessarily? It seems as though people are quite preoccupied with the question of energy; and why are they quite preoccupied with the question of energy? Well, it's obvious, isn't it?

Voices: They haven't got any.

S: They haven't got any. (Laughter) So it's natural in a way, isn't it? But sometimes, you know, at the end of retreats people even, you know, come and see me and they say, "Oh, at the end of this retreat I'm feeling really full of energy," yes. So what does that tell you about them? They normally don't have energy; they're certainly not full of it. Or sometimes another favourite one - people come and say, "After this retreat I'm feeling really strong." But what does that tell you about them? Or, "I'm

- feeling really together." I mean, these are the three things usually - energy, strength, and togetherness. So that, you know, tells you at once that normally they just don't feel like that. So we tend, I think, to be preoccupied with energy just because, you know, much of the time, unfortunately, we are deficient in energy. I mean, perhaps Dr Conze hasn't got

much to say about energy because he's quite an energetic person - he seems to be judging by the amount of material he produces, he's certainly a

very hard worker - so perhaps it's not a problem for him so he's not all that interested in vigour 'cause he's got plenty of it...

Anyway, I think we've reached the end of that point more or less. But any further or final point about vigour or energy? We've had faith and vigour but it's interesting that they are in that order; when you put them sequentially you get faith leading to energy, to vigour, vigour helping to bring into existence within your own psycho-physical continuum - to use the Buddhist expression - those dharmas, those skilful mental states and experiences in which you have faith, you know, having seen them as it were fully exhibited in the person of the Buddha, and realizing that they can be developed within yourself, that they can emerge within yourself. I mean, that about sums it up.

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Susiddhi: What was the definition of vigour? The first one?

S: The first one was that "vigour brings into existence those dharmas in which you have faith." Dharmas meaning mental states, skilful mental states and experiences.

Susiddhi: Those dharmas in which?

S: You have faith. So therefore no faith, no vigour, quite clearly, yes. If you have faith, you will have vigour.... (We might have gone over time just a little bit. I'm wondering when the meditation was starting... Ah, it was four o'clock. Well, I think we should stop because....

Suvaira: Which Wheel number is this one?

S: This is 65 and 66. Anyway, a quick cup of tea and then meditation. BREAK

S: Alright, carry on reading from where we left off.

Text: III. mindfulness A Buddhist owes his soberness... ...restraint of the mind. (Pages 11/12)

S: There are quite a few points to be commented upon here. First of all, this question of soberness. We did touch upon it a little yesterday. "A Buddhist owes... ...Pali: sati)." What about this soberness of the Buddhist? Do you think that's really an adequate description? Doesn't it need to be supplemented or complemented by something? Yes, "soberness" is alright, "soberness" suggests, you know, continued mindfulness and awareness, but what do you think is a bit lacking, a bit missing, as it were?

Susiddhi: Joy.

S: Joy, yes. There must be a sort of, well, not exhilaration exactly, but certainly a sort of radiant joy, you could say. This is one of the things that we started noticing on retreats quite a long time ago, that it was very difficult to strike a balance as between mindfulness, which started to go a bit stiff and a bit rigid, and joyfulness, which started becoming a bit unmindful. What usually used to happen was that at the beginning of the retreat people would be all rather stiff. In those days, of course,

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people would be coming straight from work and nearly everybody did have a full-time job of a conventional nature so they'd need a bit of time for loosening up. So you'd let them loosen up for a day or two and they'd be happy, but then they'd start getting a bit sort of skittish and a bit playful and a bit unmindful. So you'd remind them about mindfulness and awareness, maybe have a bit of silence. But then they'd tend to go a bit stiff and a bit rigid and a bit blocked. So if that went too far again, you'd sort of ease up, maybe have some

communication exercises, that would restore the balance a bit. But then they might get carried away again a bit by that, so you'd have to have a bit more silence. In this way try to bring people back to a middle path where they did have awareness and mindfulness but they also had joy and energy and liveliness at the same time. It's very difficult to have these two, not just side by side, not just even alternating between them, but, you know, fused or interfused or blended together. So soberness seems a bit too much weighted on the side of mindfulness. Not that mindfulness shouldn't be there, not that soberness shouldn't be there, but it also needs that, you know, element of joy and lightness and radiance, one could say.

Suvaira: Is this Conze himself coming out here? Is he a sort of very sober person 'cause he's not in contact with the Sangha?

S: Not really, he's quite a jovial old chap actually. I'm sure he's been carried away more than once in his life, judging by his autobiography anyway. NO, I think he's trying to, I think he's forming his picture of the Buddhist from the texts, and some of the texts themselves are a bit one-sided. So, alright, a Buddhist does hold his soberness to the cultivation of the third virtue of mindfulness, but you mustn't, you know, cause that to give us the impression that a Buddhist is simply all soberness, you know, that a Buddhist is an embodiment of soberness and nothing more. There's more to the spiritual life than that. So, "Whereas faith and vigour... .. to excess." I don't quite like that expression "driven

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to excess" - "must be restrained favours indolence." This is a quite interesting thought - that faith, vigour and wisdom may excite us - and there is a footnote here: "Faith lends itself to emotional excitement; vigour to the excitement of doing things and wanting to do more; wisdom to the excitement of discovery." Yes. So, do you agree with this - that faith lends itself to emotional excitement? Can you think of any, say, rather extreme examples of this, possibly outside Buddhism; faith lending itself to emotional excitement?

mahamati: And fanaticism.

S' Fanaticism. As you get at a revivalist meeting, yes. People, you

know, the preacher whipping up people's feelings. Or, as you get in the

- Hinu kirtan, this congregational singing and chanting where everybody gets really carried away, as I've described in my memoirs, if you remember. So this is faith, which "lends itself to emotional excitement." And then, "vigour to the excitement of doing things and wanting to do more." Well, I think most people are familiar with that, aren't they, yes. No need to say very much about that - you know, you get a new idea, you are very excited, very interested, you look it up here, you look it up there, you trace its ramifications; this reference book, that reference book, and new vistas unfolding before you all the time - you get very excited. So wisdom leads to excitement, the excitement of discovery. So it's quite interesting that that excitement needs to be sort of toned down by the interposition of mindfulness. ~ut

you don't want to carry the mindfulness so far that it becomes sober in a very one-sided sort of way and not only get rid of the emotional excitement of faith, you get rid of faith itself. (Laughter) Not only get rid of the excitement of vigour, but you get rid of vigour itself, and so on. Again you must be really careful to follow the middle way.

And also, mindfulness protects the mind, not only from excitedness,

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but "from indolence into which it might fall since concentration favours indolence." Do you think this is true? That concentration, samadhi, favours indolence?

A Voice: I didn't understand that. (... ? ...)

) mahamati: (... ? ...)

Susiddhi: Introversion.

5: I think it's maybe Buddhaghosa being a little bit symmetrical, as it were. But I think I can see what he's getting at, but I wouldn't really call that samadhi in the true sense; you know, you can just get into a dreamy meditation, yes. You know, your meditation is~just thinking these beautiful thoughts and getting into these beautiful states and floating away on a little rose-coloured cloud.... And you might just want to indulge in that and not do anything, just be all quiet and peaceful and beautiful and not soil your hands with any dirty work or do anything, hmm? I assume Buddhaghosa is thinking of that sort of thing. But that is not real samadhi of course because samadhi consists in the constant uninterrupted production of highly skilful mental states, positive mental states. And that means really hard work. And even if, you know, things have come to the point where it's no longer hard work and there's a spontaneous flow of these skilful mental states of a relatively high level, you're certainly not in a state of indolence. So the samadhi that might fall into indolence, I would say, is not true samadhi really at all. It's true that mindfulness could guard you against that, but what it's guarding you against is not really samadhi as a spiritual faculty or a cardinal virtue but something much, much inferior to that. So therefore in the first place mindfulness is useful because it helps you to balance the four remaining spiritual faculties, and because it guards you against the excitedness that three of them might degenerate into and the indolence that one, you know, wrongly understood or wrongly experienced, might degenerate into. So therefore mindfulness is always useful, yes. If

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you wanted to be a little pernickety you might say: well, mindfulness itself can go to extremes. If faith can go to extremes, why not mindfulness? If wisdom can go to extremes, you know, why not mindfulness? If even samadhi can go to extremes, again, why not mindfulness? And then, what it would be then in that case is a sort of pseudo-mindfulness that you could regard as mindfulness gone to the extreme of mindfulness. mark: Over

self-consciousness.

S: Over self-consciousness. You know, self-conscious in such a way that you just inhibited yourself all the time; that could be regarded as, you know, mindfulness gone to the extreme. You could say: well, that isn't real mindfulness, but in the same way you could say that the samadhi that leads to indolence is not the real samadhi, yes. So perhaps we shouldn't make so much of an exception in the case of mindfulness as perhaps tradition does and, you know, we ourselves, following tradition, have been in the habit of doing. In the sense in which samadhi at least can go to extremes mindfulness too perhaps can go to extremes. You can have too much mindfulness of the wrong sort, but then again the faith of which you might have too much is faith of the wrong sort, yes. Well, certainly that holds you know, good in the case of, you know, samadhi and indolence. maybe even the right sort of faith needs to be balanced by, you know, by the, by wisdom. But even the right kind of mindfulness needs to be balanced you might say by joy and spontaneity.

John: Does that mean the the five, do they come out ~imultaneously or do they have to be developed simultaneously, or in order? Because you have faith and not wisdom which means....

S: Well, here an order seems to be followed in this exposition: that you develop faith first and it's because of your faith, that you have faith, that you develop vigour. Sometimes it's explained in this way. Well, you saw there was a text which did explain that. I quoted this: "Through vigour you develop, you bring into existence within yourself, the skill

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ful mental states in which you have faith, yes. And then awareness and mindfulness is the sort of process of guarding those skilful mental states that you've brought into existence and preventing them from falling away, and, you know, weeding out the unskilful, you know, mental states that might spring up amongst them. So you could look at it in that way. And then, when those skilful mental states become uninterruptedly established in you so that your mind is nothing but a pure continuous flow of highly positive mental states, that is samadhi, yes. And when your samadhi is sufficiently strong and on the basis of that samadhi you can have an insight into Reality itself, and that is your wisdom. So in this way they are developed in sequence. At the same time they need, all of them,

to be developed because, if you develop your faith to the full then your 6th' vigour can be developed to the full; if you develop your vigour to the

full, then your mindfulness can be developed to the full; and so on. So you could say here there is a possibility of a path of regular steps and a path of irregular steps. You could start off by developing wisdom without much in the way of faith or much in the way of vigour. You wouldn't get very far though; you'd have to come back and strengthen and consolidate your base. But this is what most people do. They, you know, they work on this faculty, a bit on that. But you can't perfect, say, vigour before you've perfected faith. You can't perfect mindfulness before you've perfected vigour. This is where the path of regular steps comes



in....

Alright, "mindfulness is desirable everywhere," - alright, let's take that for granted and not question it too much - "like a seasoning of salt in all sauces, like the prime minister in all state functions." The Indian prime minister was a sort of general maid~of~all~work as it were; it was the dewan, as they call them, at a later stage. I remember in this connection a little story which is not an horrific one. (Laughter) You know, I used to go up to the state of Sikkim, which was at that time a

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kingdom under the - not exactly - yes, under the sort of protection of India. Now India has swallowed it up completely, annexed it, unfortunately. But anyway I used to go up there to this village capital, as it was called, with this toy government almost, and toy court. There's only at that time about 150,000 people in Sikkim, though they had their own complete government, complete with an Indian representative, and of course their maharaj, their king, with his court and everything. So at the time I was going up everything was in process of democratization. So they were building a secretariat and they had two hundred people employed there, you know, a miniature bureaucracy. And they had a prime minister, a dewan, and they had a number of different ministers. So there were, you know, altogether between two and three hundred people administering this tiny state, yes, under the maharaj assisted by the Indian political Officer. And one day I was talking to an old friend of mine up there who was at that time the Chief Secretary to the government, and he was a Tibetan Buddhist, Sikkimese-born, of the old school, a very, very devout Buddhist, connected by marriage with the Sakyapa Lamas, and completely and openly contemptuous of anything democratic. (Laughter) A real aristocrat of the old school. And I was with him once at the Secretariat and he said, "Look at this," he said, "this secretariat. Look at all these ministers and these clerks," he said. "In the old days," he said, "when I was the private secretary to his highness," he said, "I ran the whole state, single-handed, with the help of one clerk." (Laughter) You see. So, in his spare time - because, being private secretary, his main task was to look after the maharaj's private affairs, to take his children down to Calcutta to school, to order his wines and spirits from Calcutta, and see that he got what he wanted - these were the important things. And when he had time he saw to the administration of the state with the help of this one clerk. (Laughter) So he had all these different portfolios, every single one of them, and he, according to his own account at least,

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he ran the state perfectly satisfactorily. So this is what the old style Indian prime minister or dewan was like. So therefore, "like the prime minister in all state functions," - yes, he was present everywhere. "hence it is said, '~' ...of the mind." This is quite interesting, isn't it? Without mindfulness there can be no exertion, you might forget to exert, or why you should exert, or restraint, of the mind. Alright, let's carry on.

