

## Aspects of The Higher Evolution of The Individual

### Men's study group leader Q/A session.

Present:- The Venerable Sangharakshita Dharmapriya Buddhadasa Abhaya Tejananda Sanghapala Sudhana Suvajra Subhuti Kulamitra Padmavajra Mahamati Tejamitra Vairocana Susiddhi Virananda Ratnaguna

Abhaya: This morning we listened to the first lecture and then we studied. There are a few questions, we have got thirteen, possibly fifteen questions.

We start with Buddhadasa who has got a question about your terminology in the title, 'The Higher Evolution of Man'.

S: Though the title of this series is 'The Higher Evolution of the individual', isn't it.

Abhaya: Yes, the question is to do with the phrase 'the higher evolution of Man'.

Buddhadasa: In this lecture series, which is in fact 'Aspects of the Higher Evolution of the Individual', which you gave sixteen years ago, the word 'man' and the word 'he' occur frequently. Also such terms as 'the new man', and 'individual man'. If you had to give this same lecture again today, would you modify your terminology for an audience almost inevitably influenced by current feminist thinking and attitudes?

S I think I probably wouldn't. I think, partly because I am not inclined to make any concessions to feminism as such, and also because I don't really see what other word there would be. One could, I suppose, speak in terms of the Higher Evolution of human beings, but somehow it doesn't sound quite the same. I think I would continue to insist that 'man' covered both men and women, as the dictionary says it does. I think that would be my short answer. That wouldn't, of course, in a sense, solve the problem, one might say. In the sense that you would probably upset quite a few people. But even though one does want to communicate the Dharma to as many people as possible and to people of as many different outlooks and attitudes, I think one can go quite a long way with people who have got honest difficulties. I think in the case of some of the more militant feminists, who are the sort that are likely to raise these difficulties, the questions that you have in mind, I think it is very doubtful whether the problems they [2] raised or gave expression to, would in a way be honest ones that one could deal with in a rational sort of way. So I think I would prefer, if I gave the talks again, to use my original terminology.

We can follow this up a little bit if you like, if you want to go a bit further into it.

Subhuti: Do you think there is anything in the feminist argument that for a woman to hear the expression 'man', applied to the human race in general, makes her feel excluded?

S: I can understand the argument logically, but it seems rather surprising that it is only just very recently, that women have, in fact, started to feel in that way. Of course it is a minority of women who have started feeling in that way, and one might say, an exceptionally vocal minority of women. I think still in this country, at least, the majority of women are not bothered by this. They understand that 'man', when one speaks of mankind, it includes men

and women.

I notice, for instance, when I look up my dictionary, the one that I generally use, that is Webster's New International, which I have for the last thirty odd years, 'man' is defined initially, the primary definition is 'a human being', the secondary definition is 'a human being of the male sex'.

In more recent dictionaries the order is reversed. Which is rather interesting. So how has that come about? Because, clearly, originally, man was understood, by everybody apparently, to include both male and female. So how come, within some twenty or thirty years that sort of change has taken place?

I add a little rider here, a more amusing note. A woman Order Member did tell me some time ago that on a retreat they decided to alter, women's retreat, all the male personal pronouns to female ones in the Dhammapada readings. So, I think, on a women's retreat, no doubt this is quite valid. But they got a bit of a shock, because a reading which they had, I forget the exact wording but it was somewhere along the lines of in their version, 'She who does such and such will go to hell', and it had never occurred to them that a woman might go to hell'. So she said that it did certainly bring it home to them, much more strongly, that they could go to hell, the women present could go to hell if they behaved in that particular unskilful way.

Subhuti: Would that not support the case that the use of the terminology, man, he, etc., for the whole of the human race did make women feel excluded, or they didn't feel so cogently.

S: But this was of course FWBO women on a women's retreat, where, perhaps, the use of the 'he' quotations of the scriptures might stand out more, so to speak.

But I think that women as a whole, that is women outside the FWBO and less, perhaps educated and less vocal, aren't bothered by that sort of thing.

Subhuti: Just to continue to play devil's advocate, wouldn't the feminists argue that this was simply because the majority of women were not sufficiently aware of their own reactions. For instance, women didn't press for the vote until relatively recently.

S: After which they voted, usually, for the same party as their husbands voted for.

[3]

One can always argue in that way. One could say that the majority of men are unaware that they need to stick up [for] their rights more and keep women in subordination. One could say that, if it is a question of arguing from a present state of unawareness in that sort of way.

V: But there do seem to be two things that can get confused. One is our response to feminism, and the other is a response to individual women who say that they find that the material does not have the same impact, as you said in that case, as if it included a 'she'. I noticed that in the lecture today the use of man here was entirely consistent throughout. Do you think there might be a case for making an effort to include women by making sure that they understood that the individual applied to them as well?

S: I do that, I do that from time to time if I think it is in doubt. Because sometimes a slight

ambiguity is possible. If I think it is in doubt, whether women are included or not, I always say 'men and women'. In fact you might have noticed I have done that in the Ten Pillars, because in a few places, if I had said only 'men', in view of present usages, it would have remained a bit ambiguous. So in those cases I have said men and women.

But I think, if one speaks of The Higher Evolution of Man, I think, despite the feminists, any impartial person, just going by the ordinary dictionary meaning of the term, would understand by that the evolution of individuals of the human race, both male and female. So in that sort of case I think the feminists are making a point for the sake of making a point, not because they don't understand what you are saying.

Sanghapala: Do you have any comment, Bhante, to the thing about, whereas Webster's defines man as human being first and secondarily as the male sex and modern dictionaries have the reverse?

S: Well some modern dictionaries, I don't know whether all have, but certainly some that I have seen have reversed this.

Sanghapala: It might be grounds for an argument that language does change and therefore it should be changed.

S: Yes, I agree with that, language does change, but there is such a thing as natural change and change which is brought about quite artificially as a result of pressure by minorities, and which does not, in fact, reflect general usage.

I mean, theoretically the dictionary represents general usage. Where, I think, a change of that sort probably does not reflect general usage but is made on ideological grounds by the particular compilers of those dictionaries.

I don't think in those days, it was fifteen years ago I gave those lectures, I don't think there were feminists of that sort around, not in England, that I recollect. I don't remember anybody, any woman saying that she felt left out because I had spoken in terms of the higher evolution of man. But I believe in some quarters there are all sorts of extraordinary developments, even suggesting introducing quite new words. Neuter and unisex, presumably, personal pronouns. I consider this as quite important and quite dangerous. I think people don't understand it [4] sufficiently, because it represents the imposition of what is, in fact, a minority point of view on the whole community. I had much the same feelings when Britain went metric, you remember that probably, you are all old enough to remember that. I really don't like the idea of substituting metres for yards. I tried to talk about this in a discussion group once I think it was in New Zealand, but I was virtually shouted down. It was considered so outrageous that I should be so reactionary, unprogressive and backward looking etc., etc., as to regret the substitution of the old fashioned system for the metric system. I tried to explain but, as I said, I got really shouted down, people just didn't want to listen, one or two women in particular. It was really extraordinary, the vehemence of their reaction and it was nothing to do with feminism it was just this particular point. But what I was trying to say was this, was that the word 'yard', where does it come from, what does it represent? It represents the length of a man's arm. So these more traditional measures are closely connected with our actual experience of life, the foot is the actual length of the foot, just as the yard is the length of the arm, and so on. These terms are not only closely related to our own bodies and our actual

experience of life, but they are embedded in our thought, in our literature, in our poetry.

Whereas, where does the metre come from? The metre, as far as I recollect, is the circumference of the earth.

Subhuti: Isn't it the distance between Paris and the North Pole.

S: Ah, divided by. In other words it is a quite abstract mathematical concept, to which we cannot directly relate. And to me, the substitution of that, for the traditional kind of measure is a symptom of our alienation from our own experience. But the metre has been made to take the place of the yard and so on and so forth, for purely utilitarian and, one might say, ideological, reasons.

So in much the same way, I think, people who are involved in feminism, or feminists, both male and female, who often have the ear of the media or even have the media under their control, are trying to impose an ideology on the rest of the population in making these sort of changes. And I do object to that very much.

V: Personally I understand that in any situation when you are running a public centre with beginners, in different ways they are bound to react to certain things that they dislike about the people, or this or that, but what do you feel about Mitras, and even Order Members who say that they still find that this terminology, they say, alienates them to some extent from the material, and to that extent I feel they are also saying, from you?

S: But do they feel alienated when they read, say, Shakespeare or Milton or Dickens?

V: I don't know?

S: If they feel alienated, I would say the problem is theirs, and I don't think we solve it by trying to share their alienation.

But do they really feel alienated or do they think that [5] they feel or do they think, for ideological reasons, that they ought to feel alienated and therefore succeed in convincing themselves that they do feel alienated.

V: I don't know, they just claim that they feel alienated, I don't know what it is. I find it very difficult to understand from an Order Member.

S: Yes, when one uses the word alienated, or if anyone uses the word alienation, I think one should be on one's guard, because it is a word that is used very, very loosely. It is a quite strong term and perhaps sometimes people don't realize what a strong term it is.

I've come across some quite ridiculous instances of the feminist distortion of language. For instance in one book I was reading some time ago I came across some such sentence as this 'Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael and all the other great men and women artists of the Italian Renaissance'. (laughter) Because, presumably the author, or the sub-editor, put in, 'and women' to include the ladies so that they shouldn't feel left out or alienated from that particular content. So you see how ridiculous it can become.

V: That's when you, you start to actually get, almost, a rewriting of history with something like that, don't you. You have something that Orwell envisaged, starting to develop, Newspeak.

S: I think this is what we are seeing, it is in fact a variety of Newspeak. If, of course, spontaneously, the whole population changes linguistic usage in this respect, clearly the dictionary must reflect that and it will become generally accepted. But I think, as I said before, that the people who have the ear of the media, or even the control of the media, are people with these sort of ideological axes to grind. And they exercise an influence, I think, entirely disproportionate to their actual numbers.

So I would say, yes, if in a particular context, if there is any doubt whether women would feel themselves to be included or not, by all means spell it out and say 'men and women', there is certainly no objection to that. I think one should not make any concession to pure feminist attitudes which are being plugged just for the sake of plugging them, or advanced just for the sake of advancing them.

V: If in doubt spell it out.

S: If in doubt spell it out, but if you are in doubt, if you are preparing your material, writing your talk or an article, and if you are concerned just to make it completely clear, you think it might not be, in that case, yes, spell it out. But no concessions to militant feminism. If a woman is sincerely in doubt whether something does apply to her, whether she is included, that is quite a different matter, go more than halfway to meet that. But don't compromise where militant feminists are concerned.