Text: Although traces of it... ...realization of Nirvana. (Page 12)

S: So, "Although tracee... ...a central position." You notice he says a central position and not the central position; to say the central position would be to give mindfulness just a little too much importance. "If one were asked... ...laid on mindfulness." Do you know what he means by the dharma theory? What is the dharma theory? Well, the dharma theory is the theory or doctrine or teaching that the whole of our experience, the whole of existence in fact\* can be analysed into ultimate irreducible factors, psycho-physical factors, which are called dharmas, and that things we experience as wholes and as entities are in fact made up of dharmas which are not in fact entities in their terms - though sometimes they interpret it as such - but processes. The dharma theory really means that what we think of as a succession, or an association of, collocation of, or an arrangement of, of solid things is really just flux and process; that all these things can be reduced to their various constituent processes on various levels - absolutely everything - both the so-called material things and the so-called mental things. This is the dharma theory. And the stress laid on mindfulness: it's certainly true that no other religious teaching lays the same stress on mindfulness. Do you think there's any equivalent of mindfulness ever taught in Christianity? I mean, do you ever hear of a Christian preacher speaking about mindfulness from the pulpit? Are you likely to hear? Or is there any equivalent? Well, in Christian monastic circles there is what they call recollection, which to some extent resembles mindfulness, but it's a distinctively monastic

- ?B -

sort of virtue, it's not a sort of generally Christian virtue. The ordinary Christian is certainly not advised to practise recollection. But monks are sometimes, or used to be - I don't know about now. And there's also a term: "consideration". There's a work by St Bernard called "On Consideration". This is addressed to a Pope who had been a monk, and St Bernard himself was a monk, so again it was very much a monastic teaching. It's as though the whole conception of recollection or consideration or mindfulness has significance only within the context of a comparatively intensive spiritual life and an actual effort to develop in some way. So it's virtually useless to the masses, as it were. You can't imagine an ethnic religion teaching mindfulness. So, Buddhism being so concerned with the development of the individual, it's not surprising there should be this stress on mindfulness. And the fact that there is this stress on mindfulness in Buddhism - in a way that you don't get in any other religion - you know, simply is a reflection of the fact that no other religion or religious teaching is concerned with the development of the individual in such an intensive and central way that Buddhism is....

"mindfulness is not only... ...Buddhism itself." So, the Eightfold Path is pretty central, the Five Virtues are pretty central, the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment, the bojjhngas, are pretty central; in all of them mindfulness figures. So one can correctly speak of a stress laid on mindfulness by Buddhism, that all the most important formulations include mindfulness, certainly all the most important formulations of primitive Buddhism, as we might call it.

"On occasions Buddhism itself." To be a Buddhist is to be mindful, to be mindful is to be a Buddhist, practically.

"So we read of ~irvana." I take it you know what these four applications of mindfulness are? Well, you ought to; these are quite basic things.

mark: Is this the qualities of the emotions....?

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S: Yes, yes....

Susiddhi: States of mind, consciousness....

S: It's not just the body, it's the body and bodily movements, yes. Then feelings, thoughts, and then dhammas, which means something more like realities or formulations of the teaching. So there is a constant mindfulness of how you are physically, the state of your physical body, its position, its movements, - if in fact you are moving - and then your emotional state, whether you are happy, whether you are sad, and so on. And then what you are thinking of, whether you are thinking of your lunch, or whether you are thinking of the dharma theory, whether you are thinking of an absent friend. And then, of dhammas, whether you are bearing in mind, say, the Buddha's teaching about impermanence\* or the teaching of the five skandhas, or whether you have your mind fixed on Nirvana, and so on. These are the four applications, sometimes called the four foundations of mindfulness. I've also spoken in lectures in terms of the four dimensions of awareness, that is to say: awareness of one's self, one's own body, feelings, thoughts; awareness of other people, yes; awareness of nature, the whole of the natural environment, you could say ecological awareness, or even eco-awareness if you wanted to be very "with it"; and then awareness of reality. This is perhaps more comprehensive. But again I think there is some danger in speaking of the spiritual life, speaking of Buddhism exclusively, or almost exclusively, in terms of awareness and mindfulness. It does tend to become a bit dry, just a little bit too onesidedly sober. Do you know what I mean? I think that this sort of teaching was fine for ancient Indians who was, as far as we can make out, were very exuberant people full of the joy of living - in the Buddha's day and before that. So there was no danger of them becoming sort of dried up or blocked or anything of that sort. They came into the Buddha's teaching in a very sort of healthy, lively, exuberant sort of state, and just needed to be sort of calmed down with this teaching of mindfulness.

But, if you come into Buddhism already blocked, overly self-conscious, then perhaps mindfulness teaching is not going to help you quite so much. It needs to be supplemented by something else; it isn't an all-sufficing teaching then. You may need a different sort of approach - maybe more emphasis on faith, more emphasis on vigour, not so much emphasis on mindfulness. You might have already too much of the wrong sort of mindfulness.

For instance, there are one or two quite good books on these four foundations of mindfulness, but they do strike one, though excellent and really very worthy, as rather dry and almost dull sometimes.

mahamati: Perhaps mindfulness itself can be talked about in another way. S, Hmm.

mahamati: You know, really experiencing it.

~t Right, yes - or perhaps one could speak of it in terms of awareness even, rather than mindfulness; you know, the so-called vipassana teaching-- I say so-called because it's simply a teaching', because it bears that label and doesn't have much resemblance to the original vipassana teaching

of the Buddha - includes, you know, a strong element of mindfulness. In fact, it is mindfulness. I mean, I was quite shocked when I came back from

India and found people practising this in England, and they were just making themselves into zombies. It was really terrible to see. Some of

them ought to have been in a mental hospital; in fact, some of them did go into a mental hospital. And this is what they had been taught by some Thai vipassana teachers and an Englishman - oh, I'm sorry: a Canadian - who'd been out in a meditation centre for three weeks and had come back full of just theory and technique and had started applying it vigorously and getting people doing it. They became acutely alienated from themselves, really acutely, in a way I've seen nobody even approaching in the Friends, ever. Literally, just like zombies. So I went to a meditation centre where they were doing this and they were just literally walking around in that sort of state. So this is what the wrong practice of mindfulness can do. Alright, let's carry on.

- SI -

Text: What then is "mindfulness"?... ...only in rare intervals. (Pages 12/13)

S: So, "What then is 'mindfulness'?... ...carelessness and distraction." So it "prevents ideas from 'floating away'". So, do you see remembering functioning in this sort of way? What is this tendency of ideas to float

away? Why do they float away? Why don't they stay?

John: Because you get other ideas which just kind of...

S: Hmm, you get other ideas, you get interested in other things...

SuvaAra: You haven't really paid attention to them in the first place.

S: Yes, that also - they haven't made a sufficiently strong impression on the mind. Well, suppose, though, you've got, say for the sake of argument, the idea of the Buddha. Presumably you shouldn't allow that idea to float away, should you? I mean, presumably that idea should be there all the time. But does that idea tend to float away, yes? Unfortunately, it does. So one could say that, in this sort of case, you know, mindfulness is an act of remembering which prevents ideas from floating away - as when you actually have the recollection of the Buddha - Buddham smrti, mindfulness of the Buddha. You try to keep that idea because you know you are convinced that that is an idea which you ought to be entertaining all the time; that you ought to be making a permanent part of your mental make-up; that you ought to have always in mind, yes. So in this way mindfulness can be defined as

an act of remembering which prevents those ideas which ought to be a permanent part of your mental make-up, you know, from floating away, and which fights forgetfulness of such ideas, carelessness about them and distraction from them brought about by the intervention of other opposite or inimical ideas. So this is quite a useful way of looking at remembering, at mindfulness, - that it is this sort of act of remembering. Because we get all sorts of good ideas, positive ideas, that we ought to have been thinking all the time, but they float away. So what is going to prevent them floating away? This act of remembering them, in a sense hanging on to them, not letting them float

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away. And this is mindfulness. You could say, even, the idea of development - you should never allow that to float away. The idea of yourself as

a developing person - just hang on to that idea. There should be an act of remembering with regard to it so that it doesn't float away. ~ahamati: Become involved with the idea, say, of the Buddha would remain with one because one felt... I don't quite see how mindfulness would...

S: And what about recollection of the Buddha? I mean, recollection of the Buddha is not just, you know, the thought of the abstract idea of the Buddha, but the recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, that is to say the bringing of those qualities powerfully before your mind in an imaginative sort of way - which means that faith, you know, would automatically be there. So, supposing, for instance, you had forgotten the Buddha because there was no faith. Well, how are you going to bring the Buddha back? You bring the Buddha back by an act of recollection, you sort of remember His qualities, you start vividly realizing and imagining them. And then, of course, the faith comes up again. Then, of course, so long as that faith lasts, you've no difficulty in recollecting the Buddha. So it seems even here then that mindfulness does play its part, yes, you know, in the absence of faith. If faith is present, well, yes, you don't need mindfulness then, but if faith fades away and disappears altogether\* you know, then you need mindfulness to bring back that image, as it were, of the Buddha which will then stimulate the faith in the Buddha.

Sueiddhi: This is very much like the classic perfect effort.

S: Yes, yes, right, yes.

Susiddhi: In that these two steps - perfect effort and mindfulness - are pretty much bound up together.

S: Yes, yes. So, "The Abhidharma,... ..fights forgetfulness, carelessness,..." What do you think carelessness would be? How would carelessness come in, about, you know+ Carelessness with respect to these ideas that you ought to be bearing in mind.

Susiddhi: Just letting them be displaced by other things. 5, Yes, but that is covered by distraction. What does carelessness really convey?

END OF TAPE FOUR, SIDE ONE

TAPE FOUR. SIDE TWO

S: Lack of reverence... maybe something a bit more general than that perhaps. You don't value those ideas as you ought to. I mean, when you, say, treat something carelessly it means you don't really value it. If you've got, say, a really valuable painting you look after it very carefully, yes. If you look after it carelessly it means you're not valuing it. So, if you are careless with regard to these highly positive ideas you ought to be making a, you know, permanent part of your mental make-up, it means you don't really value them. That's why you're careless about them. So mindfulness helps you to remember how valuable they are, yes, how useful they are, and therefore it fights carelessness. And, in the same way, fights distraction, fights those ideas which get in the way, - you know, less skilful, less positive ideas. It makes you work at the fact that if you allow these ideas in, well, you sacrifice the more valuable ideas; these ideas therefore are dangerous, should be kept away. So we can, so it seems, therefore, that mindfulness as an act of remembering has this sort of threefold function: it prevents us from forgetting ideas that we ought to remember; prevents us from undervaluing them; and prevents us from allowing them to be interrupted by ideas less valuable and therefore, you know, less helpful to us. Anyway, Dr Conze isn't very satisfied. He says, "This definition... ..to us today." I'm not so sure I agree with that but anyway... "The theoretical assumptions... ..taken for granted." Alright, what is that? What are those theoretical assumptions? "What one assumes... ..rare intervals." So, according to

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Dr Conze, this definition which he quotes from the Abhidharma, though correct, does not really make the function of this virtue, mindfulness, very clear to us today because "The theoretical assumptions for granted." Now, is that really so? I mean, do these theoretical assumptions, as he describes them, about these two levels of the mind really underly these practices and does one have to understand these assumptions in order to have a clear understanding of what mindfulness is?