Another general point is, when we are speaking of Buddhism we should use the language of Buddhism, as far as we can make it intelligible. Supposing you are talking to a communist, have you got to speak in terms of class warfare? Have you got to speak in terms of 'running dogs of imperialism' and all the rest [6] of it? Do you see what I mean, when we don't share that point of view why should we use that language? In the same way, we don't share the feminist point of view, why should we use their language? When I speak of feminist, of course, I mean the extreme militant feminist, not simply those women who are concerned that women should have, so to speak, the same opportunities for personal development as men, that is quite another matter. I sometimes speak in terms of Feminism with a capital 'F' and feminism with a small 'f'. Feminism with a small 'f' is quite compatible with Buddhism, but with a big 'F' isn't.

Is this becoming a problem around centres, militant Feminists?

Kulamitra: I think, your definition of feminism with a small 'f' and Feminism with a large 'F', it was a very difficult one for people to individually make.

S: Oh. Well some women are half way between, but extreme instances are quite easy to detect.

Kulamitra: Yes. I think, in terms of really extreme instances, I don't see a lot of real problem. But what I see is that a lot of women are influenced by the extremists, and they mix up a certain amount of what you are calling feminism with a small 'f' with a certain amount of

Feminism with a capital 'F'. And it is quite difficult for them and other people to disentangle which is which.

S: Hmm. But then you have to try to help them to do that.

Dharmapriya: Another problem which I have noticed coming in is women who are, in a sense, getting over their own feelings of insecurity, are doing it through a feminist model. One example of two women from Germany who visited Khadiravani for a working retreat. They really enjoyed, in one case, specifically doing plumbing, because it is like showing that a woman can do it too, it wasn't just a man's thing. She used very much a feminist's language to describe it. It was, sort of 'woman power', sort of thing, in a letter to us. Like it was obviously in terms of getting over feelings of insecurity and inadequacy.

Sanghapala: I see fear and doubt in young men, Bhante, in this area, and that is a bit of a worry, actually.

S: Say a little more. I'm rather out of touch with young men these days.

Sanghapala: Fear of being ideologically unsound, and guilt about... actually genuinely being a wee bit ideologically unsound anyway. They don't really believe it. And also how quickly they have to, relatively speaking, let go of those views, feminist views, which are just totally taken on because of the weight of peer group pressure, at college.

S: Yes, I think it is simply that in many cases. It is not easy to be an individual. And even if they identify with the FWBO as a group, to some extent, the society at large is a much bigger group, and to that extent exerts a much more powerful pressure.

[7]

So, no, I don't think I would change my language, I think that is the short answer. I would still speak of 'the higher evolution of man', I wouldn't speak in terms of 'the higher evolution of man and woman'. I wouldn't speak in terms of 'the higher evolution of human beings', because you could say human beings, even though it is actually a different word, isn't it. But a feminist might object even to that, because it is M A N. She is not to know that it is just the end of a Latin word and not simply an Anglo-Saxon word. Their objections are very often not rational.

Sanghapala: How about the word 'humanity', Bhante?

S: That's a Latin word, humanity. The man in it has, as far as I know, got nothing to do with the Anglo-Saxon man.

Sanghapala: Well presumably that could be put forward as a substitute term.

S: I would say no. I would say there is a world of difference between 'man' and 'humanity'. 'Man', is Anglo-Saxon, 'humanity' is Latin, and generally speaking in the English language all Anglo-Saxon words are more concrete words, they are close to your actual experience. Latin words are more abstract words, more learned words, more intellectual words. So there is a definite shade of difference between them. You find some writers habitually combine a word of Latin origin with a word of Anglo-Saxon origin. Milton does this, I don't know if anyone can think of an example off hand. For instance the prayer book does it, for instance in one of

the Collects, written by Cranmer, it goes like this. 'We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep and there is no health in us'. You must have recited this, some of you. 'Erred', is from Latin, to wander, 'strayed' is Anglo-Saxon. So why is it that Cranmer uses both, there is a subtle difference in the meaning of these two words. So, if you are at all sensitive to language, you cannot just roughly, on ideological grounds, change over and substitute a word of Latin origin, probably polysyllabic, for an Anglo-Saxon monosyllable. It just doesn't mean the same thing, if you are at all sensitive to language. So I really object to the virtual massacring of the English language on ideological grounds. Just as I objected to the introduction of the metric system on much the same grounds. I think it is all a symptom of our progressive alienation from our actual experience.

Abhaya: The second question is from Dharmapriya about the role of memory, reason and ethics in the development of self consciousness.

S: Perhaps we should take it bit by bit, if you have divided it into sections or clauses.

Dharmapriya: I'll just read it through, then you just say if I should. Generally you name self-consciousness as the watershed in the evolutionary process, but in your description of an individual's development the transition from rudimentary to full self consciousness appears to be far more important. Could you clarify [8] this and say something about the role of memory, reason and ethics in developing this full self-consciousness?

S: I am not quite sure, really, what the question is, or what the question amounts to. I think that first bit is a little unclear to me.

Dharmapriya: Well the contrast between your normal use of self-consciousness as this watershed in the evolutionary process and then this lecture describing the development of an embryo and a child into an adult stage, say at the age of three, more or less things stand still, at which point the child has developed sense consciousness and rudimentary self consciousness and that is the point where the great decision comes. As if the transition from rudimentary to full self consciousness seems to be a watershed.

S: It is a question of a watershed of what. If one is thinking in terms of the average human development, the attainment of that rudimentary self consciousness seems to be the watershed in as much as it is the highest point reached. Perhaps the expression is a little misleading, because you know what a watershed is, it is a ridge down the two sides of which water pours, it is a dividing line in that sense. But I am not strictly speaking using watershed here quite in that sense. It is more like the highest point reached by the tide. It's the tide-line.

So, in the case of the average human being, the ordinary human being, rudimentary self-consciousness is as far as he or she gets. Full self-consciousness is achieved only as a result of personal effort. So I think I make that distinction to suggest or to underline that though we have self consciousness we have only rudimentary self consciousness, there is still a lot more work that we have to do in that particular respect. It's not that we can go from our present state of self consciousness straight to transcendental consciousness. No, we have only got rudimentary consciousness, thus the immediate task is to become more fully and truly self conscious, we haven't even reached that stage yet. So in a sense, also, inasmuch as self consciousness is characteristic of human beings, we are not yet fully human. I think this is what I am trying to underline by that particular usage. And also we don't really make much

progress, I think I have emphasized this, anyway, in the lecture, in this respect, basically, after the age of three. We acquire knowledge, we acquire skills, but the basic structure of our psyche, in respect of its two poles of sense consciousness and rudimentary self consciousness, remains really the same.

So, is that part clear?

Dharmapriya: That part, yes. The other part came up in our discussion. In one of your answers to a question put to you at the original lecture, you relegated reason, even highly advanced reason to the lower evolution. And we discussed that there seem to be several phenomena, reason, memory, ethics, even aesthetics. Did they play a role, could they play a role in the further development of self consciousness?

S; I think it is a reciprocal thing. I don't think one can regard one as cause and the other as effect. I think the more self-conscious you are the more you are able to reason, especially [9] with regard to the effect of your actions on other people and the way other people feel. And, of course, the more you are able to reason and the more you can identify yourself with other people the more your self-consciousness will develop.

I am not quite sure where memory exactly fits in. Perhaps this requires further thought. I have spoken about it in Tuscany once or twice, haven't I. Memory, obviously, implies continuity of consciousness, you remember that you did something. That is to say, your self, in the past, becomes the object, so to speak, of yourself in the present. So in this way you are an object to yourself, so this is reflexive consciousness, so here memory is inseparable from reflexive consciousness and reflexive consciousness is inseparable from memory. Because, to the extent that you are self-conscious you can remember what you have done, just as you can imagine what you might do.

So, I find it very difficult to separate all these different strands out. Certainly very difficult to regard one coming first and, so to speak, causing the others. They all seem to hang together, one can distinguish them but one can't really separate them.

V: I did hear, it's one of these spiritual rumours I think, that one of the sixty-four Arhants had very poor memory. I don't know whether you have heard anything like that, in fact I did hear that you...

S: Ah, no. No, I don't think it was an Arhant. You might be thinking of a story about a monk who admitted to the Buddha that he wasn't able to remember the Buddha's teaching. And the Buddha said, 'could you remember a verse, if I was to teach it to you?' He said 'no, I couldn't even remember a whole verse So the Buddha said, 'could you remember half a verse?' and he said 'I think I might be able to remember that'. So the Buddha taught him that half a verse and then he gained Enlightenment. It might be that story that you are thinking of, or that you heard about, because as far as I remember there is no instance of an Arhant having a bad memory.

It is possible, of course, I think for an Arhant to forget. Because if you are absorbed in a higher state of consciousness you may not be aware of what is happening on other levels, as it were. You may, for instance, lose all sense of time. Supposing you are meditating, you don't have to be an Arhant to do this, but supposing you are meditating. You might have promised



to meet someone at three o'clock, but meditating, you just lose all sense of time. And when you emerge from your meditation you find it is four o'clock. Now it might be said that what you ought to do, before going into meditation, to tell yourself, 'look, I have got an appointment at three o'clock, I have got to emerge from the meditation at three, or just before three'. That is possible, according to Buddhist tradition. But if you don't do that, and perhaps that would be a failure of, not so much memory, what would one call it?

V: Responsibility.

S: In a sense responsibility.

V: Mindfulness.

S: Mindfulness in a sense. If you didn't do it you could well continue.

[10]

So it is not that if you are a bit forgetful you are necessarily, therefore, on a very low level of consciousness. Because, recollection of matters pertaining to a lower level of experience can be blotted out by your experience of something pertaining to a higher level altogether. And it isn't always easy to make the adjustment between one level and another. You may be deeply absorbed in reading, say, the Life of Padmasambhava and you forget entirely that you are supposed to start cooking at eleven o'clock. Do you see what I mean?

I remember a little incident from the life of Johnson in connection with memory. He says, 'if a young man on leaving someone's house forgets to take his hat, no one says anything about it, no one makes any comment. But if an old man forgets, they say "Aha, his memory must be going"'.  
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V: Have you any idea why someone like myself might have a bad memory?

S: Well what is a bad memory. My personal view is - I am thinking a little on my feet, so to speak, about this. I think, if you have a lot of things to remember, the chances are that you will forget some of them. This is connected with the other point I wanted to make, which was, that if something makes a very deep impression on you, you are unlikely to forget it. So I think memory is, perhaps, at bottom, a question of sensibility, or susceptibility to impressions. Though there is a rider required here to the effect that, if you are subject to too many impressions they tend to cancel one another out. Do you see what I mean?

V: What do you mean, what sort of impressions, different sort of impressions?

S: If you are dealing with a lot of people, and arranging to do a lot of things, it could be that you just forget one or two of those things. Whereas if it was just a limited number of things and you were a person who was reasonably impressionable, as it were, you wouldn't forget any of them.