A Voice: No.

Suvaira: I can't remember coming across it apart from in T.fl.

S: Ah. It seems rather odd, doesn't it? It doesn't really make things any clearer, it only introduces a sort of quasi-metaphysical explanation, yes. It seems to me, you know, a bit like what I talked about on the Wei Lang seminar several years ago about what I think I called the meta-physics of potentiality. For instance, we say that if you make an effort you can become Enlightened and you can become a Buddha, you can realize Buddhahood. This is all that the original Pali or, if you like, Theravada teaching, or original teaching, of Buddhism says. But you can, as it were, interpret that metaphysically in this way: if you are able to gain Enlightenment, gain Buddhahood, you are potentially Enlightened, you are potentially Buddha. That means you are Buddha in fact here and now, even

-- though you don't realize that. So that there are two levels: there's your level of unenlightened, unbuddhistic nature, and there's your level of Enlightened, Buddha-like nature. You are Buddha here and now. Right deep down in the depths of your being you are

Buddha. All you have to do is to contact that, which is your real nature. That is the more meta physical way of putting it, which to some extent, in some ways, the rna-ha- yana adopted later on. But the Buddha Himself seems quite clearly not to have used that sort of language. Do you see the difference? The Buddha only said: if you make the effort, you can become Enlightened. He did not speak of any potential state of Enli~htenment, you know, or state which

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you were potentially capable of realizing, actually existing in some hidden depth within you. You can understand, as a way of speaking, that "You are potentially Buddha; in fact you are a Buddha now," is alright to encourage people. But it can lead to intellectual difficulties. For instance: alright, if you are Buddha, well, how did you come to think you were anything else~ (Laughter) You know, how did this horrible mistake - you know, you were Iflahamati or whoever - arise? (Laughter) How, I mean, how can a Buddha forget that he is a Buddha, assuming that he is a Buddha to start with? So this metaphysics of potentiality, as I call it, is fraught with difficulties. I therefore think it's much better and safer and sounder and no less helpful just to speak in the same terms as the Buddha used - that if you make the effort you can develop, you know, a specific mental state, including the state of Enlightenment. There's no need to have recourse to a metaphysics of potentiality in that sort of way, and it seems to me that this is what Dr Conze is doing. Instead of being satisfied with a simple statement that you can develop mindfulness and you can develop a calmer and clearer state of mind than you have at present he talks about the theoretical assumptions which underly the various practices summed up in the word "mindfulness" in the form of these two disparate parts - the calm, quiet depth and the surface. And such assumptions seem completely unnecessary and not in fact made by the Buddha in any case at all when he gave this teaching of mindfulness. Do you see the point? Yes? So it's not surprising that people remain incredulous when told of a submerged spot of stillness in their innermost hearts. (Laughter) It's not surprising at all. It's a sort of metaphysical fiction, yes. It's much better to say: well, look, you are in a terrible state now, your mind is very disturbed, it's in a state of turmoil. But if you go about it in the right way, if you practise correctly, if you follow the right methods, you can develop at least a measure of calm, yes.

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That seems much more convincing to them than saying: well, no, you're not really in a state of mental turmoil, deep down you're just still, calm, quiet. You see, we are taking the analogy of the ocean, which is just ruffled on the surface but still in the depths - much too literally. We don't need to do that sort of thing. We don't need these sort of pseudo- -metaphysical assumptions or pseudo~Jungian assumptions or whatever. I'd say, if anything, what I'd seen of people, that their minds are in a state of turmoil right from the surface right down into the depths. (Laughter) That would probably be much truer. So speak in terms of calming that tumult at all levels\* which can be done.

Susiddhi: It's not assumptions you need, it's just a wee bit of experience of it. Sometimes you're calm, other times not, and...

S: You don't need any assumptions of this sort of metaphysical order.

Suvaira: It's like telling an acorn that it really is an oak tree - that it should be fully-grown.  
(Laughter)

S: Yes. If you dig deep enough into the acorn you find, you know, an oak tree there, a tiny oak tree. This is what it used to be like with the homuncule. They used to believe that each - I mean, this is, I thi~k, medieval - each spermatozoon contained a tiny man, complete of course with genitals containing spermatazoa containing tiny men (Laughter) to infinity, yes. It's rather like that, isn't it, yes. In other words, it's a negation of the concept of growth. And then you present yourself with the problem of how, in this world of static levels, as it were, how growth is possible. But, you know, if you were\* say, that you are already Buddha, in a sense you are negating growth, you're regarding the growth as something illusory. Do you see what I mean? Because there's no real growth - you a:a already are that, you just have to uncover the fact, reveal yourself to yourself, as you really are, there's no question of growth or development. So, if growth or development becomes a sort of a fiction, yes, a metaphysical fiction, you can hardly expect people to

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put energy into it. So the woole of the Buddha's teaching, as far as3one can see, is based on the sort of reality of change, the reality of develop- ment, the reality of the progress of the individual, that that change is real. The situation is not complicated by any metaphysical assumptions; these, I'm sure, would have been dismissed by the Buddha as ditthis, mere views, which were not at all helpful. There's only one passage in the whole Pali canon which speaks of this essentially pure mind which is only defiled by adventitious defilements. So it might be alright on occasion to, you know, just to encourage people, especially if people who are, you know, riddled with feelings of strong guilt and unworthiness - that they're evil and bad and so on - to encourage them by saying: no, you know, you're potentially Enlightened, that Buddha-nature is there underneath, you are not bad. It could be a skilful thing to do in those sort of circumstances. But not as a sort of general approach or general measure, as it were. It just isn't necessary for ordinary, healthy people. They feel themselves alive and growing, so to spee1( in those terms - they don't feel themselves as uncovering some metaphysical Buddha-nature by stages. I think here it's the strongly metaphysically~inclined Indian mind getting to work on Buddhism, on the Buddha's teaching, and trying to sort of metaphysicalize it when that's quite unnecessary. You could, it is really a form of substantialism, it is a form of atmavada really - thinking in terms of the final stage of development as sort of already present, actually existing within you, as it were, potentially. It negates the reality of process. And therefore of ~unyata.

Susiddhi: Dharma theory as well.

5: Yes.

Mahamati: Why therefore of sunyata?

S: Because sunyata isn't a sort of metaphysical absolute. It represents,

as it wars, the possibility of complete change, complete transformation, that nothing is limited



to being what it is. Sunyata is, as it were, the

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guarantor of the possibility of unrestricted change and development; eunyata is what prevents anything from being what it is. (Laughter)

Airight, let's go on.

Text: mindfulness and concentration... ...cut off discursive thinking. (Pages 13/14)

S: So, "mindfulness and concentration," - that is to say samadhi - "are two virtues... ..have my being." Is it necessary to think of these "enemies of spiritual quietude" as occurring on the surface of the mind? Can't one just think of them as occurring at one's present level of development, as it were~ That's quite sufficient really, isn't it?

Susiddhi: still relating to the last paragraph.

5, Yes. "When this busy... ..discursive thinking." He's going to go into these in detail in the next paragraph, so we won't comment on them at this stage. Just go straight on.

Text: By an effort... ..calm in one's heart. (Page 14)

S, That's alright provided one thinks, you know, of that calm as something which is, one is actually developing and keeping in existence, rather than of it as something already existing in the depths of one's heart, as it were. Alright, let's go on to the detailed account of this then.

Text: First, as regards... ..a fallen mind. (Page 14)

5, Hmm, he's getting a bit away from Buddhism in a way, isn't he? This "fallen mind" sounds almost like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, doesn't it? (Laughter) Yes, because - "the mind should dwell on sense-linked objects.... ..contemplation of emptiness." Well, why on earth doesn't thought do what is natural to it?

What makes it do anything else? Why should it be a fallen mind? You know, this raises the, you know, the inherent difficulty of this meta-physics of potentiality\* as we called it\* yes. So there's no need to speak of it in terms of natural or unnatural. If anything, it's natural for the mind to wander, yes. If the natural is the, you know, the already

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existing, and what your mind usually does, and what everybody's mind usually does and always has done, well, that would seem to be the natural. So it would be better to take that as the basis and think if anything of the spiritual life itself as unnatural. Certainly in

biological terms\* in the same way that culture is unnatural, houses are unnatural, art is unnatural, philosophy is unnatural, spiritual life is unnatural. Because it goes right against nature, yes, Turning the other cheek is unnatural, practising metta bhavana is unnatural. Goethe once said, "Whatever is against nature is to be cultivated." (Laughter) You see, that seems to make more sense in a way, doesn't it? Looking at things more natural-istically and less metaphysically. Otherwise you have to explain why this pure, clear, free, Enlightened mind fell. Well, the Christians have got enough difficulty, you know, understanding how Adam fell, you know. Well, there was Eve, true; there was also the serpent; there was even an apple. (Laughter) Yes, and they were of course created with free will, so the Christians say. So they could either follow or not, you know; it was up to them; they chose to fall. But, you know, can an Enlightened mind fall? How can an enlightened mind, a pure mind, do anything that isn't Enlightened and pure? So, in this manner I'm afraid Dr Conze gets himself into some difficulties. It is natural for the mind to dwell on sense-linked objects, despite what, I'm afraid, Dr Conze says. "In its natural purity... ..of emptiness." No, despite the mahayana and the Vajrayans there's no such thing as the natural purity of thought, not as something actually experienced or real in experiential terms. It's only a sort of what Dr Guenther would call an operational concept. It might be useful in certain circumstances to speak in that way, but one shouldn't take it at all literally. What you really mean when you say that you are fundamentally pure is you can jolly well become so if you only pull up your socks and make the effort., yes. (~laughter) This is what it really amounts to. Otherwise you can, you know, sort of dwell upon that thought

of how pure you really are, deep down, without making any real actual effort to realize that; you are satisfied with the fact, as you believe it to be, that you are pure deep down, yes. So you just go along, you know, in your usual sort of grubby way, making no effort to purify yourself because you're convinced, or have been convinced, that deep down you're pure - so what need you do?

So, "For two reasons... ..flood the mind;" - true - " (2) because attention... ..emptiness of dharmas." So what Dr Conze says, you know, on this sort of level is perfectly alright. I mean, it's sense stimulation may disturb inner calm because it's the occasion for the arising of unskillful mental states and because it represents a distraction, you know, in comparison with what we really ought to be occupying ourselves with, which is Reality. But anyway there's a bit more to be said on these topics even than that. "Sense stimulation may disturb inner calm because it gives an occasion for undesirable states." Do you realize the significance of this word "occasion", hmm? He's using the word "occasion" quite deliberately and quite correctly, not "caused", yes. He doesn't say sense stimulation may disturb inner calm because it is the cause of undesirable states arising, it's the occasion. Now what is the point of the distinction?

Mahamati: It doesn't have to arise.

S: It doesn't have to arise, yes. It's only an occasion.

Suvajra: Like an opportunity.