For instance, if you are deeply in love and the person with whom you are in love promises to meet you at a certain time, you are not likely to forget that, because of the impression that that promise has made upon you. You don't have to make any effort to remember. But supposing you have made light promises to five or six people to see them at different times during the

day and you haven't made a note of it, and when you promised you were thinking of something else, the impression made on you is very, very slight, very, very shallow and you are therefore, quite likely to forget. So I think that in many cases, or to a great extent, memory is a question of depth of impression. The depth of the original impression made by that particular matter that you want to remember or recollect. Do you see what I mean?

V: That is borne out by something that I just happened to see in the paper. Some study in America, about this phenomenon that you can sometimes go into a room and your mind just goes blank, you just can't remember what you are there for. They have found that if that happened to people a lot, it was almost always because they were very busy, had [11] much more responsibility than average, and as you say, they just had many, many different things to remember, and some of them just started to get lost. In other words it wasn't a psychological problem.

S: No, it's not a psychological problem. If, of course, you have got very few things to remember and you still can't remember them, then you have got a bit of a problem but it is still, basically, I think, a question of depth of impression. And all sorts of factors enter into that. The extent to which you attend to what is being said, or what is being done, or the extent to which you are receptive and not thinking about something else. The extent to which you are in touch with your own emotions. Because if a thing makes an impact on you emotionally you are much less likely to forget it, or the greater the impact something makes on you emotionally, whether pleurably or painfully, well the less likely you are to forget.

Abhaya: So what you are saying is that people with, like photographic memories...

(gap with end of side one)

S: But that doesn't seem to be quite the same sort of thing, does it? It is a sort of impression and ability. Does anyone have an experience of this, photographic memory, has anyone got photographic memory? It is the capacity for visual recall, isn't it. Presumably it appears to be dissociated from any sort of emotional experience.

Sanghapala: It's a different kind of memory, Bhante. It's the thing... the stimulus has been presented to you. It's the whole thing about how people can remember a face and not remember a name, they are presented with a face but they are not presented with a list of names when they encounter this person. It's a quite different... it's a lot easier therefore, to recognize a face. Names are something that you are not presented with, it's quite different.

S: So if one does have a problem with memory in the ordinary sense I think it is a question of asking oneself whether one is sufficiently in touch with one's feelings or emotions to be able to receive a powerful impression, and also whether one is perhaps not receiving so many impressions that the one is obliterating another.

So what else, there was ethics, wasn't there?

Dharmapriya: Yes, the role of ethics in developing self consciousness.

S: There again it is a question of a mutual influence, between self consciousness and ethics. By ethics, meaning in this context your capacity to put yourself in another's place and another

in your own place. You can't think in terms of doing unto others as they would that you should do unto them unless you can place yourself in the other person's position and experience, imaginatively what it is like to be at the receiving end of a particular action. So here a rudimentary reasoning is involved.

So if you were to behave ethically in this particular way that would strengthen, presumably, your feeling of self consciousness, your reflexive consciousness. And the more [12] conscious you are in that way the more ethically you would be able to behave, so they reciprocally influence each other.

Virananda: When does a human being start behaving ethically? Does he have this capacity...

S: In a sense one has already answered that, because one has said that when you have reflexive consciousness or self-consciousness there is the possibility of behaving ethically in as much as you can reason that, 'if someone sticks a pin in me it hurts and similarly if I stick a pin in little Johnny it is going to hurt him. Since I don't like that sort of thing to be done to me I shouldn't do it to him.' I think one can reason with children in this way at a quite early age. I wouldn't care to say exactly when. Probably as soon as they can speak, almost. I think, probably, I have never tried it on a three year old, but you could probably speak to a three year old. Would fathers present please speak up.

Abhaya: Yes, you can.

S: You can, yes. There is a dialogue in the Buddhist scriptures where the Buddha is talking to a group of small boys who have been tormenting a crow and he reasoned with them in that way. Their ages are not given, but they are certainly very small boys. But do children respond, can they see the point at that age, would you say?

Abhaya: I think it varies, sometimes they do and sometimes they are just pleasing you.

S: Yes, because after all the self consciousness is rudimentary and perhaps at that age it is very rudimentary. Perhaps they don't always see the point but sometimes they can. It depends also on the mood that they are in and what other distractions there are and so on and so forth. Your own attitude in explaining, that all enters into the situation, surely.

Abhaya: It's difficult to know what they get up to when you are not around.

S: Well that's a quite different matter, all sorts of people get up to all sorts of things when certain other people aren't around. (laughter) Not only children!

Really the last few years I have been thinking about this quite a lot, this question of the relationship between self-consciousness and what one might call the ethical sense. They do seem to be very intimately connected.

V: You mentioned in your answer that it involved also a degree of imaginative identification. When you say imaginative does that imply another faculty besides that of reason?

S: In a sense it does. Although one doesn't like to make too hard and fast a difference, even a distinction, between one faculty and another. But yes, there is, what one might call, an

empathetic leap. Do you know what I mean? By virtue of the fact that you are both human beings, or even in the case of an animal, that you are both living beings. You [13] can empathize with that other person, with that other being. And your reasoning process gives a formal, logical structure to that empathetic process, one might say.

Probably, if a person was a psychopath and for some reason or other was deprived of that kind of empathy, your reasoning would probably not convince them at all, mere reasoning by itself. I do believe that it is quite difficult to convince social psychopaths that they have in fact done something wrong. It just doesn't mean anything to them, presumably because that feeling of social empathy, that imaginative identification with other human beings simply is not there.

Dharmapriya: I can't remember his exact words but in Jaspers' last lectures, he goes so far as to say that people [who] cannot make any emotional identification with others, he's talking ethically, he sees them as basically disturbed.

S: I think that's true. That is to say if they are over the age of three.

So all these things seem very much interconnected. Self consciousness, the ethical sense, imagination, reason, responsibility. And when they are developed to an extent which is more than rudimentary they add up to individuality.

V: Very often one speaks of imagination within the context of culture, within the context of some aesthetic experience. But if that aesthetic experience... you might have that quite richly, quite a rich appreciation, if that doesn't involve you in a real empathetic leap with other people, how...?

S: Hmm, I know what you mean. You are thinking of the sort of thing that Tennyson writes about in the Palace of Art. I think probably one has to make a distinction between aesthetic experience in the narrower sense and imaginative experience or the imagination. Simply to sample different states of mind or different emotions through works of art is not to exercise the imagination. Some people have doubted in recent times, whether it is really, in a sense healthy that we go to things like concerts, where we simply sit back and enjoy the sensations, as it were. Enjoy the aesthetic experience, without, perhaps, aesthetic experience having its place within any particular structure of meaning.

For instance, to give you a concrete example. Suppose you go and listen to Bach's mass in B minor. You listen to it just as a musical composition. But it is not, in fact, just a musical composition. Bach did not write it as a musical composition, we know what Bach wrote it as and what he wrote it for, he wrote it as part of a Church service. He wrote it for people who were participating in that Church service, believing in everything that it stood for, believing in the mass, believing in the sacrifice of the mass, believing in Lutheran doctrine and so on. So we try to pluck out of that total complex of experience. We try to pluck out the aesthetic element and enjoy it separately, which represents, in a way, an impoverishment. It's probably unfortunate that we have to divorce the aesthetic element from what I call the structure of meaning, but it seems that for a lot of people there is no alternative. But perhaps we shouldn't overestimate the importance of what we are doing, or overestimate the significance of what we are doing, or misjudge it. Because there is an [14] element of meaning which is lacking.

Abhaya: This seems to go against what you were saying in Tuscany when you were discussing appreciating Renaissance pictures of the annunciation. Where you were saying that's fine, you just appreciate the aesthetics, that's what I understand you were saying, just the aesthetic qualities, you don't have to worry about the dogmatic implications of what the annunciation means.

S: That is true, but I did bring in the question of archetypes. Because from what does the Christian image itself derive its weight? It's from the archetype that it reflects, so you can certainly drop the Christian dogma in the narrower sense and make a direct connection between that particular visual image and the archetype to which it pertains, as understood by you as a Buddhist. Do you see what I mean? That is rather a different thing. It is quite different from just enjoying the Christian work of art purely aesthetically, without having any apprehension through that work of art, of an archetype which represents an element of spiritual meaning.

Sanghapala: Bhante, I'm not quite clear about the gravity of the dangers of this example of, say, Bach's mass in B, just listening to it for the sake of the experience divorced from the structure, could you say more about that?

S: What I have in mind is, a situation in which you are simply sitting back, not just in the concert hall but in life generally and feeding upon pleasurable experiences about ...?... to the detriment of any intellectual element or any volitional element in your life or any overall structure of meaning and purpose. So your attitude is essentially subjective and self-indulgent and even narcissistic, as explained in that book 'The Culture of Narcissism', which some of you may have seen. It was around a few years ago, perhaps we ought to stock it, see if it is in print again, now.

V: Do you think, within the FWBO you have emphasized the imaginal faculty quite a lot of late, do you think there is danger of people confusing that with aesthetic experience?

S: Passive aesthetic experience, I think possibly there is.

V: Do you think it might be better to, if we speak in terms of the imagination, that first of all we have to stress this empathetic leap, say towards other human beings, other living beings, before people think in terms of contact with images?

S: Not necessarily. I think, perhaps, one should be careful to avoid giving the impression that involvement with the arts is essentially a passive thing, a matter of sitting back in your seat and just enjoying hearing something or looking at something. Perhaps one should stress the creative side more, though even that, sometimes, can be overdone. Stress the aspect of [15] yourself taking up a particular art, yourself learning to paint or learning to make pots and so on and so forth. Do you see what I mean? So that you don't think in terms of involvement with the fine arts in that purely passive sense. At the very least you can improve the way that you write, because you write letters, you write out your reporting in, and of course you are using the English language all the time. You can learn to use it better, improve your grammar, your spelling, your punctuation, your command of language generally. That itself is of artistic significance and value, it's a creative activity.

I think sometimes, if people are generally open and receptive, if you go and listen to

something like Bach's mass in B minor, if especially you are trying to lead some kind of spiritual life it isn't just a passive, aesthetic experience. You do get something from it more than that, you can get a glimpse of some higher ideal, such as Bach must have envisaged or experienced through his music, as he created it.

V: Even, presumably, you could experience something higher than Bach did.

S: Yes, because you could take it as a spring board. But sometimes one wonders about people at concerts, because they come out of a concert, they come out after hearing the Messiah or Mass in B Minor or Beethoven's Ninth and they immediately start talking about all sorts of inane things. It is a bit like people coming straight out of the shrineroom in the morning and at once start talking in a quite foolish way. You wonder what an earth they have been doing during that hour, or two hours in some cases. Anyone who has been immersed in meditation even to a moderate degree, during that time, one wouldn't be able to talk in that way. In the same way if you really experienced the music, to any depth, you couldn't come out and immediately start chattering. Not everybody does, but I think the majority of people do. I am not talking about people in the FWBO at the moment but the public at large.

V: Is there a possibility of using meditation in the same way, or is it so intertwined(?) with insight that it's...

S: We are exhorted by different sages, and Buddhist Yogis and mystics not to have a self indulgent attitude towards the Dhyanas. Not just immerse oneself in the Dhyanas and enjoy them for their own sake. But those admonitions have an ironic sound about them for most people.

So yes, I think we take the point but I think it isn't very relevant for a lot of people.

V: Is there not a danger of losing the desire to know things, to enquire?

S: I think there is.

V: Just sit and get by, and get subjective, you forget why you are meditating.

S: But then again if you are involved in a centre and you are taking classes, well, you are confronted by questions from people, such as beginners, and that will set you thinking, you will have to think. You will have to consider what your [16] position really is and where you really do stand. So no doubt that will look after that particular problem.

Anyway, does that deal with your question? (D: Yes)

Abhaya: Padmavajra has a question about the distortion of self consciousness in certain realms.

Padmavajra: Would you say, that the asuras, pretas and hell beings represent distortions of self-consciousness? Could such states only come about through a prior achievement of self consciousness?

S: I must say I haven't considered this question before, but just off the cuff, it seems likely in

the case of the asuras because they are very competitive. They are comparing themselves with others, they want to be more powerful than others, they are jealous of others, they want to defeat others, they don't want to be defeated by others. So all this is comparison and that suggests a measure of self-consciousness, but as you say, it is distorted. How it becomes distorted, or how a human being's consciousness becomes distorted in that particular way is, of course, another matter.

It happens, perhaps, quite early in life. When, for instance, parents start comparing one child's performance with another, or preferring one child to another. But yes, certainly one can see a case of distorted self-consciousness in the Asuras.

What about the pretas. The pretas are dominated by neurotic greed or craving. They would seem to be rather lower down on the scale, which is, of course, what tradition says. There seems to be much less of self consciousness, they are much more narcissistic in a way, aren't they? You can have aesthetic pretas.

V: I wonder if that kind of neurosis, somehow, can only come about if you have got a degree of self consciousness. Because it is not the same kind of appetite as, say, an animal has. It seems to be a hunger, almost because you can fantasize it.

S: That's what we suggest when we say that it is neurotic. So that raises the question, what is the relation between neurosis and self consciousness.

Subhuti: Something to do with rudimentary self consciousness, being only a partial development of self consciousness so there is quite a strong degree of insecurity and one-sidedness, distortion. If that is emphasized then it goes up one or other of these evolutionary cul-de-sacs.

S: Yes, in the case of the asura, you want to establish or you want to strengthen your rather weak sense of personal identity at the expense of others. In the case of the preta you want to build it up by stuffing yourself as full as you can with things from external sources.

Subhuti: And the hell being wants to push away, ...?... threatened identity.

S: Yes. This involves something a little different from self consciousness, it seems to involve something like self [17] confidence, doesn't it?

V: I think Freud talks about neurosis in terms of being under the sway of one's thoughts. He talks of the omnipotence of thoughts. In a healthy, sane person one is able to distance oneself from one's thoughts but in the neurotic one's thoughts assume a kind of omnipotence.

S: In the case of the pretas, presumably, through thought you invest certain external things, certain objects, with a greater capacity to satisfy you than they in fact possess.

It does seem that the asuras and pretas and beings in hell realms represented distorted forms of self consciousness. Or perhaps we should say, not that in their case self consciousness is fully developed and also distorted, the distortion is somehow connected with the failure of that rudimentary self consciousness to grow into a full, complete, healthy self consciousness. That's why they are all, including the asuras from a certain point of view, considered to be

sub-human.

V: And this you connect up with a lack of self confidence?

S: I said a lack of self confidence, but perhaps a more satisfactory expression would be inadequacy. A sense of inadequacy. This, perhaps, goes a bit deeper. In the case of the asura you try to compensate for your feelings of inadequacy through conquest. In the case of the preta, through possession and in the case of the beings in hell through isolation and rejection of others.

Was that the whole of your question? (P: Yes)

Abhaya: Padmavajra also has a question about the distinction between mind and body.

Padmavajra: This arose at the end of the lecture, when there was a question on mind and body. You answered it very briefly by saying, roughly, that the Buddhist view is that they are the same thing seen from a different point of view. Could you elaborate on that, please?

S: This is, in a way, the Buddhist point of view, or a way that the Buddhist point of view could be put. It is also Blake's point of [view], isn't it? I think I would approach it rather differently though. If one speaks at all in terms of body and mind, you have already made certain quite important assumptions; or let's say an important assumption. We talk about body and mind, and we ask what are body and mind, what is body, what is mind. But in speaking about them at all in that way, or even to that extent, we have already made a vitally important assumption; in fact we have already said what mind is. Do you see what I mean? By speaking of body and mind you have assumed that mind can be spoken of in the same way that body can be spoken of. In other words you are treating mind as an object. But the very essence of the matter would seem to be that mind is not an object, because mind is mind. Mind is not that which is perceived, mind is that which perceives.

So strictly speaking you cannot say what mind is, because when you make it an object at all it ceases to be mind. (Pause)

So you have got mind, which is not an object, and you have got [18] body, which is an object. So you are this, you are - again this is falsifying, because when you speak of 'you are', when you say, 'you are mind and body', you are making mind into a quasi body. So to that extent you are falsifying it. But because you have got self consciousness you can perform these sort of gymnastics, but you mustn't be misled by your own gymnastics. Because actually, in point of fact, in terms of experience, you have not made mind into an object and what you are speaking about is not, in fact, mind, as you actually experience it.

So one can't really say, even, that the two are basically the same thing. In fact one could say that the exact opposite is probably no less near the truth. Except that they are not two different things because mind isn't even a thing.

V: What would you say to the person who said his thoughts were his mind, that he can see his thoughts and thereby he can see his mind.

S: But who is this person that sees the thoughts?



V: The point he is making is that his thoughts are mind and that whatever...

S: If his thoughts are mind and if his mind is nothing but thoughts he cannot even make that statement. Of course, if you are not careful, a certain type of presentation of Buddhism, seems to do that. For instance the Abhidharma, it seems to do that. That is to say it seems to reduce what is subject to object.

I think we have to acknowledge in our own experience that there is both subject and object. And there is a residue of subjectivity which we cannot possibly translate into an object. The two seem to hang together. This does not mean that one is real and the other unreal, but it means that our experience as we actually experience it has this sort of dual character. That we ourselves, one might say - some people express it in these terms, have an inside and an outside. And our outside, what is perceived by other people, is what we call our body, and our inside, what we are able to perceive but others aren't able to perceive, is our mind. But there is a mind, as it were, within our minds that even we can't perceive. You cannot make yourself fully object to yourself, any more than you can make yourself fully subject to yourself. So you cannot escape this basic duality of your experience. You can't perceive yourself. You can't perceive an object, even according to modern science, because the act of perception modifies the object itself. So this all tends to suggest that the whole distinction, difference between subject and object is very different from what we usually think it is. It's not so absolute.

There is a sort of subjective form, there is an objective form, but it's not that there is a separate subject and a separate object standing over against each other. It's more like two points of tension, the relationship between which is changing all the time. Do you see what I am getting at? (V: Yes)

Upanishadic philosophy speaks in terms of knowing the knower, but you can't know the knower, literally. It involves a regression to infinity. You can know yourself knowing what you know, you can know yourself knowing what you know and so on and so forth. You can't even turn round and view yourself [19] in your totality as a pure object. So this is the nature, in a way, of reflexive consciousness. Consciousness can bend round and it can, as it were, see it's own tail, but it can't see it's own head.

V: It's pretty elementary in a way, you just have to sit down and look. (S: Yes) The first thing I ever did when I meditated was sit down and look and it became elementary within two or three sits, you have to take up the mindfulness of breathing, calm down and hope for more of a transcendental insight.

S: Is that the whole question? To go back, just for a moment to that, perhaps I wouldn't say, now, wouldn't say so easily that mind and body are the same thing seen from different points of view. That does, of course, emphasize the fact that mind and body hang together but they are not really like the two halves of a sphere or the two different sides of a shield, that would be much too simplistic.

Abhaya: Tejananda has a question about the relationship between samskara and the vijñānaskaras.

Tejananda: This is with regard to the definition of consciousness. Could you please clarify what vijñāna is in terms of the five skandhas? That is to say, is it to be regarded simply as a

passive awareness of workings of the other four skandhas, or are there, so to speak, psychic events which are regarded as belonging specifically to vijñāna and if so in what way do these differ from the Saṃskāras?

S: As far as I remember vijñāna, which is usually translated as consciousness, is really much more like awareness. It's the skandha which is aware of the four other skandhas. That would seem to be the classical Buddhist position. What was the remainder of the question?

Tejananda: Is it passive awareness or are there psychic events which are regarded as belonging specifically to vijñāna?

S: Psychic events, one might say, belong to vijñāna or awareness in the sense that they are the objects of that awareness.

Tejananda: But then it would belong to the... come under the category of other skandhas

S: It's a different classification. Because in the case of the five skandhas, one speaks of vijñāna or awareness and rūpa - bodily form, vedāna - feeling or emotion, samjñā perception or one might even say cognition, and Saṃskāras which are volitions. These exhaust all the contents of consciousness, all these things are objects of that awareness like or mirroring or reflecting vijñāna. There is another classification, of course, which is not the same as this one, where one speaks of citta and caitasika, mind and mental concomitance. But that is a different classification, not to be mixed up with the first one.

Abhaya: Also to do with the skandhas, Padmavajra had a question about feelings and emotions.

Padmavajra: Where does feeling and where does emotion fit, exactly in the skandhas? I noticed just then when you [20] translated vedāna you said feeling or emotion. Would it, perhaps, not be more correct to actually say that emotion is included in the saṃskāra skandha rather than in the vedāna skandha.

S: Usually, of course, in general psychology a distinction is made between feeling and emotion. Feeling is more simple, emotion is more complex. You can have, for instance, a feeling of pleasure, but you have an emotion of love. Spinoza, in his ethics makes, what I think is regarded as a standard distinction. He says that love is the feeling of pleasure associated with the idea of an external cause. I don't know whether he says this but if he doesn't he should, this external cause being a person.