S: An opportunity. Or, it's even more than an opportunity, but not a cause, just, er, you know... So it's very important to make this distinction. Sometimes we say of another person: he made me angry, it was his fault that I became angry, he made me angry. But no, he didn't

make you angry, he only gave you the occasion for anger. The anger came from within you; you were responsible. So the mere fact that you use this word "occasions" suggests that withdrawal from sense stimuli is not in itself a solution. Because you still have to deal with these unskilful mental states within

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yourself. The sense contact has only given the occasion of their arising and it hasn't caused them. So, even if you go off into solitary retreat with the minimum of sense stimuli, you'd still be confronted by these unskilful mental states. They may arise in the entire absence of appropriate sense stimuli and you may still have to deal with them. So that also suggests that you could deal with them without an actual physical withdrawal - if you were of a strong, heroic, determined, spiritual character. But most people need periods of respite and withdrawal, you know, from the sense stimuli so that they can study, as it were, the unskilful mental state independently of the actual occasions of their arising in the external world. Do you see what I mean? You need a more laboratory-like situation. And also "because attention... ..emptiness of dharmas." That is not completely true, that attention to the sensory distracts from the object of wisdom. So what is the object of wisdom? So give a very simple example - leave aside emptiness of dharmas - a very simple example from early Buddhism, the Buddha's own teaching. Impermanence, yes. But when you contemplate impermanence do you simply contemplate the abstract notion of impermanence, apart from concrete things that are impermanent? Do you? No. So that isn't in a sense a little bit absurd to speak of withdrawing yourself from sense objects in order to contemplate the permanence of those sense objects. You know, maybe just to strengthen the general idea of impermanence you need to withdraw a bit, but ultimately it's to those very things that you've got to apply the concept of impermanence. You've got to realize that this is impermanent and that is impermanent, not just review a general conception of impermanence. Do you see what I mean? So you could say that contemplation is not contemplation of an abstract idea of impermanence, or wisdom is not the contemplation of an abstract idea of impermanence. That's too easy, yes, that's letting you get away with it too easily. It's letting you off too lightly. You've got to realize that this food

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that you are eating is impermanent, that this person that you are attached to is impermanent, that your books that you read so lovingly every day are impermanent, yes, not just withdraw from all these things and contemplate an abstract idea of impermanence. You see what I mean? So, therefore, what he says here, though correct as far as it goes, has to be qualified somewhat. You may well have to withdraw, you know, for a time, but, you know, withdrawal is not the last word - withdrawal from sense objects, sense stimulation.

inahamati: I've been thinking of mindfulness, and you're really in touch

with things around you. I mean, you experience them so that seems to be... that also with withdrawal in the sense of not (... ? ... )

- S: Hmm, yes. Well, there are some experiences which are - what shall I say - incompatible with mindfulness. You've either - in order to preserve the mindfulness - you've either, you've got to separate from the experience, or, if you insist in having the experience

along with the mindfulness, tuell, either the mindfulness will disintegrate or the experience. Do you see what I mean? That, you know, you can't have the two together, just like you can't have love and hate together or, let us say, metta and hate together.

mahamati: That's only in certain circumstances.

S: For instance, supposing you go to a party, yes, Well, a party is usually a situation that excites unmindfulness. So you can either preserve your mindfulness by leaving the party, or you can stay with the party and lose your mindfulness. You can, of course, do both. Supposing, say, ten people at the party all simultaneously wanted to preserve their mindfulness and not leave the party; what would happen? The party would disintegrate. (Laughter) You'd have ten mindful people there, they certainly wouldn't have a party. They'd do something else. Do you see what I mean? So the sort of state of excitability that you associate with the party is incompatible with mindfulness. So you stay with the situation, but your

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rAshamati: If one is, say, mindful of another person, one really experiences them.

S: Oh yes, yes. Yes. You don't necessarily have to go away and think

about them to be mindful and aware of them, you can be aware and mindful of them in that actual situation. I mean, this is, sometimes you can be

with them in such a way that mindfulness is completely destroyed. The chances are you are not really with them any longer. Something else has taken over, like when you might just go off with a friend and get drunk

with them. Well, you are together in a sense, but not really any meaning

ful sense. You're not mindful anymore and neither are you really aware of each other\* and to that extent not really together any longer...you know, not even aware of yourself, not to speak of the other person.

Airight, let's go on.

Text: The capacity... ..Nirvana are considered. (Page 15)

S: So this is all very true but I think the crucial sentence or the crucial point is this: "Attention, normally passive, involuntary and compulsive, is subjected to voluntary control." This is really the point of this restraint of the senses and guarding the doors of the senses. From becoming passive you become active, or from becoming reactive you become creative. Usually we respond to sense stimuli automatically, we are quite passive, we respond mechanically, therefore reactively. So what

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we have to do is to slow the whole thing down, be more aware of what is happening and select more, not simply allow ourselves to be played upon and influenced. 'not allow ourselves to remain simply passive but to become more active, more selective even, more creative therefore. So you - in order to do this it may be necessary to limit the sensory intake, at least for a while. So therefore Dr Conze quite rightly says~ "In the process... ..satisfactions and grievances." One really does notice this. I mean, the senses\*or the mind through the senses, is constantly reaching out towards various objects and is deflected with difficulty and feels angry and frustrated if it is deflected sometimes. So one has to observe this whole process and not allow oneself to be simply played upon by these multitudinous external sense stimuli, but be more assertive, be more in control, be more creative. You can, say, compare the two states of mind. Supposing you're walking along a street with nothing in particular in mind and you're looking this side and that side and you see something attractive in a window; you go and have a look at it, wonder whether to buy it, maybe go in and have a look at it, decide not to buy it, it's too expensive. You come out, you see something else, or you see a pretty girl pass by; you follow her with your eyes up the road a little way, then something else captures your attention. (maybe you see a cafe, you go and look at the menu in the window and think: o.k., I'll go and hav~ this, I'll go and have that. In you go. You responding to stimuli. I mean, it's mechanical~, automatic, reactive all the time here\* But, supposing you go down that same street and you have in mind the idea: I have to buy such and such a book. So you just go straight to the book- shop and you buy that book and you go away. That's a quite different situation because you're much more in control or much more in charge; you're being much more creative. And, you know, that experience will not have this sort of dissipating effect upon you that the first one will. Maybe, you know, if you've spent an hour or so wandering down a street

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in the first kind of way, by the end of the hour you'll feel a bit sort of dissipated, a bit tired, a bit exhausted even, a bit dirty; but you won't if you go about things in the second way~ Luheri things are much more under your own control, where you're being much more decisive, determined, selective, in charge, creative. provided, of course, it's not one particular powerful, unekilful desire temporarily outweighing all the others. (Laughter) I don't mean that; let's assume the book you're in search of is a book on Buddhism. (~laughter) Alright, let's go on.

Text: 2. Secondly, as regards... ..source of insight. (Pages 15/16)

S: So, awareness of the muscular movements of the body. This is all very true, but again

there is a sort of qualification. You can do this

-- in the wrong sort of way, you can have a sort of alienated awareness here. Do you know what I mean? You can just be watching yourself as though you were another person. Sometimes, I'm afraid, one is even advised to do this, but that's quite wrong. But what should one really be doing?

Susiddhi: Experiencing.

5: Experiencing oneself physically all the time. I think( that is a much better way of putting it. Not "watching one's bodily movements"; that certainly can lead to alienation in the case at least of Western people.

~ra: What about this word "suppress... °.. those movements."

S: He does say suppress and not repress. But perhaps one shouldn't take that word too literally. If you're truly mindful of any unskilful movements, that will, that mindfulness will have the effect of - perhaps one shouldn't say suppressing, but of smoothing out that movement. Do you see what I mean?

E~D OF TAPE FOUR. SIDE TWO

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TAPE FIVE. SIDE ONE

S: Also, there is, or seems to be, the suggestion here that if you're mindful you cannot do anything quickly, yes. This is not necessarily correct. "In London traffic... °0.little survival value." Well1 you can be very mindful in crossing the road and very quick at the same time. You don't have to slow down in order to be more mindful, though you may have to do that in certain circumstances. But, you know, from your own experience that there's some practical things that you can do very quickly and very mindfully at the same time. Or can you?

Suvaira: Crossing the road quickly in London, if you didn't cross the road quickly in London with mindfulness, you wouldn't survive.

Andy: Some things I've found that I can only do them quickly if I am mindful about what I'm doing.

S: Hmm. But I was thinking, for instance, of the case of a musician. He may have to play very, very rapidly indeed, but he is completely mindful; he doesn't have to slow down in order to play mindfully.

mahamatit I mean, I quite often find that if I spend a long time doing then things and/get very mixed up, I'm not in all that good a state. In a

good state I get more done much quicker.

S: Yes. If the "good" includes the being more mindful

mahamati: Yes.

Surata: That's where the discipline comes in, because if you've been disciplined in your practice then you can do it quickly and mindfully.

S: Yes. Which is, of course, quite a different thing from trying to get it done quickly. Sometimes trying to get a thing done quickly will just get in the way and cause more hold-ups. So, especially if one is skilled and experienced in practice, you can do things very quickly and very mindfully. In fact, in some cases, you can't do them quickly without doing them mindfully.

Mahamati: What does he... What does he refer to by the "breathing-practices"?

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S: Simply mindfulness of breathing. Alright, go on to 3 then.

Text: 3. Where we have incipient concentration. (page 16)

S: Here he's thinking of, you know, of calm as something already existing and to be defended rather than something to be developed. Anyway, carry on.

Text: At this point current misunderstandings, (page 16)

S: Including Dr Conze. (laughter)

~ext: ...quits apart from... ...word of mouth. (pages 16/17)

S: In other words, in the form of, you know, what the Tibetans call a precept, which is a teaching meant specifically for a certain person. So, I mean, a lot of the scriptures are really precepts and you can read them - it's like overhearing a conversation between two people, and you know part of what is said applies to you because you're in the same situation as the person who is being addressed, the person to whom the precept originally applied. Sometimes, of course, as you listen in, you may feel that it just doesn't apply to you at all, it's got nothing to do with you - might be alright but just isn't relevant so far as you're concerned. You might feel this even with regard to the greatest scriptures, as it were. Also, of course, your experience may vary from time to time. You might have a certain experience yourself and then find a certain precept, a certain scripture, very, very applicable, whereas before you hadn't found it applicable. So, you know, for this reason you have to keep on going back to the scriptures, not consider you've dealt with them once and for all....

One could even say in a way there shouldn't be any article on Buddhism written for the general reader - well, not for the general non-Buddhist reader anyway; what have they got to do with Buddhism? (Laughter) Buddhism is essentially practical; they're not going to practise it. I mean, let them read something else more interesting or more useful. It's a sort of

voyeurism almost: why do you bother about other religions?

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£;o and practise your own! The chances are, if you're bothered about other religions, and studying them too much, you're not devoting all that much time to the practice of your own. I'm sure this is why some. clergymen, for instance, go into the study of comparative religion, even taaching comparative religion: as an escape from the fact that they don't really have any longer, have any faith in Christianity, and are, in fact, no longer practising it.

Susiddhi: We've got to get recruits from the group though.

S: Hmm, yes.

Susiddhi: I mean, if we're not getting recruits, we're not...

S: Well, that's true, yes. Well, you hope to find, you know, a potential Buddhist...  
Alright, carry on.

Text: On the other hand... ...the sublimer virtues. (Page 1?)

S: What is Dr Conze really saying here, do you think? Do you think one can know one's own mind without help, external help, as it were, in the form of-- in a sort of systematic treatise on psychology or religious psychology? Do you think these things re~lly do help?

A \loice: No, I don't think so.

? Surata: Yes, I think they do help - otherwise, I think, you can waste a hell of a lot of time. Like he said~ if you've got a map you don't take wrong turnings.

S: Is it as simple as that though, do you think? Necessarily?

Surata: You've got to be careful. Maybe it's more important to have a guide than a map.

S: Hmm. Alright, take the example, for instance, of "Mind in Buddhist psychology": you know, there's that list of positive mental states, positive mental events. Would you say that was helpful and useful, in terms of enabling one to recognize those states within oneself and to give one an idea of what had to be cultivated and developed?



Surata: Not on my own, no. I did look at that book on my own and thought it was rubbish, but I've been through it with Manjuvajra and it comes alive.

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S: Yes. So perhaps it does come back to the teacher rather than the text. I think I must say that, in going through Buddhist texts, it does seem that very little really applies to, or seems relevant to, one's own experience. You know, for instance, the descriptions of the dhyanas; I mean, not only within the Friends, but in general - I mean other Buddhist circles - people seem to have a great deal of difficulty in squaring the descriptions of the dhyanas in the scriptures with their own experience of meditation, which suggests perhaps that those sort of descriptions of the dhyanas might have been edited in the course of centuries, whether orally or in any other way, by monks who perhaps hadn't had overmuch experience themselves and were just redacting, you know, accounts of somebody else's experiences - so in that way got rather away from actual descriptions of experiences. So I think one has to be very careful, you know. Alright, take, make use of, the maps, you know, preferably with the help of the map-maker or at least a map-reader, a skilled map-reader. But one has to realize not only that one's own experience, or that human experience, is much richer than any map, but also that there might be quite a few prominent features of your own experience which don't seem to be found on any map at all. You know, sometimes things are introduced into these sort of maps which are just personal idiosyncrasies almost. For instance, anyway, Dr Conze mentions the practising contemplatives of the Catholic church. Well, there were practising contemplatives in the Catholic church for many hundreds of years but in the seventeenth century St John of the Cross produced his teaching about the "Dark Night of the Soul", which is a very important teaching. But nobody had ever heard of it before, no-one had ever experienced the Dark Night of the Soul apparently before he wrote about it. But after he wrote about it, all sorts of people started experiencing the Dark Night of the Soul. Do you see what I mean? You have to be very careful about what is your own true, natural, spontaneous experience.