So when the source of your pleasure, which is a feeling, is a person, then obviously the whole situation becomes much more complex, because your relationship with another person whose company you find pleasurable, is quite different from your relationship with, say, good weather, which you find pleasurable. Because elements of intellect, reason, understanding and volition do obviously come in. And that more complex pattern, suffused by that pleasurable emotion, or pleasurable feeling, rather, is what we call an emotion. So when I speak of vedāna, when I translate vedāna as feeling I add on emotion because, yes, emotion has to be put somewhere, but one is not to think that there aren't more complex forms. That the different skandhas can't combine in different ways, they don't remain always in their chemically pure state. They are not always apart, you can distinguish but you can't really

separate. So you can get an overlapping of a vedana skandha and the vijnana skandha and the samskara skandha and, of course, the rupa skandha, and you can get an emotion.

V: Would the inadequacy, the person we were talking about before, the asuras and pretas and what not, be associated with this inability to feel the pleasure not associated with a person, as it were. That they could not feel emotional independence, as it were.

S: It would seem that you have to be able to experience yourself before you can experience others and the deficiency may originally be there, they may not have a sufficient experience of themselves so they are not able to experience others in a healthy way. They have to try and intensify their experience of themselves but relating to other people in an essentially negative sort of way. Some people get a sort of kick, that is to say an enhanced experience of themselves out of inflicting pain and suffering on others in a sadistic way, as we say.

It makes me think, I was talking at lunch today about my experience the other evening when I went to the cinema to see 'Passage to India'. Before seeing 'Passage to India' I had to sit through a whole series of trailers which were of unmitigated violence. Even though the films from which the trailers... (End of tape one)

[21]

S: ... the trailers should have been X's, the films for which they were trailers should have been U's. It seemed so strange that there was this succession of violent episodes in each particular trailer and it seemed really excessively violent. If people want to watch that sort of thing it suggests they are out of touch with all healthy feeling or emotion to an incredible degree. You are in such a state that you can't experience anything positive, you can only experience something negative because that strikes you more powerfully. It's like the person in India who is so accustomed to taking lots and lots of chilli that if there is not an enormous quantity of chilli in the food it has got no taste to it, it is tasteless.

I hadn't been to the cinema for quite a long time and certainly hadn't seen any trailers of that sort, not to say films of that sort, ever before, perhaps. I really wondered what had happened during the last two or three years, have things got progressively worse? Because it really suggests that people who go to cinemas, and these things wouldn't be shown if there wasn't an audience, if there weren't customers, would just represent the fact that people can be interested only in something really very negative.

Kulamitra: I think also it is a gradual process of inoculation to that. That that stimulation, you never see anything like that so you appreciate it for what it really is, but gradually people have built up so that they can only get their violent kick by a bit more violence each time.

S: So they get further and further away from the possibility of any positive experience.

Kulamitra: Yes. I think that process is definitely happening in the media, television and cinema. Even films that would have been harmless, cowboy type children's films twenty years ago now have what we would consider a really harmful degree of violence in them, but which the children don't think anything of.

S: So that would suggest that in the case of the children either their imaginative faculty is atrophied and they cannot imagine what it is like to experience that sort of violence, or even

in the case of children there is very little of genuinely positive feeling. Which would be a very sad state of affairs if that was so.

Sanghapala: You are aware sometimes at the movies that people only sitting still and saying nothing because they don't want to cause a fuss whereas in their own home, if they walked in, say, to the kitchen they would say 'put that off, it's terrible'.

S: But people do go along to see these films and they have got a rough idea what they are like. They are titillated by the trailers and they have got pictures of certain scenes up in the foyer and they probably hear from their friends what they are like, or they read reviews from the papers, but certainly they hear from their friends, and along they go in their thousands.

V: And they go again. (S: Yes)

Dharmapriya: More educated people in Germany come up with [22] a rationalization, having read some classics or something, that is a catharsis for them, seeing violence. They explain it in a very convincing manner, they do know what they are going to and they go again and again.

S: Which would suggest that the catharsis hasn't taken place. Do they feel uplifted and purged, really?

Dharmapriya: They don't look it.

S: So I suppose when one very nearly reaches the age of sixty, when one is expected to ask 'what is the world coming to?', I wonder, am I just getting into this rut or is really the world getting worse? Is it really worse than it was in my youth, because this sort of thing, one knows, is said by elderly men and old men of every generation. Surely the world isn't getting worse and worse every twenty or thirty years? But if one goes by one's own experience and doesn't reason in this way it does really seem that... this is one's experience, that things have become worse. And this time round, perhaps, that really is the case.

Anyway, next question.

Abhaya: Virananda has a question of how you relate the four levels of consciousness to the tradition, the Buddhist tradition.

Virananda: In terms of Mitra study how are these four stages of consciousness best to be correlated with a traditional formulation of the path, say, the Four Shunyatas or the Six Paramitas or what?

S: I don't think it correlates with any of those because it is a quite different kind of classification. But I think one can go from the known to the unknown. Transcendental consciousness I have correlated anyway with stream entry. It is the consciousness of the stream entrant. In the same way self consciousness is the consciousness of the, what should one say, the moral worldling. The person who does not have any insight, so who is a prthagjana or puthujjana in traditional terms, but who possesses punya, who performs meritorious actions not associated with insight. That is the individual, with a small 'i' in the highest sense. So self consciousness is the consciousness of that kind of person.

So transcendental consciousness is the consciousness of the stream entrant and self consciousness is the consciousness of the highest possible kind of prthagjana or puthujjana. If one takes that literally that would include even meditative states, states of dhyana. So yes, the self consciousness is the consciousness of the skilful puthujjana. And as I said, transcendental consciousness is the consciousness of the stream entrant.

Sense consciousness, obviously, is consciousness of the animal, the animal realm, animal kingdom. And absolute consciousness is the consciousness of the Buddha. But one could also say, in terms of the wheel of life, sense consciousness is the consciousness of the animal. Self consciousness is the consciousness of the human being and the god, the human being representing the lower and the god the higher form of self-consciousness. And then outside the wheel of life the stream entrant representing transcendental consciousness and then the Buddha, absolute consciousness. One could correlate in that kind of way.

[23]

V: And from what we said the Asuras, rudimentary.

S: They represent deformations of rudimentary self consciousness. They are, as it were, askew, from the deva realm, aren't they.

V: You make a point that simple consciousness was not necessarily unsophisticated, that some animals will have very subtle, very refined levels of sense consciousness, and that rather than thinking in terms of brutishness that simple consciousness can be very sophisticated at it's own level.

S: Sophisticated in the sense of subtle. As in the case of a dog's sense of smell or sense of hearing.

V: Or animals sensing an impending earthquake.

S: Mm. It's the same with the human mind, with respect of things like telepathy.

V: That led on to a discussion that perhaps the scientific mind that just pursues remorselessly objectivity without any reference to the person who is doing the perceiving is in fact manifesting an element of simple consciousness.

S: This sounds more like the asura.

Subhuti: It's distorted.

S: The conquest of nature and an element of alienation and one sided development.

Virananda: Could I take my question a little bit further?

S: Yes.

Virananda: You choose to correlate the four stages of consciousness in Hinayana terms. Could it be done in Mahayana terms, in terms of the Bodhisattva ideal, in terms of progressive arising of the Bodhichitta?

S: I have already correlated the stream entry with the developing of the Bodhichitta, so in a sense that has been done.

Abhaya: Sudhana has a question about your remark somewhere about the transcendental. The transcendental seeing us.

S: Yes, that's in the lecture.

Sudhana: In that part of the lecture, where you are defining transcendental consciousness, you talk in terms of a crack, a flash of insight when we see the transcendental. Also this being the light by which the transcendental sees us. This seems to give the transcendental a personality. What do you mean by the transcendental seeing us?

S: I think one must see the context here, or see what I am broadly trying to do. One has come to a point where, as I have said, a sort of crack appears between subject and object. That is to say, not that subject and object have drawn apart while remaining subject and object, you have started [24] penetrating into a dimension where that very distinction of subject and object ceases to obtain. And that is what is meant by the crack. So if that distinction between subject and object ceases to pertain you cannot really speak of that 'state' (inverted commas) as an object in the ordinary sense. So in order to emphasize that point, that it is not an object, I have made the point that it is just as easy, or just as correct to speak of it as a subject. In other words it is just as correct to speak of it as that which sees as it is to speak of it as that which is seen. So I can only express it by saying, not only do you see it but it also sees you.

In other words, if you think of that, which is also seeing you, as an object, then you have lost it, though by you even speaking of it in this way, you can't help relegating it to the position of an object, but that is an inherent fault of language itself and perhaps even rational thought itself.

Sanghapala: So you are using a type of language, in a sense, to break a subject, object dichotomy.

S: Not so much to break it down but to give expression to that 'state', which obtains when it has begun to be broken down.

V: Yet your main emphasis seems to be on the transcendental consciousness as an object in this whole section.

S: If one is speaking of consciousness one, consciousness two, consciousness three, you are laying them out, in a sense, as objects. But one must remember all the time that it is not really like that at all.

Dharmapriya: But you have said, it is more than implied, that it is just as correct to speak of it as subject when it has reached this level. (S: Yes) Is this, then, the main justification for talking of, or almost personalizing Buddhahood into the form of a leader, or Amitabha?

S: I don't think that is what is in mind, or is what most people have in mind when they speak of Buddhahood or Amitabha. I think they think of it as, not an object but a person, out there. They don't think of it as their subjectivity, as it were. So I think it really amounts to the same

thing. Amitabha for most people, for most Buddhists is still an object but it is an object which is personal and not impersonal. But in a way it should mean that, just as when you meditate on a Bodhisattva, to begin with, or you visualize a Bodhisattva, that Bodhisattva is out there, is a person. But the point must come, not when you see that Bodhisattva as yourself, that is still the wrong way of putting it, but it is as though instead of being out there the Bodhisattva is in here. You are that Bodhisattva. In other words you have started breaking down the subject-object dichotomy and it is just as true to say me as to say him, in respect of that Bodhisattva. If you are a theist you say 'him', and if you are a Buddhist you say 'me' but if you are a Buddhist you say 'both and neither'.

Dharmapriya: Can one go from here to say that along the pattern of someone doing visualization practice of a Bodhisattva, a theist, nevertheless it being possible of them being in a position of developing transcendental insight. He has to overcome seeing..., instead of seeing an object, seeing a subject out there, which he has to overcome?

[25]

S: I think that is very very difficult for a convinced theist. I don't know if there is any historical instance of that, maybe among some Sufis, certainly not in the Christian world, that I know of. Because usually theists belong to a theistic environment and a theistic tradition and it's almost impossible to think in non-theistic terms. Theoretically the possibility is there, of making the transition, but I think in point of fact this hardly ever happens. Because the theistic ideology is so strongly reinforced from without.

Sanghapala: Did you say that they find it almost impossible not to think in non-theistic or non-dualistic terms?

S I said non-theistic.

V: Do you think there are practical reasons, though, for speaking of transcendental consciousness more in terms of an object than, say, in terms of subject, I mean neither pertain at that level?

S: But to the extent that we talk at all we talk about things. So as soon as you start talking about anything you make it into a thing, you objectify it, And it isn't really a thing that's a delusion which is reinforced. It's not that if you can visualize, say, god, well you have only got to drop your Christian conditioning and at once you can experience that as subject, or you know. Because it is intrinsically difficult, apart from any cultural and religious conditioning, it is intrinsically difficult to break through that sort of subject-object duality barrier. So if that is reinforced by the teaching and religion of the culture to which you belong, the two in combination are almost insuperably difficult to overcome. Even for a Buddhist, for all the help and advice he has from his philosophy, it is difficult enough and is in fact a very, very rare achievement.

Sanghapala: ...?... these theistic religions are always burdened by the dualistic thinking as an essential part of it?

S: Broadly speaking yes. There are exceptions, I would say more especially among Sufis, but broadly speaking there is a definite limitation. Not that Buddhists, necessarily, do very much better in practice, though their theory is all right. Because it's not just a question of being free

from external conditioning, it is also the question of the inner, personal effort.

Abhaya: Kulamitra had a question in the same area, I wonder if it still stands.

Kulamitra: Yes, I think it does, maybe it is an extension of that but I don't think it has been answered.

Can one try and make the transcendental an object of one's consciousness through puja and visualization or should it be more a question of trying to take a particular attitude to life?

S: Well the two go together, I would say. Whereas again, it is not as though the transcendental is a thing, it is not as though the unconditioned is a thing, it is more a question of having an unconditioned attitude towards life, in other words a non-reactive or apparently non-reactive attitude [26] towards life. If one expresses that in metaphysical, ontological terms one can speak in the sense of getting the Transcendental (capital T) into view, or getting the Unconditioned (capital U) into view. But essentially it is a matter of your transcendental or unconditioned attitude towards life. That is the proof, in a way, that you have seen the transcendental or the unconditioned, and you behave in a certain way or have a certain attitude towards life.

V: ...?... all beings as sacred,

S: No, I think that is still, as it were, ideology. Not that, but simply that in your day to day life you do not react, to use that word, in a reactive way. Your "reaction" (inverted commas) is always creative, it is response rather than a reaction. You are always one step ahead or one step or one flight above the given. Do you see what I mean?

I don't really see getting the transcendental into view and having a certain attitude towards life as antithetical or as things between which a choice has to be made. Maybe at first, to some extent, but not really, not in the long run. Otherwise, for instance it is like doing lots of visualizations of Amitabha and really feeling, really experiencing that Amitabha is infinite light, infinite love and all the rest of it, feeling very inspired, but you have no time for other people. Do you see what I mean? It is possible to pursue that path up to a point but the time comes when there has got to be some reflection of your feeling for Amitabha in your behaviour towards other beings. It is not that you see them as Amitabha, you might not even think about Amitabha, but nonetheless your attitude towards them would be of a certain kind.

V: So you pursue it on both fronts, as it were.

S: Yes. And any success on one front helps you on the other front.

Abhaya: Tejananda, you have a question about visualization, in this connection.

Tejananda: could you explain the arising of transcendental consciousness in terms of visualization practice? For instance, if one were to experience it in the course of a visualization practice, would this be the equivalent of a transformation of the samaya-sattva into vijñana-sattva or is it a more limited experience of the transcendental than the realization of vijñana-sattva?



S: One could probably put it in those terms from the Vajrayana point of view, yes. Because when one speaks in terms of experiencing vijnana sattva instead of samayasattva it is not that in front of one, instead of seeing the samya-sattva you now see the vijnana-sattva, no, it is a different kind of experience in which that dichotomy between subject and object begins to be transcended. Since one is using the language of visualization one goes on using that. You don't see another sattva, you don't even see the same sattva in a different way, it is an experience of a different level, a different dimension, which supervenes upon the first. Yes, it does mark that same kind of transition.

[27]

Abhaya: Tejamitra has a question about the recapitulation theory in the lecture and the attitude of modern environmentalists.

Tejamitra: In the lecture you said that in the womb the foetus passes through the different stages of the lower evolution. Would you still say that in the light of the latest thinking on that subject?

S: I am not sure what the really latest thinking is, but I understand that the recapitulation is, in any case, very general and is not to be regarded as point by point. That there is a recapitulation only in a very general sense I don't know whether the very latest research would still agree with that or not, I would have to look that up.

Tejamitra: The thing that Maynard-Smith says is that there is a sort of form of passing through different levels of evolution but what it resembles is the young of different species rather than aspects of the mature of the species. So it would be a gill would develop but it would only be resembling a young fish and then it changes into an ear hole or whatever.

S: Well one could make two points here. Perhaps there isn't time for the whole process to be gone through and also if the gill, say, develops fully, then that denotes a degree of specialization which is incompatible with passing on to the next stage. So it is not that when ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, it is not that each preceding stage, each species is recapitulated fully and then having recapitulated it fully you fully recapitulate the next stage or next species and so on, it is nothing like that, no.

Abhaya: Mahamati has a question about emotions and the development of self consciousness.

Mamamati: This relates to the point in the lecture where you say that the emergence of rudimentary self consciousness is accompanied by the development of reason, memory and language. (S: again all rudimentary) And I noticed that there was no mention of the emotions.

S: I think I probably took that for granted, certainly there is feeling and even in the case of the infant there is..., well perhaps there isn't emotion, because the infant, perhaps, doesn't fully realize that people are people. But there are certainly feelings even in the case of the infant. There is the sensation of pleasure, pain, there is consciousness of that and there is emotion to the extent that the infant becomes the child and starts getting the parents at least, and other people, generally, into view as independent personalities, not just extensions of its own personality.

Mahamati: What I was wondering was, whether there is an emotional element that is

necessary to the arising of rudimentary self consciousness, that it is in some way different from feelings and emotions which would come before that, which perhaps might be classified as instincts?

S: Say that again.

Mahamati: I am wondering whether there is an emotional element which is necessary to the arising of rudimentary self consciousness.

[28]

S: If it is rudimentary it is doubtful whether emotion in the strict sense would be there before. Rudimentary self consciousness, feeling, yes, but not emotion as distinct from feeling. Emotion as distinct from feeling would seem to be associated only with a degree of self consciousness. So it would be, in a way, a contradiction in terms to speak of an emotion that was necessary for the development of self consciousness.

Mahamati: Maybe I am confusing the question that it was in my mind, which was, why emotion wasn't included with reason, memory and language as being selected as being indicative of the development of rudimentary self consciousness.

S: I can only say, without being even actually to remember, that I must have taken it for granted or regarded it as so obvious that emotion was a compliment of all human experience. Because I have certainly said later on that positive emotion is a characteristic of the individual.

What I thought you might be going to get at was the fact that in the case of the infant, for a healthy development of self consciousness perhaps there needs to be a sense of instinctual oneness, almost, originally with the mother, leading to sense of security that makes possible that whole subsequent healthy development. Do you see what I mean? I thought that was probably the line that you were going to take. And yes, there definitely would be something in that, I think. I wouldn't speak of emotion of oneness with the mother, but certainly a sort of sense of oneness with the mother, even a feeling of oneness. Not that the infant would consciously think in those terms, of course. But without that, perhaps, there wouldn't be a proper and healthy development of rudimentary self consciousness leading to full self consciousness.

Abhaya: Tejamitra has a question about the higher evolution and rebirth.

Tejamitra: Wouldn't it be better to qualify the statement that the higher evolution cannot be inherited, by the fact that one's previous existences may have given one a propensity for greater awareness?

S: But it still wouldn't be a question of biological inheritance. But perhaps one could well make that point that one may have inherited qualities of the individual from oneself, as it were, in previous existences, though not from one's biological parents. Though the fact that you have developed those qualities of the individual might lead you to be reborn of parents who already have developed those qualities, so that it might seem that you had inherited them from them.

Dharmapriya: There does seem to be an analogy, something like the young Mozart inherited his musical talents from himself in previous lives and because of his musical aptitude was reborn in a musical family, and it appeared that he inherited them biologically.

S: When one says not inherited, well not genetically determined.

V: Surely inheriting talents, though, is different from inheriting transcendental or...

[29]

S: Well it depends what the talent is. Perhaps there is a difference between, say, a talent for playing on the piano which is a skill, which have to be learned with the fingers of the particular body, and say a talent for musical composition, which is virtually a mental process. Because you can, presumably, be able to compose music without being able to write it down. Being able to write it down would be a talent in the more narrow sense.

V: Meaning that talent, presumably, could be inherited quite easily?

S: You could inherit, presumably, the capacity or at least the potential for certain manual dexterity, you could inherit long fingers and because you had inherited long fingers you might be able to play the piano and in that way manifest the talent which you had brought from a previous life. Perhaps it is quite difficult to draw a hard and fast line and distinction, always.

V: What, between psychical inheritance and genetic inheritance.

S: Because you take advantage of particular parents by being reborn of them because it enables you to manifest a particular talent or aptitude. And also some talents require a certain mechanical expertise for their development or their manifestation. It is very difficult to know where one ends and the other begins.

Abhaya: I had a small question.

Those who take the higher evolution as being in the minority. Do you think in fact that the majority of people have at least, at some time, the glimpse of the possibility of developing individual consciousness further, albeit perhaps only for a few moments? Or do you think it never even occurs to most and that only intervention of a real individual will encourage any development?

S: It doesn't seem to occur to most. A lot of people have been in a traumatic experience and so on, and moments when they stop and think. Often when they have a misfortune or a bereavement. But I think very, very few actually take the step from that to thinking in terms of it being possible for them to develop as individuals. I think that whole mode of thought is foreign to most people. So I think, certainly in our culture and civilization, contact with some other person is required, or perhaps with a book. But very often in the case of the book you are not likely to get as far as the book unless you had already developed some sort of interest in something like personal development.

Very often, even when people talk in terms of personal development they only really mean stretching their bodies and their minds a little bit further than they do at present. They haven't really got any conception of the transcendental stage of development, as we would say. But I

think at the same time there are a lot more people than we usually think, who, if they did get right sort of conditions and the right sort of contact could actually develop to a considerable extent. Because it sometimes hard to see how blind you are to things until they are actually pointed out to you.

[30]

They need to be pointed out and you can actually see them then. So I think there are quite a lot of people who are unable to see things for themselves but who are quite able to see those same things if they are actually pointed out by another person. That's why I think that the pointing out by other people, skilfully, is so important, that is why I think spreading the Dharma is so important. Because there are people who, once they come into contact with the Dharma or the Dharma is made clear to them, can appreciate it, although left to themselves they would never have got around to thinking in those sort of terms or moving in that sort of direction. That is the great argument, that is the biggest argument for, for want of a better term, publicity, for the FWBO.