You can, you know, sort of condition your own experience, perhaps from a quite healthy way, you know, in accordance with these manuals, to make them fit the manual, especially if you're a Catholic. You want to be on the right, orthodox path; you don't want to go straying off into heresy. It's not quite like that with the Buddhists, but even so there might be a tendency to make your experience fit the maps rather than just read them to help you find your way around in your own experience. ~urata: Certain things are more immediate than others though (... ? °..)

S: Yes. But, if one is thinking in terms, say, of a detailed description of the path and the experiences you have at each stage of the Path, it won't fit because usually the Path is laid down in regular steps and you don't follow the path of regular steps, hardly ever. The Path described in the Buddhist scriptures, you could say, is not a Path that anybody actually follows in that order, not even the Buddha followed it in that order. What did he start off with? He started off with something wrong. In other words, first of all, you know, self-indulgence; then one-sided asceticism; and then he gradually got onto the right Path, the middle Way. And, though the Buddha has laid down a Path correctly, you know, as a path of regular steps, well, it can only be followed in that way by completely and utterly healthy persons, such as we don't, in fact, encounter. So we follow the Path in all sorts of irregular,

wierd, indirect, contradictory ways of our own, and, though we do manage to make, hopefully, sort of overall spiritual progress, it will be very difficult to actually plot the steps and stages of our progress as we look back. Do you see what I mean? That, first this stage, then that, and then something else.... Manjuvaira managed to do something like that in his talk; I think that was probably relatively exceptional, or perhaps he'd simplified his experiences very, very much. But certainly, you know, one quite important state or stage he seemed to be going through, as far as I remember, on a retreat which I took- which he didn't

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mention at all - which was quite, he was in quite an extraordinary state on that particular retreat, so much so that everybody thought he was tripping. But he afterwards assured us that he hadn't been; it was just a natural state, something that just happened. Well, he left it out of his little map. (Laughter) So, all that one really needs to bother about is whether one is actually growing, yes; you know, looking at the picture, as it were, as a whole, yes. But, even if you are quite sure that you are actually growing - or have grown since you last took a look at yourself - it might be very difficult to reduce that to a definite series of stages which you could advise another person to go through if they also wanted to grow. It seems to be a much more individual thing than that. That's why it's a mistake to regard - or one of the reasons why it's a mistake to regard - the Eightfold Path as a path of eight steps, which you take one after the other. It's a path of eight limbs, or factors, all of which must be developed, in some way, sooner or later. That's what it really stands for, what it really means....

Alright, let's go on.

Text: But this is not all.... °0.down to us. (page 1B)

S: Yes, again what Dr Conze says is very correct about this need for a complete break with the established habits of life and thought - even sacrifice, provided one understands that word correctly - but it's not so much a question of withdrawal from the world, it's more a question of a transition to a different kind of world. Do you see what I mean? It's a question of a transition from the world to the world within the world, from the world to the spiritual community; you make the spirit- ual community your world, your environment, because that makes it, so to speak, easier for you to practise the spiritual life and to develop yourself. So it's not just a question of going forth, in the sense of leaving the world, and just being out in a void - though you might be for a while - it really means leaving the world and finding a spirit-

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ual community; leaving those conditions which hamper your development as an individual all the time and finding a set of conditions in the form of that other world or that spiritual community which help and which further your development. I mean, you know from your own ex- perience - well, supposing you had just dropped out, given up your job, maybe left

your wife and family - those that had them - but there wasn't any spiritual community to get involved with; where would you be? You'd really be off on a limb. Well, maybe that would be better than going on in the old way, in the old rut, but it's infinitely better that you should have found your way into a spiritual community and be able to enjoy conditions which actually help you instead of conditions which --hinder, or even conditions which are merely neutral.... So it isn't so much a question of the higher ranges of mindfulness being meant for the monk rather than for the layman in the old-fashioned sense; it isn't really as simple and as clear-cut as that. You can only practise the higher levels of mindfulness if circumstances help you rather than hinder you all the time. That means being in a spiritual community, being within the Sangha, at least much of the time, if not most of the time, or even all the time. It's not a question of being a monk in any formal sense because lots of monks really receive ordination in Buddhist countries and remain LA~~l within the world in the fullest sense of the term. "rnonk" becomes a sort of vocation, a sort of profession, just like clergymen in the West. You have your place in society, you don't go outside society anymore as you did in the Buddha's day; you have a place in society. You can see in some newspapers and Buddhist magazines Thai bhikkhus blessing guns and tanks. So, you know, they have their place very much within the world....

Anyway, any further point on that? Yes, Dr Conze also talks in terms of a radical seclusion from the world; that can be misunderstood. It

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doesn't necessarily mean that you are away in some remote hermitage. It really means, or should mean, that you're in the bosom of the spiritual community, where everything and everyone is helping you to develop instead of hindering you. Of course, you know, periods of literal, physical seclusion may also be necessary - what we call solitary retreat.

Alright, any question on anything that we've done this morning? We've dealt with mindfulness.

Susiddhi: Is it pure coincidence? I mean, did Dr Conze write this for Theravada consumption, or from the Theravada point of view?

S: It was first published in "The Middle Way" and has now been republished as a Wheel publication. But I think he follows mainly the Visuddhi-magga. I think this is why he, his slant is a little bit, as it were, Theravadin. And you know philosophically speaking of course he is very much the mahayanist, at least the Madhyamika mahaysnist.

Susiddhi: Yes, it's unlike his usual (... ?

S: Hmm, yes.

Suwajra: He doesn't seem to have gone into cutting off discursive thought.

S: He doesn't, does he?

Suvaira: He's gone through 1, 2, and 3, but....

S: Perhaps he deals with that under wisdom. Anyway, we shall see this afternoon.... Alright, let's leave it there for the moment. I believe tea is ready.

TEA BREAK

S: This afternoon we have to deal with concentration and wisdom.

Text: Concentration (samadhi)... ...rare, virtue. (page 19)

S: Alright, let's go into this distinction then; carry straight on. Text: 1. In its simplest... ..the celestial harmonies?" (pages 19/20) S Alright, there's two points here really: the fact that concentration continues the work of mindfulness, and the fact that concentration is a factor essential to all thought. Do you see how concentration

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continues the work of mindfulness? mindfulness, we saw - where was that? - "mindfulness is an act of remembering which prevents ideas from 'floating away'." It, as it were, keeps hold of the ideas, it keeps them together. So here you can see how the connection with concentration comes in, because if you keep those ideas in your mind for any length of time, and especially if you reduce the number of ideas and keep maybe just one idea for quite a length of time, then you're said to be concentrated. So in this way there's a sort of easy or natural transition from mindfulness to concentration. In a sense, therefore, mindfulness and concentration are mutually exclusive, in the sense that concentration tends to involve fewer and fewer objects as the concentration becomes more heightened. That's the reason why Newton could not attend to his landlady's egg at the same time as he attended to his own intellectual problems. If he had been more mindful, he would have done; but he would therefore have been less concentrated. So there is a certain incompatibility between mindfulness and concentration, even though mindfulness does lead to concentration inasmuch as concentration is preoccupied with pure objects, yes; it's spread out over a number of objects. So, being spread out over a number of objects, is incompatible with being spread out over just a few objects. So, in that sense, mindfulness and concentration incompatible; but nonetheless one does lead on to the other, yes. They're a movement in the same general direction; concentration is a sort of more intensified form of mindfulness. So you in a way increase the intensity by reducing the field, hmmm

Susiddhi: So, if you are doing a concentration practice, should you deliberately lay aside mindfulness at the start of it?

S: Well, if, as one gets more and more mindful, the mindfulness will tend to narrow its field, and in that way the concentration will emerge. Supposing you are doing the mindfulness of breathing; at the beginning

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you'll be aware of sounds outside, you'll be aware of your own breathing, your own body, other people in the room, yes. But, as you get more and more into the mindfulness of the breathing, these things will sort of go to the periphery of consciousness and you may become completely oblivious to them. Then you are concentrated.

Susiddhi: You narrow the mindfulness.

S: You narrow the mindfulness, yes; or, it narrows itself, as it were, as you just do the practice. You know, that brings in another point. Dr Conze says, "In its simplest form by the will." It's not really quite like that in terms of practice. Because you don't, as it were, say to yourself: I shall now proceed to progressively narrow my field of attention so that I can become concentrated. You know, all that you aim at doing is doing the actual practice. If you do it faithfully, eg the mindfulness of breathing, the field of attention will automatically narrow. You don't have to exert a special separate act of will to make it narrow; that would in fact be a distraction, it would in fact get in the way and prevent you narrowing the field of attention in that particular way. But perhaps we shouldn't take him up too literally on this point here because you've an overall intention to do that. It's just that a specific act of will at that particular time, at that particular moment, is not the way of bringing about that result.

And then, concentration as a factor essential to all thought. You know, this draws attention to the fact that all concentration, both concentration in general and concentration in the more specifically mental sense, is a source of unifying, synthesizing activity. You become more integrated, therefore more of an individual. So meditation or concentration, samadhi, in the more specific sense is only a much more specialized and wholesome form of something that is going on all the time. You could say that usually your thoughts are concentrated, but they're only concentrated in the ordinary way for a certain purpose and

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for a certain length of time and usually in accordance with one's instincts and desires, skilful and unskilful, and so on, but the aim of meditation, or samadhi, concentration in that higher, more specialized sense, is to unify you as an individual, to bring everything together into harmony, to bring everything, as it were, to a head, to a point, instead of it being scattered and loose and disconnected and disjointed, as it usually is; to make a whole out of floating bits and pieces. Do you see that? So concentration is very important. Most of the time we're not concentrated; we're able to concentrate on this, concentrate on that, you know, for a certain length of time, but we, ourselves, as a whole~ totally, are not concentrated, are not unified, and not synthesized. And the aim of concentration, or meditation in the more specialized sense, is to help bring that about. It's not just a question of being able to concentrate for a particular purpose - even the purpose of so-called concentration and meditation - but ourselves being concentrated, if you like, even meditating, beings, yes. I mean, the beings, the devas, in higher heavenly worlds are in that state all the time. They're not just concentrating by a sort of act of will, their being, as it were, remaining outside the concentration and unconcentrated and un~unified; no, they are totally integrated and unified on that level. That's why they're born there, as it were, or they live on that level. So this should be the aim of concentration: not to enable us to concentrate while we're doing a certain

exercise, but to concentrate the whole being, to unify all the energies, if you like, bring them together, get them all going in the same direction. That's what samadhi really means. So there is this tendency, or this capacity, present all the time, but we use it only in certain specific situations, for certain limited purposes, for certain limited lengths of time, in accordance with quite mundane and transitory desires and inclinations and wishes and so on. But we our- selves, as a whole. as a total being, as a total individual, so to speak,

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we remain unconcentrated, and to that extent all the less an individual. Alright, on to part two than.

Susiddhi: Sorry, I've forgotten what that story of Sir Isaac Newton boiling his watch.

S: pardon?

Susiddhi: What was the story about Sir Isaac Newton boiling his watch?

S: Well, his landlady, who seems to have been sitting there by the fire, asked him to boil an egg for her. She gave him an egg to put in the pot of boiling water, and by mistake he popped his watch in, yes. Because he was so absorbed; he'd just had these two things - one in one hand, one in the other - you know, watches were made round in those days almost. So he's thinking deeply about some problem connected with mathematics or astronomy and he's vaguely aware that he had to put something in a pot. (Laughter) He put his watch in; concentration led to unmindfulness, yes. Susiddhi: Why is he being castigated? "But the result of his intellectual labours has been to cast a dark shadow..."

Surata: Yes.

Susiddhi: I'm not sure about that.

S: That is very much by the way; it doesn't really logically follow from what he's been talking about. It's as though this is an additional point. You know, Conze seems to be following Blake here unknowingly: that Sir Isaac Newton allegedly emphasized rational understanding at the expense of - what should one say? - imaginative insight, spiritual vision, and presented a vision, a picture rather, or a model, of the universe which was purely mechanical, and banished all the elements of poetry and beauty and truth in the higher spiritual sense, and in that way "cast a dark shadow over the spiritual radiance of the universe." One could look at it like that, but no doubt there are other things to be said on the other side, yes. But that is just a sort of aside of Dr Conze's; it doesn't really follow from the subject that he's talking about. Because

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mediation would disclose to you presumably, you know, the "spiritual radiance of the universe." You know, especially when you cultivate the Five Spiritual Faculties, you're not cultivating intellect or reason or rationality in a one-sided sort of way; therefore you're not seeing a sort of mechanical universe, you're not seeing the universe as a sort of gigantic machine, as Newton is alleged to have seen it.

It's not a very good verse of poetry by Longfellow, but you get the general idea. The rhymes are pretty awful - "noises" and "voices, "these" and "harmonies". Anyway, let that go.

Alright, let's go on then to that part two.

Text: 2. How then does... ..the spiritually concentrated...(Pages 20/21)

S: "Spiritually concentrated": that is, spiritually concentrated people.

Text: release the inward .returns to it. (page 21)

END OF TAPE FIVE. SIDE ONE

~FIUESIDETtUO

(Laughter)

S: I'm not so sure about that, anyway.

Surata: pacifying passivity.

S: Yes, we'll deal with that in a minute. (Laughter) So, there is a difference of course between" concentration as a spiritual virtue and concentration as a condition of the intellect." I don't really like this "condition of the intellect", it's more like concentration as a general psychical factor. "Spiritual or transic concentration": "transic concentration" is Dr Conzs's expression for concentration amounting to the experience of dhyana states, jnana states - he translates "jnana" or "dhyana" as "trance" usually. So, "Spiritual or transic... 0~.and the will." So that's fair enough, but in what does that rebirth of the whole personality really consist? What is one really talking about when one says that ~Spiritu5l or transic concentration results....from a re~birth of the whole personality?"

- IOB -

Andy: Integration.

S: Integretion. One is talking about a much higher degree of overall unification, yes. And this "cannot possibly be achieved without some discipline over the body... ..and so on." But there's a variety of practices here which can assist concentration. He's presented it in a rather yogic disciplinary sort of way, but there can be things like mantra recitation, visualization, even chanting, yes. "It is further... ..Before spiritual concentration," - this is what I'd tend to call vertical integration - "Before spiritual concentration... ..five vices" - I'm not very happy about this word "vices", but anyway - "which are known...

.and doubt." This is very important indeed. Unless, at the time that one is meditating, or concentrating, there is present in the mind "no sense-desire, no ill-will. no sloth and torpor, no excitedness and sense of guilt," - just to follow that translation for the moment - "and no doubt," you will not be able to make the transition to that state or stage of vertical integration or transic concentration or spiritual concentration; that is absolutely essential, yes. So what usually happens is, the usual procedure is, you sit down and you concentrate; maybe you do the mind-fulness of breathing practice. So, as you do that, your mind becomes a bit calmer, a bit more concentrated. So, even though you are aware of sense objects to some extent - at least you're aware of your immediate physical surroundings - still, for higher concentration to be possible, there must be no desire. Do you see what I mean? There must be a total suspension, at least for the time being, of sense-desire. If, say, the thought floats into your mind of, say, "Wouldn't it be nice to have an ice-cream," then you know that sense desire is present. So, in order to be able to effect that transition to transic concentration, there cannot be any sense-desire. It may be that there is sense-awareness, but it is, of course, suggested one plays safe and isn't even aware of sense objects. That's one of the reasons you close your eyes. After all, there might

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be a pretty girl meditating next to you; well, if you close your eyes you can't even see her, you can't even see the pretty flowers on the altar, yes. So there's no sense distraction. You might hear sounds and they might even be a bit disturbing, but they're unlikely to act as actual occasions of sense-desire, unless for instance you hear the sound of the ice-cream van or something like that. (Laughter) But you get the point; so long as any sense-desire connected with any of the sense is actually present in your mind that is an obstacle or a hindrance to the achievement of transic concentration, that is to say the dhyana states, vertical integration. And the same applies to ill-will. You know, if at the time when you are trying to concentrate, there's any ill-will rankling in your mind towards anybody, any sort of sense of disgruntlement or dissatisfaction with anybody or annoyance or irritation - maybe as you're sitting there someone comes into the room, doesn't close the door very quietly, and you feel slightly annoyed - that is a hindrance immediately, yes. Or, if, as a result of your contact with people during the day, you're left in a somewhat irritated frame of mind, just displeased with everybody generally, that is a hindrance. So it's possible for you again to make that transition to transic concentration only if there's no ill-will whatsoever in your mind at that time when you are concentrating and meditating, yes.

Also, no sloth and torpor. You mustn't be in a dull, sleepy, stupid, tired sort of state; you must be very alert, light, aware, bright, with your energy functioning, your energy



flowing, yes.

And also there must be no excitedness, as Conze translates it, no excitedness and sense of guilt. Literally, uddhacca-kukkucca means more like, yes, excitedness and sort of worry and anxiety; perhaps it does include a sense of guilt, but that's more his sort of paraphrase. You mustn't be sort of agitated or worried or disturbed in any way about anything; otherwise that is a hindrance to your achievement of those

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states of transic concentration.

And there must be no doubt; no such reflection as "Well, ought I really to be meditating at all? Is this really the way? Would not some other kind of practice suit me better? I mean, am I wasting my time with Buddhism? Am I really making progress?" (Laughter) So all this is sort of doubt.

So, if these five, if any one even of these five hindrances is present, it is sufficient to inhibit your attainment of the higher states or stages of concentration. So, therefore, great importance is attached, in meditation practice, to what is called the suppression of these five hindrances - suppression, not eradication; it's only insight can permanently and finally eradicate them. So long as one has not achieved Insight, so long as one is not a Stream Entrant, the hindrances will

always come and go. You may be able to hold them at bay for a short great while, but not indefinitely, or not for any/length of time, without

the help of Insight. But the idea is to suppress the hindrances for a sufficient length of time, and then, when the hindrances are suppressed; - because they are suppressed - to be able to rise to the levels of transic concentration. And then, firmly basing yourself on transic concentration, to develop Insight, which in its turn eventually will cut the root of those five hindrances and render it impossible for them to arise, yes. So, "Where these hindrances are present," - and they're usually present, almost always present, they're very rarely not present - "Where these hindrances... ..virtue is not found." So this is the great criterion: this presence or absence of the five hindrances. Concentration associated with the five hindrances, or with the five hindrances present, will not carry you into the dhyana states. So, "In this sense... ..of spiritual concentration."

He seems to be paraphrasing here the five psychological factors present in the first dhyana. Sukha first of all: this sense of "physical

- ill -

ease." It's more than that; it includes the body, but it's more like a sense of total well-being. You notice that when you get really concentrated, which means you're just beginning to approach the first dhyana - and you can do that fairly easily if you meditate regularly. You notice that sitting no longer becomes uncomfortable, yes; you notice even if you've been feeling a bit stiff, or your leg has been aching, when you get really concentrated sort of suddenly, almost miraculously, your body feels alright, it feels quite comfortable. So this is a sign that first dhyana is being entered upon or entered into - there is this feeling of total ease and comfort, which is psycho-physical. Conze says physical ease, but it isn't just physical - it's not just a comfortable posture - it's more than that. It's a mental feeling of ease which communicates itself even to the physical body. And self-purification - well, you're away from those five hindrances, so you feel, at least for a few moments, sort of pure, fresh, clean, clear. So these are the first two distinctive features of spiritual concentration. If you're feeling very buoyant, you're physically sort of at ease, your mind is also at ease, and you're feeling very clear and free and pure, and there are no hindrances present - then you have entered upon at least the fringes of the first dhyana state.

"The third... ..subtler realm." Yes and no. You're no longer paying attention to the sensory world; you're, as it were, enjoying your own state of concentration. You may not have a particular object by that time, or, of course, you may be continuing to focus on your original object, whether the breath or anything else. So, "The methods... ..formless attainments." This isn't really correct, I would say~ The four trances are not methods of attaining anything; they are the actual states you experience as a result of your progressive integration, your progressive vertical integration.

"They are essentially a training in increasing introversion," - introversion in a sense only - "achieved by progressively diminishing the impact of the outer stimuli." You can be aware of the outer stimuli.

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Supposing you open your eyes when you're in a concentrated state - you can be perfectly aware of everything around you - but no sense desire arises. So the absence of sense stimuli is not essential to concentration. Do you see what I mean? Usually, as you know, as a matter of practice, we need to eliminate the sense stimuli just so that we can concentrate; but it is possible to concentrate even in the presence of sense stimuli, or to enjoy the concentrated state in the presence of sense stimuli.

"As a result... ..in their hearts." Well, we've dealt with this before. It is no doubt more helpful to say, and may be more correct to say, that you develop a state of inward calm, not that you sort of dig your way through to something that is already there.

"This concentration... ..equally important." There's no attention in the sense of active attention, no interest given. If you start giving active attention and taking interest, well, of course your concentration will be lost. But if you've just a pure, mirror-like awareness of things around you, that is quite compatible with concentration.

"Subjectively it" ,that,concentration - "is marked by a soft, tranquil and pacified passivity," do you agree with this? Not really; or at least it's really one-sided. The mind then can be in a very vibrant state. For instance, if you reach the fourth dhyana, which I've described as the stage of radiation, it certainly couldn't be described as passive. On the other hand, paradoxically, passivity is not excluded. Do you see what I mean? It is soft, but at the same time it is very vibrant. So one shouldn't describe it merely as soft, merely as tranquil, merely as passive - that is definitely one-sided.

Susiddhi: More balanced.

S: more balanced, yes. In a way, you've gone beyond that distinction between active and passive. It would be equally true to say of your mind in that state that it was very, very active and also that it was

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completely still. Do you see what I mean? It is intensely alive but there are no separate thoughts, there's no discursive mental activity.

"The experience is... ..returns to it." Well, not everybody says that. (Laughter) ~uite a lot of people say that when you open your eyes after a really good meditation the world doesn't seem like "cold ashes"; it seems all bright and lit-up and radiant and clear - because you see it undistorted by your subjective preferences and likes and dislikes and so on....

Anyway, any further point about concentration? mark: I've not come across this word "transic" before.

S: Ah, it's a word of Dr Conze' 5. It's the adjective from trance. He translates "dhyana" as "trance". So if he wants to speak of concentration, which is equivalent to the dhyanas, he calls it "transic concentration"11, or "trance-level concentration".

Mark: You could say "dhyanic".

S: Yes, dhyanic, yes. I don't like that word "trance" at all, especially not as an equivalent to dhyana. Most of his translations are very good, but I just don't feel happy about this particular one.

mahamati: There was something we were discussing in our study group a few weeks ago about the dhyanas. It's whether each dhyana - there are levels within, say, the first and second and third - whether there are levels of experience of that dhyana, or whether it's just an experience of the second dhyana.

S: I think each dhyana represents a whole sort of range of psychical territory, as it were, yes. It's not just one sort of dead level. Do you see what I mean? Looked at from a distance, in

very broad, general terms, it's as though the dhyana is one step, but looked at more closely that step is made up of a number of little steps. In fact, you could even say it was an inclined plane, yes. In fact, you could say the four, the eight, dhyanas represent one absolutely continuous inclined plane!

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In a sense you can't too literally mark them off from one another. Do you see what I mean?

mahamati: So we were discussing whether one could sort of experience the second dhyana without fully experiencing the first dhyana.

S: Oh no, this wouldn't be possible. For instance, supposing you take the difference between the first dhyana and the second dhyana - the technical difference according to the Abhidharma is that in the first dhyana you get vitakka and vicara, that is to say what is usually translated as applied and discursive thought, but in the second dhyana there is no vitakka and no vicara, no discursive mental activity, yes. So how - I mean normally one does experience discursive mental activity - so how could you go - there'd be no question - it would be contradictory to speak of attaining a state of dhyana free from vitakka, vicara, before you had attained a state of dhyana with vitakka, vicara, yes. Do you see what I mean?