One especially begins to find that now that we have got co-ops and people come into contact with us through the co-ops who had never thought about religion, never had any idea about Buddhism or meditation. But after a while they do start thinking in those terms, thinking in terms of personal development. But they never would have come along to a meditation class or a lecture on Buddhism or anything of that sort. We know now what direct personal contact can do, even in the case of people who appear to have no spiritual interest or aspirations whatever. Those interests and aspirations can be awoken, at least in the case of a minority of people, perhaps a substantial minority, comparatively easily.

V: Do you think that our co-ops should make it clear that they are Buddhist influenced?

S: I think it isn't necessary. In the last analysis it is not a question of the co-op, it's the question of the personal contact of the individual. You mustn't disguise the fact or try to hide the fact that it is a Buddhist co-op but you need not make any particular point. Because with some people that is just not going to cut any ice at all. What cuts ice, if any ice is cut, is you, and the way you relate to that particular person and how seriously he begins to take you.

Abhaya: There is one more question from Kulamitra.

Kulamitra: I hope this isn't too... It's sort of carrying on from a question that you asked at the end of that lecture. I don't know if you realized that on the tape there are still some questions from the session that you had when you gave the lecture. Apparently you had some study groups afterwards. They are still there. I think it is the sort of question that people think of and sometimes do ask. When you were asked in those questions about your own transcendental experience you replied that to say you had (I'm making it briefly), that to say that you had or had not had any would both be misleading. Did you reply in this way because, and I have got a series of possibilities.

- a) It is unskilful to talk of one's transcendental experience;
- b) it cannot be talked about because of language problems;
- c) we, i.e., other people could not understand your experience without similar experience of

our own;

d) even you cannot be sure just how far you had gone in those terms of transcendental experience;

e) some other reason.

[31]

[Bit missing?]

S: ...and I still say that, because there is no locus of either, as it were. (laughter)

Subhuti: Could you perhaps rephrase that.

S: There is no point in the form of a person to whom either having the experience or not having the experience would apply.

V: So once you pass beyond the initial point any sense of distinguishing...

S: But at the same time you couldn't say that you had passed beyond that particular point, because you would be saying then that there was a 'you' that had passed beyond that particular point whereas the whole point is that there isn't. That's what you realize, that there isn't a 'you' to pass beyond that particular point. So that would be untrue to say that you had had that experience, but it would also be untrue to say that you had not had that experience. So it would be misleading to an enquirer if you were to make either answer, speaking for oneself that is, not generally.

Kulamitra: But in what sense is it different speaking for oneself or speaking as the Buddhist tradition does of, that person became a stream entrant, that person became a once returner, and so on. There the person is being talked of in a colloquial sense, not insisting that they are still...

S: Third parties can speak about you as they please but if you are asked yourself then you say what you think or what you experience. So I would still make that reply. Anyway, pass on to the other point.

Kulamitra: Did you reply in this way because, a) it is unskilful to talk of one's transcendental experience?

S: I would say not because it was unskilful but because it was untrue. (laughter) You see what I mean.

V: So is it not unskilful to talk in...

S: Put it another way, someone who hadn't had transcendental experience could say that no, I haven't had any transcendental experience, but actually he would not really know what he meant by that. He couldn't, in fact, know what he meant by that. How can you know what you mean when you say that you haven't had an experience of which you have no knowledge. (laughter)

V: You could say you have no knowledge of it.

S: No you couldn't, because that would assume that you had, in fact, knowledge of that.

V: A question though. In the case of, I was thinking of Han Shan, actually. In his autobiography he describes in detail what he seems to suggest are transcendental experiences.

S: Well that's fair enough, Han Shan is speaking for himself and others can speak for themselves too. (Laughter) Let Han Shan say what he pleases and don't wish to stop him.

Anyway what were the other, let's go through these.

[32]

Kulamitra: b) It cannot be talked about because of language problems, i.e. the duality that exists in...

S: That is true in a way, that is true if one takes language, as it were scientifically. But if you use language poetically I think some hint can be given, some sense can be conveyed or can be communicated. So I wouldn't say it is altogether beyond language, but it depends very much on the way that you use language, including of course the paradox.

Kulamitra: c) We, i.e., other people, could not understand your experience without similar experience of our own.

S: That is, in a way, objectifying experience more than I would care to do. It's making an experience seem like a thing with which you have got to compare another thing which is your experience, so you are objectifying both of them in this way. This seems to falsify the whole experience. I prefer to speak in much more practical terms and say that you can understand something of that sort when your behaviour harmonizes with that of another person.

When you, in a particular situation, find that another person is behaving with the same degree of sensitivity that you are conscious of behaving with yourself, and a certain rapport is established between you on that account. Then you would perhaps be justified in inferring, if that is the right word, that that person was experiencing the same mental state, or had even attained the same level of spiritual realization as you had attained yourself. You would come to know that in the process of your interaction, finding that they were as sensitive and so on, as aware, as responsible as you were yourself. But if you continually find deficiencies in them in this respect you would conclude that they were not as advanced as you were yourself, presuming that you did have, in fact, a just view of yourself.

Kulamitra: I think at that point, the assumption is that assuming that there are differences, despite those differences could someone with a lesser degree of spiritual realization, through some form of communication, whether it is paradox or whatever, intuit something of the other person's?

S: Again I think it is through a process of interaction, which may be more or less material or physical. The point comes when you realize that the other person is just bigger than you are, that the other person just goes beyond you in so many different ways. At first you may be doubtful whether it is an overall going beyond or whether they just go beyond you in specific

respects, that they know more or they are more experienced or they are older. Well that may be so but it doesn't really amount to very much spiritually. But then later on you may feel that, yes, they are more centred, yes, they are more aware than you, yes, they are more responsible than you and all this adds up in the end, perhaps, to a sort of overall superiority, if one uses that term, in respect of human development.

Kulamitra: So if you are in the position of being, as it were, on the lower round of the process, you sense that they are bigger than you but you can't really sense what their experience of that bigness is.

[33]

S: No. For instance, like playing with a tennis champion, you very quickly come to know that he is better than you but some of his shots, the way he plays from some of your shots is so, as it were, miraculous, that you realize that he's reached an altogether different dimension of skill in that particular game. Do you see what I mean? (K: yes) You think, 'well now I've got him' then no, he deals with it so easily. You know that it's just child's play for him to deal with that particular kind of shot. So then you realize that he is so much a better player than you that there is really no comparison.

So it is through one's interaction with people. That's why I think you can't possibly say with regard to some distant guru-like figure, that you have never met, that he is god etc., etc., that is just pure projection. But you might be able to say that if you were interacting with him personally, if you knew him personally, because at every turn he would be beyond you or above you or behind you and you just couldn't cope at all. So then you might conclude that he was above you, but exactly how far, that you couldn't tell. Because how can you tell if you are, say, a [a few words missing ?] the difference between a Bodhisattva on the eight degree and the ninth. There is no way that you can tell.

Abhaya: Maybe they would try to harass him into submission. I think if somebody is sometimes a little bit senior he can be tried to be made to react quite a lot by people who don't like the fact that he is superior in some ways. So they just needle.

S: Well everyone wants to challenge the champion.

Kulamitra: d) - is rather speculative I think, that perhaps in a sense you couldn't fully talk about it because even yourself you find it difficult to tie the experience down.

S: There is that too. You need a sort of structure for yourself as well as for others. But also in the case of others there needs to be a certain empathy otherwise you can't really communicate, because communication is communication. It isn't a purveying of factual information. So it is a question of the person and the moment, that is also involved in it. One can say a lot when one has got the right person and the right moment.

V: I suppose the problem is treating the transcendental as a theme, as a realization of some kind of thing that is added on to you.

S: Yes, perhaps it is better to speak of it as almost as a relation, a particular way of relating to other people.

Kulamitra: The last was just any other reason.

S: I can't think of any, perhaps there wasn't then either. I had forgotten about those question and answer sessions but now you speak of them I do remember, it was at the Centre House and there were these little groups after the lecture. That was a sort of innovation, I don't know why it was introduced, maybe to help people explore the whole subject more.

V: To get people more involved, I think.

[34]

S: Yes, I had completely forgotten about those discussion groups. I don't know whether we did continue them for other series of lectures.

V: I think we only did it on that one occasion.

S: I have a vague recollection of... thinking about this, that they weren't all that successful and most people didn't actually say anything.

V: We got some quite strange questions about LSD and the four levels of consciousness. [35]

Abhaya: So, Bhante, we've been listening to the second lecture in the series, 'From alienated awareness to integrated awareness', and we've got nine questions. The first one is from Virananda, who has a question on the place of ethics in developing integrated awareness.

Virananda: This is a somewhat lengthy question, which is about the relation between ethics and integrated awareness. When dealing with the awareness of self and the awareness of others, should more emphasis now be placed upon the ethical implications of this awareness? For instance, at the point when we are dealing with awareness of thoughts, ought the connection with sila to be made explicit? What is the place of the ethical dimension in creating an integrated awareness? Could someone be advised to work on their alienated awareness by a practice of sila, for example paying attention to a particular Precept like 'adinnadana'?

S: I think I did touch yesterday on the point that there is an emotional component in ethics, especially if one thinks of ethics in other-regarding terms. You've got to have some feeling for the other person; do you recall that? (Murmurs of assent.) You've got to be able to feel with the other person, you've got to empathize with the other person. You've got to identify imaginatively with the other person. And, unless you can do that - this is the point I was making yesterday, I think - it is very difficult to lead an ethical life; it is very difficult to behave ethically. Is that clear so far?

So, to come back to Virananda's question, it would seem that, if you are in a state of alienated awareness, it's not going to be very easy for you to be ethical except in a purely formalistic sense; because that feeling of empathy which is at the heart of ethics would seem to be missing. So it would seem that what you really need to do, if you are in a state of alienated awareness, is not so much to insist on more ethics, but to cultivate your emotions or, as it were, get in touch with your emotions, because it is those emotions which will contribute to the development of integrated awareness out of alienated awareness, as well as contribute, hopefully, to a greater degree of ethical behaviour.



So I think that to think of ethics as reinforcing integrated awareness or helping to develop integrated awareness is rather putting the cart before the horse. I think it is more likely to be the other way round. But comments on that are invited. Obviously, by ethical behaviour one doesn't mean what I've referred to as formalistic behaviour, not just observing the rules - ethics has got to be more than that - not observing the rules without any feeling for why you are observing them, or, in the case of other people, not being just or treating other people justly in a cold, logical way, or not just giving them what you think you ought to give in a cold, 'charitable' manner, in the Dickensian sense of 'charitable'.

[36]

Vairocana: There's a starting point, isn't there, often, that people do start ethics in that way, and they develop a feeling for it later on?