Mahamati: It's one of those things you're supposed to have said.

S: Ah! Yes. Oh dear.

Mahamati: But it was probably something like that: maybe people may have experiences of the second dhyana - on a seminar - and I was trying to work out how that can be.

S: It is possible of course to go very quickly through the dhyanas and then, as it were, to remain in the one that you eventually reach. You may have, say, a prolonged experience of a certain dhyana before you've had a prolonged experience of a lower dhyana; that is not impossible. But, in order to reach that dhyana, you would go through the lower dhyanas. I mean, that is essential. Because if, for instance, there were degrees of mental activity - well, supposing in a higher state you've got, say, five thoughts, and in a lower one, ten. Well, you reduce from ten to five. Do you see what I mean? You could, of course, go quickly and sort of knock off the thoughts more quickly, and then reach that state

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of only five, or even none at all, more quickly; but you'd still be going through the same process. But, you know, the further the resultant experience is from your main base, the less

likely you are to be able to prolong the experience. You could, of course, have a quite extraordinary experience which so impressed you that it precipitated you right into the third dhyana; but if the general trend of your being was not in keeping with that, you would fall back relatively quickly. But you could be sort of precipitated into it by some very powerful emotional spiritual experience. But, even so, you would, however rapidly, pass through the lower dhyanas first before arriving in that final one, which you experienced in a more prolonged manner.

Mahamati: But would it be maybe that one wouldn't experience that, say, second or third dhyana fully because one hadn't integrated oneself fully at a lower level.

S: Yes, I would say that. You could compare it, say, to falling in love - you know, to try and make it clear. There are certain recognized stages, aren't there. I mean, correct me if I'm mistaken. (Laughter) First of all, you see somebody, and then you sort of get to the stage where you'd like to see them, you know, every now and then; then you'd like to see them, you know, often; then you'd like to be with them all the time; then, then you're violently infatuated. So, in the case - so you end up in the stage of infatuation; that corresponds, say, to the dhyana you end up in. (Laughter) Sometimes people even think it's a sort of dhyana-like experience; they find out their mistake later. (Laughter) So you can go through all these, this whole series, this whole sequence of stages, say over a period of about a year, can't you, and end up infatuated; but you can go through them in the course of a few days, even a few hours, and end up infatuated, yes. So you see what I mean? You go through them nonetheless: you see the person, then you want to see them frequently, then you want to see them many times, then you want to be with them all

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the time. You can go through all these stages very, very quickly or relatively slowly and end up in that same state of infatuation. So, in the same way, you can go through the sort of preliminary experiences and stages or dhyanas very, very slowly or very rapidly, ending up, you know, wherever you do end up eventually. But, again, we can't sort of generalize too much because, supposing by some almost extraordinary fluke, by some quite extraordinary experience - emotional or spiritual - you do get into the third dhyana, for the sake of argument, and you're in sufficiently long to develop Insight - well, then you really have achieved and attained something. Whereas somebody else might have been slogging away at their meditation and never got anywhere near Insight. But then one could also say: why did you have that extraordinary experience at all? You were susceptible to it, it was possible for you to have it. Do you see what I mean? So some kind of potential was there in you all the time. It's not just a free gift from heaven; in a way you were prepared and ready. But, as a broad general principle, a prolonged experience of a higher state of being, consciousness, including dhyanic experience, depends on a fairly considerable experience of the lower levels....

Alright, wisdom.

Text: And so we come... °..mindfulness and concentration. (pages 21/22) S You're familiar with this distinction three kinds of wisdom? It's a very, very basic one. "Learning", literally "hearing", - it's sutta- maya-panna, the wisdom, or understanding, that comes by hearing, where you simply take in information, you simply learn. And then cinta-maya-panna. I don't think Conze's brought the sense or the significance of the cinta~maya~panna sufficiently. It's not just discursive reflection, it's more like appropriating what you've heard, what you've learnt, making it your own. Do you see what I mean? I have made, I have ~istinguished it in this way also: that in sutta~maya~panna you understand the meaning of the words, you understand what is said, but in cinta~maya~panna you

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understand the meaning of the meaning; or, you could even say, why it is said, what its wider significance is, what its ramifications are, esp- ecially for you in your own life. 50 you could say also that cinta- .eaya.panna represents also creative thought. I mean, you start off, y.u know, mulling over what you have learnt, what you have heard, - that is your raw material - but then you appropriate it to yourself, you understand it in the light of your own experience of life, or in the li~ht ~r wider, more general principles, it doesn't become something merely that you understand in a superficial manner. I mean, you can always tell when you read a book which is written by someone who has only, whose learning is of the sutta~maya~panna type, or his und~rstand- ing is of the sutta~maya~panna type. You know, you can get a book on Buddhism written by someone who's read other books and read translations of scriptures and he compiles something. I mean, he understands the meaning of what he is writing, he understands the meaning of the words that he is drawing upon, but he doesn't understand the meaning of the meaning, he's not able to, as it were, recreate Buddhism for you out of his own creative thinking. So, a book which is based merely on the sutta~maya~panna is very flat and uninteresting, whereas one which is the product of cinta~maya~panna is much more interesting and stimulating, even when you disagree with it, even when it's written by a non~Buddhist. It's much more interesting than a factual compilation put together by someone who calls himself a Buddhist but who hasn't started thinking for himself about Buddhism. So, you know, hearing is alright, learning is alright, but you ought to be able to transform that end appropriate that by your own original creative thinking. You can't sort of think creat- ively - at least most people can't - in a void, in a vacuum; they need material. So I think this is one of the reasons I appreciated the three t~alks that were given by the three speakers last night. They've all certainly listened - they know their five of this, and four of that,

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and eight of something else, they've read their ~Survey11, and they've listened to a lot of tapes, - you can tell that - but they've also thought about it themselves quite creatively. So at least they've reached the level, as it were, of the cinta-maya-panna. They're not just parroting things that they've heard. They understand the mean- ing of what they have heard, they've appropriated it for themselves. There are not just undigested lumps of lectures given by me in

the past, as there used to be, sometimes there is - some people, it was amazing, sometimes somebody's lecture would be an extended quote. (Laughter)

And, of course, you know, bhavana-maya-panna is, you know: "bhavana" means development, making to become, causing to become, or development, cultivation. So what happens there, do you think?

Mark: Is that Insight?

S: That is Insight. Because there the transcendental object about which you've been hearing and which you've mulled over, and about which you've become, a~out which you've been thinking creatively, has now ~ecome transformed into your being, or your being has become trans- formed into it, yes; you've become one, as it were, with the object of your creative thinking, you realize it, in other words, yes. So, for instance, in the first place, supposing in the case of the teaching of impermanence, - in the first place, you hear what Buddhism has to say about impermanence, you understand it, you can explain it to others, but maybe you've not really started thinking about it yourself at all, much less still basing your life upon it. But, in the second stage, you really do have some original tfloughts about impermanence, you really do see it, you really do understand the meaning of it, you think creatively about it. But in the third stage you just realize that truth. You've imbibed it and you're so deeply imbued with it that whatever you do you are aware and are mindful of the fact of imperm-

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anence, so you never get attached anywhere. Then it becomes ~havana- maya-panna. And to penetrate that far you require a high degree of integration, of vertical integration, and that is where the help, as Conze calls it, I think, of concentration, samadhi, comes in - the aid of mindfulness and concentration\* But, anyway, you must be careful not to think of having this sort of understanding and then you bring in mindfulness and concentration as a sort of aid in a sort of tech- nical way - it's not really like that.~yes. I mean, you could say that all these three kinds of widsom are continuous. It's very diff- icult sometimes to ~ee where one ends and the other begins; you hear, and you can't help starting to think and trying to understand the mean- ing, and then your thought becomes more and more creative and you take that idea more and more into your own mind, into your own being, and gradually you are transformed into it, it is transformed into you, you become one with it, you realize it. And that is Wisdom, or understand- ing in the highest sense. You don't sort of bring in a sort of tech- nical aid to help you to develop that third kind of wisdom, yes.

Alright, on to wisdom then.

Text: "Wisdom" is, of course,\*.\* .\*\*actual definition. (Pages 22/23)

S: So, ""Wisdom" is\*\* . ...sagacity," - which is a sort of practical wisdom, as it were, - "prudence," - the ability to fit the means to the end, - "a well-developed sense of values," - understanding which things are truly more important, more valuable, and which are less so, - "serenity", - oeing unruffled by changing circumstances, - "and sovereignty over the world," -

you know, relative indifference to worldly things and worldly values, - "won by/understanding of the mode of its

operation.... \*\*\*actual definition." \Connotations~ meaning the sort of associated ideas, and then what it really is in itself. ~Iright, let's go on.

Text: As for the connotations. the defilements\* (Pages 23/24)

S: So, these connotations. The connotations are really sort of equivalents, verbal equivalents, of wisdom, and also to some extent functions of wisdom, and also symbols of wisdom. But, anyway, you get some sort of idea, don't you, from this rather miscellaneous array of connotations of wisdom. Anything that isn't immediately obvious?

Suvaira: What about "goad"? I'm not quite sure about "goad".

S: Well, it's a goad, it spurs you on. A goad is a sharp, pointed stick which you apply to the hind quarters of the bullocks to make them gallop a bit faster. So wisdom spurs you on, goads you on, in your spiritual life; so, in that sense, it's a goad, yes, "which urges the mind to move back on the right track."

And you notice at the end "wisdom is distinguished from mere cleverness by its spiritual purpose, and we are told expressly that it is designed to cut off the defilements.1., That is to say, the klesas, all the unskillful mental states. Because, when those unskillful mental states are permanently vanquished, well, you know, then one is at least a Stream Entrant.

Alright, then, if that's clear, go on to the actual definition.

Text: Now to the... ..own-being of dharmas. (Page 24)

S: So alright, ignorance causes us to see things not as they really are, but through wisdom we see things as they really are; or, if you like, we penetrate into the dharmas as they are in themselves. Wisdom frees us from delusion.

Mahamati: Is it possible to get a glimpse of them as they are without

developing Wisdom?

S: Well, how? If you have a glimpse of them at all there is Wisdom. mahamati: Sorry, I'm thin~ling of what, say, some people say that they are trying to do that on drug experiences.

S: Hmm?

Mahamati: (... ? .



S: Well, what would be the criterion? What would be the criterion? They would have eliminated the klesas, or at least some of them~ If you couldn't see that they'd eliminated any klesas then you wouldn't be justified in, you know, in agreeing that they had in fact some experience of wisdom.

flahamati: Would they have (... ? °.) some of them?

S: Well, it depends of course on the degree of Insight. There are of course a number of klesas, some of more gross, some of them more re- fined, yes. But certainly the grosser ones one would have eliminated if one had had any sort of tangible experience of Insight and Wisdom. For instance, you could not become so violently angry that you might kill somebody; that kind of gross klesa you would have eliminated through even a moderate experience of Insight or Wisdom. So if some- one showed a sort of murderous impulse after claiming to have ~eveloped Insight then one could hardly accept that.

Mahamati: So seeing things as they are is equivalent to Wisdom.

S: Yes, yes. I mean, prajna is literally, you know, from "jna" - to know - ~pra" meaning a superlative: it's a sort of prefix indicating abundance, so it's § sort of superlative knowledge, if you like, Insight. ~ut the klesas are associated with ignorance, so if really have Insight into things as they are, insight into reality, if you have really developed wisdom, at least some of the klesas will be eliminated, or, at the very least, seriously weakened. And that should ~e quite percept- ible, quite noticeable, to other people. And it should last - I mean, I think one of the things about the drug experience is that, very often, no effects are lasting at all. People might have quite extraordinary experiences, like you might have quite an exteaordinary dream, but a few days or a few weeks later it's as though you just hadn't had it. You might even forget all about it, find it very difficult to remember, and your life would not have changed.

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TAPE SIX. SIDE ONE

S: Perhaps it's very difficult to generalize too much. It may be that some people, you know, in connection with the drug experience, do have some glimpse of Reality and that does change them in a permanent way; that is not impossible. But that doesn't mean that each and every per- son who's had rather colourful drug experience has had a glimpse of Reality, you know. That's not an ultimate reality anyway; that's another matter. But one shouldn't be dogmatic and say that you can't possibly have any experience of reality in connection with drugs; I don't think one can be as positive as that about it. I mean, one does know people who have, who might not have experienced wisdom as a result of drugs, but certainly have had a definite change of outlook, which eventually led them on to the spiritual path, after a drugs' experience. I mean, there are people like that even within the Friends.

Airight then, let's carry on.

Text: What then does wisdom. realm of dharmas. (Page 24)

S: Not all traditions would call it the "realm of dharmas". The Abhi-dharma calls it that; the Jñāna and the Madhyamika might call it the realm of sunyata; the Yogachara might call it the realm of the one mind. And, you know, the Tantrics might call it the realm of the dakas and dakinis.

Text: Delusion, folly,... ...highest virtue. (page 24)

S: Yes, that is quite important. It's because ignorance - and not sin, as in Christianity - is the root evil that wisdom is regarded as the highest virtue a wisdom, or one could say Enlightenment, Bodhi.

Text: A holiness which... ...own several laws. (Page 24)

S: Mmm. I don't know that I'd agree with that. "A holiness which is devoid of wisdom is not considered impossible," - I wouldn't say that at all. I don't think I've ever encountered in Buddhism any scripture or any amount of any, you know, Buddhist teacher, "a holiness which

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was devoid of wisdom. I think that's meaningless within the Buddhist context.

"But it cannot... ...own several laws~" I don't think that's really the Buddhist view; it seems more like the Hindu view. It's a bit reminiscent of the Hindu karma yoga, bhakti yoga, raja yoga - all separate paths to God, as it were. Whereas the Buddhist attitude, of course, is, you know, a balanced approach, as exemplified by the five spiritual faculties themselves, yes. You've got to develop faith, and energy, yes, and mindfulness and meditation, and wisdom, not sort of choose one of them and then develop that only and hope that only will lead you to, straight to the goal. So you can't really by-pass wisdom. It may not necessarily take conceptual forms; I think the confusion arises here. You may not be able to present the content of your wisdom experience systematically, in terms of philosophy, as it were, but it is wisdom nonetheless. Can you imagine a holy person, in Buddhism, behaving in a truly foolish manner? Hmm? You can imagine in Christianity a foolish saint, yes. Most of the saints seem to have been very foolish. (Laughter) But can you really imagine a foolish arahant? Well, an arahant, alright, has wisdom - but what about a foolish Bodhi-sattva, shall we say, - he's got so much compassion that he becomes a fool? Well, no - if the wisdom wasn't there, there wouldn't be any compassion either, yes. So what is this holiness which can be dissociated from wisdom? In a Buddhist context I just fail to see it. As distinct from the conceptual manifestations of wisdom. But the substance of wisdom will certainly be there, the vision of dharmas as they are will certainly be there; otherwise what holiness can there be in a Buddhist context? You might be a yogi and have, you know, experience of the dhyanas without insight into reality, but that is not holiness - unless you use holiness in a very ambiguous sense indeed. You could be a great yogi without having any insight, but to

be a great yogi is not to be holy, because I don't like the use of the word "holy" here at all. It isn't really a very Buddhistic term, especially when you think of Otto's the idea of the holy as a sort of numinous, the awe-inspiring, terrifying. You know, that sort of holiness isn't in Buddhism really, I think. So there's no path of faith, or love, that can by-pass wisdom substantially. It may not be so familiar with conceptual formulations but that doesn't mean that wisdom, essentially, is not there. You can have wisdom without being an intellectual, without even knowing much about Buddhist philosophy; you don't need to. You might not know the difference between the madhyamika and the Yogacarins, but you could have wisdom, you could be Enlightened. You could answer questions from your own direct experience, even though you might not be able to explain the writings of Buddhist philosophers.

Alright, carry on then.

Text: As the unfaltering... ...dharma themselves. (pages 24/25)

S: Hmm. "As the unfaltering of the universe." Surely, once again, he's got it the wrong way round, yes. I mean, the dhyanas are not methods of concentrating, just states which you achieve as a result of concentration, In the same way wisdom is not the capacity to do certain meditation exercises about the dharmic constituents of the universe. I mean, there are those exercises 'well, wisdom is what you develop, hopefully, as a result of doing them. And then again, "Mindfulness and concentration were, as we saw, based on the assumption of a duality... ...what they appear to be." In a way that's true, but not altogether. For instance, what about the truth of impermanence, yes~ Is that not visible to common sense? Well, of course it is, yes. You know perfectly well that trees are impermanent, human beings are impermanent, houses, your own body, your own life - you know that. But, nonetheless, you remain attached, as though they were permanent. So it is something other; you need a deeper sort of recognition, a

firmer sort of understanding, as it were. But, on the other hand, yes, you could say, - you look at a table, you don't, it's not immediately obvious to common sense that it's sort of congeries of advancing atoms, you know, - all these electrons and neutrons doing their little dance round a common centre - that's not immediately obvious, yes. But I think impermanence is sufficiently obvious, even to common sense. The only thing is, only thing is, we don't follow that up and we don't act upon it. For that we need concentration, a higher degree of personal integration at all levels. So I think we have to be wary of these different levels, a level of, you know, a surface level and then the depths of things. It's alright to speak like that poetically, but we can't take it too seriously.

Alright, any further points about wisdom~ Or any further points about anything you've done these two days, because time's nearly up.

Do you get a sense of these faculties as sequential? That is to say, faith leading on to vigour, vigour to mindfulness, mindfulness to concentration, concentration to wisdom, yes.

Susiddhi: You can't overdo that - sequentially - that way of looking at it; otherwise you don't get the... balance it out... concentration, energy, ...

S: Though there's also this point: that when you go, as it were, from, say, faith to vigour, vigour to mindfulness, you don't literally go from, you know, from the one to the other in the sense of leaving behind the earlier one. Do you see what I mean? You go on collecting them. You could say it's rather like walking on a carpet and, as you walk along the carpet, you roll it up behind you and take it along with you, yes. So, you know, when you go from faith to vigour, you go with faith to vigour, yes, and then with faith and vigour you go on to mindfulness. So the fact that you go from the one to the other doesn't mean, you

know, that you're not ba-lancing them. Of course, you don't proceed

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quite regularly; you have some faith, and then some vigour, then maybe you have to go back to faith and strengthen that before you can, you know, strengthen your vigour. But you perfect faith before you perfect vigour, you perfect vigour before you perfect mindfulness. But you have to have quite a lot of all of them before you can get very far with any of them.

Susiddhi: A quite good classification for a sort of stock taking now and again, to sit down and think....

S: Hmm, yes, yes...

Susiddhi: What sort of state am I in?....

S: Yes, what is deficient~...

Susiddhi: ~uite practical as well....

S: What needs balancing?...

Susiddhi: More likely you'd be aware that one wasn't present. So you might think, sit down and think why, and wonder if the other one which was too much.

John: This means you can have sort degrees of wisdom, in the third sense, the highest sense, as well as the others.

S: Yes. Oh, yes.

John: At what point does that sort of become Enlightenment?

S: Because, you know, the fact that there can be a Stream Entrant, and you know, Once-Returner, Non-Returner, suggests degrees of Insight, therefore degrees of Wisdom.

John: That's deeper insight into wisdom.

S: Or deeper insight into the reality of things and progressively greater freedom from the defilements, or in terms of the Stream Entrant and so on, from the Ten Fetters....

Mahamati: And did you say that the list of three - hearing, reflection, and meditation - are also called the three stages of wisdom.

S: No, they're not usually called three stages, but in fact they are three stages. They're usually simply called the three wisdoms.

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Iflahamati: So that's where one begins to develop wisdom - by hearing?

S: Sorry?

Mahamati: That's where one starts to develop wisdom - by hearing?

S: Yes, yes. But, you know, wisdom proper is the third kind, the bhavana~maya-panna; or you could say contemplative wisdom.

Susiddhi: That's the first time I heard that classification.

S: Of those three?

Susiddhi: In a standardized form. It looks like common sense when you think of it.

S: It appears in several lectures, I think. I'm pretty certain it's in the "Survey" too. But it's of some practical importance, one could say.

Mahamati: It's quite surprising that Conze's writing is so lively and he seems a~really involved person.

S: Yes, yes. He certainly is very lively as a person. I know from his letters to me - these last few months I've had quite a few letters from him about this and that - he is quite a lively person, even though he's about 76 at the moment. He's not all that well, but anyway he's quite lively.

Sue&ddhi: He must have been very pleased to get the pr~jnparamita (... ? ...) in his lifetime.

S: Oh yes indeed. Apparently there's a sort of collected edition of it all coming out in the States, in three volumes, all his perfection of Wisdom translations, a complete set....

(Pause)

Susiddhi: A good text for a weekend. (Referring to "The Way of Wisdom")

S: Yes, quite, yes. Yes, I'm glad I selected this; I didn't find it easy to find one this time. Because one needed something short enough to be dealt with over a weekend, on the other hand with sufficient substance in it, and it's not easy to find something like that. But

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But this is certainly good study material for, you know, mitras and otherS, yes. I mean, we've not gone into all the topics that we might have done because I was quite keen that we should get the whole thing finished, that it should be done as a whole. But there are many points which one could discuss at much greater depth, yes. But I think I've, you know, indicated the main lines along which discussion needs to proceed; and also pointed out where we don't quite see eye to eye with Dr £onze, which I think also is important, or where he seems to have left out something, even though his overall attitude is very traditional and very satisfactory indeed.

Susiddhi: Is that the Wheel publication 65/66?

S: Yes, 65/66. Yes, we tried actually to get copies of this booklet, but we couldn't get them in time....

So perhaps one could give even a little lecture quite easily now on these five spiritual faculties, in serial order, yes.

Susiddhi: Well, it would certainly make a good mitre study....

S: Yes, indeed.

Susiddhi: You could say we're going to do the main five week by week.

S: Yes, indeed.

~usiddhi: Usually what happens is: we start something, like we're doing the Sevenfold Puja, and the discussions are very interesting, but the 5evenfold Puja doesn't get done.

S: (Laughing) Yes, I think it is important to finish something, yes, to cover i.m.kki'nq a certain definite ground and not get bogged down too much in details, or allow people to go

off too much at tangent. You have to allow them to some extent, you don't want to suppress them or anything like that - but, as soon as you can, bring the discussion back to the main point and go forward. We could easily have spent the whole time just talking about the first couple of pages, which would have been quite interesting. It wouldn't have been so satisfactory as

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covering the whole ground and seeing the five spiritual faculties as a whole, as a group, as it were, yes, and in that way getting an overall picture of the whole spiritual path and spiritual life from this particular point of view...0 Though on a chairmen's study group not so long ago I think we got through two and a half verses in a weekend, but that's alright because that's the chairmen; they've got to do it thoroughly.... (Laughter) We were supposed to have been going through all these twenty-seven or twenty-eight chapters, each with ten or twelve precepts, you know, in the chairmen's study group over the next so many years. (Laughter) So the first weekend we got through two and a half precepts, two and a half, yws, sayings, as it were, about six lines or something like that. I said it was worth it; we did it quite systematically, it wasn't just going off at tangents.

Mahamati: I think, is that the one that, with the eight (... ?

S: That's right, yes.

Mahamati: I think in our mitra study group we spent three or four weeks on the first verse.

S: Anyway, maybe we should get someone to transcribe all this so that it can be made available to study groups. I'm just about to give to Asvajit the transcribed and edited Ti Ratana Uandana seminar, which he should have given out quite soon. That would be very useful. So we've got then the Manyala Sutta, Ti Ratana Uandana; next I want to bring out the seminar on the Sevenfold Puja, and then there's a seminar on - what else is there? - the Shepherd's Search for ~ind - a weekend one - and the milarepa and the Novices, and then this. There are several things like that which would be very good for mitra study groups, yes, because some of the big seminars, the ten day ones, are too long and there is too much material. It's good to be able to begin and finish, you know, within a measurable length of time, either five weeks or eight weeks,

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or whatever it is.

Airight then, that's that for the time being.

Susiddhi: Thanks very much, Bhante, That was very enjoyable.

(Murmurs of agreement)

S; Yes, it was.

Susiddhi: Perhaps we can provide you with a cup of tea.

S: Yes, please.

END OF SEMINAR

Transcribed by John Wadkin