S: I think that you need to be ethical, even if you don't feel like being ethical, just even for social reasons. But that is not going to contribute much to your development as an individual. If you want to develop real, living ethics, which is born of your feeling for yourself and for others, and especially out of your identification imaginatively with other people, there has got to be a strong feeling element. And that feeling element is missing from alienated awareness, and it is also missing from the more formalistic type of ethical behaviour. So, in both cases, what you really need to do is to develop skilful emotion, to become more in touch with your emotions. Because one might say the cultivation of alienated ethical behaviour is not going to help you in the development of integral awareness.

Sanghapala: Does that mean that, if one thinks one's not getting into dhyanas and puts it down to lack of practice of ethics, and because of that one decides to be more ethical, that's something that wouldn't work because the decision is based upon a sort of selfish...

S: Well, in both cases you need to be in touch with your positive, skilful emotions. That would seem to be the key to the whole thing in both cases. So if you are not ethical, and because you're not ethical you can't get into the dhyanas, you can't go about being ethical - well, you can as a start - being ethical in a purely external, formalistic way. That is not going to help you very much in getting into the dhyanas. What is going to help you much more is if you develop a real ethical life, based on your genuine feeling for others - to the extent that ethics is, as I said, other-regarding.

Virananda: The other point concerning this awareness, particularly the awareness of self and the awareness of one's feelings and emotions, is that it strikes me as not being simply a fair awareness, a non-evaluative awareness. There is some element of valuation there, in that one has to distinguish between skilful and unskilful emotion.

S: Oh, yes! Though, of course, if you are completely out of touch with your feelings or emotions, you have got to get in touch, initially, with what is already there. That is not to say that, if you find that your emotions are unskilful, you will necessarily express them; but at the very least you must be in touch with them, acknowledge them and experience them within yourself. And you can then proceed to try to transform them from being unskilful to being skilful.

All this would seem to underline the importance of emotion in general and skilful emotion in particular. It seems that you can't really lead an ethical life apart from that. You can't even get

very far in your own meditation without that, [37] and you certainly can't develop integrated awareness without that. The development of integrated awareness, as I think the lecture made clear, involves more than anything else getting into contact with your own feelings.

Abhaya: The second question is from Padmavajra. He has a question on possible over-emphasis on passivity in the way we talk about awareness.

Padmavajra: There are a few related questions here, but I'll just read the first one. In the FWBO, people say they are aware of something, usually something negative; but it can seem sometimes that what they mean by it is a sort of passive observation of experience. In the lecture, you say that awareness can transform our negative emotions. On another occasion, you have described it as revolutionary. Given its radical nature, isn't there a lot more to be spelled out concerning awareness?

S: I certainly think there are degrees of awareness of every kind: awareness of self, awareness of others, awareness of the body, awareness of emotions. I think it is only a very clear, even a very sharp, awareness that can by itself have any transforming or even refining effect. Usually, the awareness needs to be reinforced by certain practical measures, even by certain exercises and practices. For instance, you can be aware that you have, say, a really bad temper. If that awareness is very strong, very sharp, you will be so clearly conscious of the undesirability of having a bad temper and so much want to get rid of it, that that very awareness, because of its sheer intensity, will have almost there and then have an effect upon you and upon your bad temper. But if it is what Padmavajra has called just a sort of passive awareness 'Ah, well, yes, I recognize it, it's true I've got a bad temper - that is not enough. That is not going to have any transforming effect at all. You have then got to supplement your very mild, moderate, meek awareness of the fact that you have a bad temper with certain practical measures. For instance, you have got to decide to avoid certain situations. You have got to decide, for instance, to count ten before you say anything. You've got to decide to practise the metta-bhavana more; etc., etc. So it's only that very intense awareness, which is comparatively rare, that can itself, with no other help, have that transforming effect on unskilful emotion. Otherwise, awareness of the passive type needs the support of additional practices and exercises.

I think quite a lot of people are content just complacently to acknowledge this or that unskilful aspect of themselves, and hope that that will do the trick, but actually it won't. That is not a transforming awareness; it is not intense enough, not powerful enough.

One can experience this within oneself. Sometimes you do realize or become aware so powerfully that you have done something unskilful that the awareness has a very definite effect [38] on your actual behaviour, and it is very difficult for you after that to repeat that unskilful action or that unskilful behaviour. That is the sort of awareness that is really needed, that transforming awareness as I have called it; but a merely reflecting or passive awareness is not enough, so it needs to be supplemented by additional exercises and practices.

Padmavajra: I've got a related question. In self-consciousness - awareness - is there some degree of transcendence of the immediate situation, both as it were temporally and spatially?

S: I think there is, and I think there always is; because to the extent that you can think of yourself - which implies self-consciousness - you can think of yourself as removed from the

present situation. You can think of yourself as doing this or that tomorrow, or as having done this or that yesterday, or you can think of yourself as being in a different part of the world, in a different country; even on a different plane. You can even day-dream that you have become a Bodhisattva and that you are on the threshold of Nirvana. So self-consciousness, by its very nature, involves the ability in imagination to transcend the existing situation, the existing set of circumstances, the existing space, the existing time, and so on; even your present personality. This is one reason why it is such a double-edged weapon, because you can indulge in Walter Mitty-like day-dreams, or you can formulate Bodhisattva vows!

Padmavajra(?): Or you could think [out] the consequences of your present actions.

S: Yes, whether skilful or unskilful.

Abhaya: Buddhadasa has a question on awareness of the body.

Buddhadasa: Yes, Bhante, there are three questions in one here. Arising out of the discussion on awareness of the body, do you think that sufficient emphasis has been given to physical and bodily awareness in the Movement generally?

S: Are you thinking of, say, the needs of the body by way of exercise, care, health and so on, or are you thinking in terms of actual awareness in day-to-day situations of your bodily movements, behaviour and so on?

Buddhadasa: I am thinking more in terms of health and care.

S: There has been some change in this respect in the Movement at large - in England, at least - over the last two or three years, I would say. I think people have become more aware of the need for exercise. People have taken up things like running, weight training, body building. But there is probably still room for improvement. I know Dharmadhara has been looking into matters of, say, community hygiene and so on. I think people are still not nearly mindful enough about such things.

[39]

Buddhadasa: And a specific question: do you think meditation leaders could pay more attention to correcting meditation posture? How far should they go in this?

S: I have been talking about this recently with the Yoga teachers. I had a talk with Surata about it on a recent retreat, because I had noticed that not enough attention was being paid to posture. I remember, in the very early days of the Movement, when I was taking meditation classes, I always paid attention to this. I came to understand that it had been rather neglected in recent years, so I had quite a talk with Surata about that, and I asked him specifically, on that retreat and on other occasions, to take the initiative and actually go around at the beginning of meditation sessions and correct people's postures, which he started doing.

I also had a similar talk with Theresa Fisher, who takes a lot of Yoga classes round the LBC, and asked her to correct postures wherever she could do that. I certainly think that there is room for a lot of improvement here, and this has been rather neglected in recent years. I noticed when I saw the video of the men's event in the shrine room quite a few people seemed to be sitting not particularly well. So, yes, I think it's easier for Yoga teachers or ex-Yoga

teachers to do this, because they understand the mechanics of the business, so to speak, a little better. So if you are a Yoga teacher or ex-Yoga teacher, and if you take or lead meditation, or if you just happen to see people sitting with a not very good posture when meditating, just help them; just correct them. I am going to talk with Kamalasila about this, a propos Vajraloka; I'll ask him. I think he used to teach Yoga, didn't he?

Buddhadasa: Yes.

S: He may well be doing it, for all I know, but I am going to talk with him anyway.

Dharmapriya: How drastic, in a sense, should the corrections be? You say 'at the beginning of a session'; do you suggest that Surata go around after people have started to meditate, even?

S: No; for instance, when I used to take beginners' classes - especially I remember this at Archway - as part of the instruction I used to say a few words about posture. I used to demonstrate postures, and I used to just check people before they started, to get them sitting properly, after I had explained the technique - the different stages of mindfulness of breathing. Once I had them sitting properly, I then used to ask them to actually start doing the meditation. That was my usual procedure. So I think some words of advice about posture could well be incorporated in one's introductory remarks. And whoever is leading meditation should himself be very careful to see that he - or she; women are not exempted! - is sitting properly.

[40]

People seem very [attached ?] to their cushion! In India I never had a cushion; in India people don't use cushions. But they don't seem so particular, in some cases, about their posture, how they sit on the cushion. Surata seemed very willing to take this little extra trouble, and so did Theresa, so I hope others will too.

Buddhadasa: Under the same general heading of awareness of body, I have an appended question here from Donald Hewitt: also, do you think more emphasis could be given to the mindfulness of breathing practice by Order Members who may be concentrating exclusively on their visualization practice?

S: When you say emphasis, you mean as regards their own personal practice?

Buddhadasa: Yes, because it is directly related to the awareness of the body.

S: People tell me it's a question of time. They say they would like to do the mindfulness and the metta and their visualization practice, but there just isn't time. What has occurred to me is that we might have, say, meditation retreats which were dedicated more to mindfulness, especially mindfulness of breathing and mindfulness of the body. I have been thinking recently, these last few months, that there is not enough emphasis within the Order on mindfulness of bodily movements. I think I touched on this yesterday, didn't I? Or maybe it was when I was talking with somebody. For instance, people have a session of meditation in the shrine room, either on retreat or in the course of their community day, but as soon as they come out of the shrine room they seem to lose their mindfulness; they behave in a very scattered way. I think it is important that one makes a definite, deliberate effort to maintain mindfulness throughout the day, whatever one is doing. One should cook mindfully, lay the

table mindfully, wash up mindfully - if people washed up mindfully there wouldn't be so many breakages - shave mindfully [or?] you cut yourself. If you work in the garden, work mindfully. I think there is an enormous field for practice here, which people often neglect. Everything that you do with your physical body is potentially an exercise in mindfulness. When you get up in the morning, you can get up mindfully. When you sit down in a chair, you can sit down mindfully.

So I think there needs to be much more emphasis on this aspect of, well, the spiritual life, so to speak, within the Movement.

Sudhana (?): Do you think people move too quickly to be mindful, in your observations? In London, we tend to rush about and try to get...

S: I don't think that awareness is incompatible with swift movement, but I think that, in the case of quite a lot of people, their quickness or speediness is an expression of [41] their unmindfulness, not of the need to do something quickly or speedily. So I think, for the majority of people, they need to slow down a bit so that they can then be rather more mindful. If only they would make an effort to be mindful, they will find that it has a tendency to slow them down somewhat, which is probably a good thing.

Susiddhi: The aim is to have a complete continuity of mindfulness, from waking up in the morning to going to sleep at night?

S: Yes, throughout your practice; especially if your practice is of mindfulness of breathing. You don't just throw the mindfulness aside as soon as you step outside the shrine room door. I am sometimes quite surprised by the extent of the unmindfulness, the unmindful behaviour of people in communities, in such things as banging doors, and wiping the basin in the bathroom after they have used it, and things of that sort. These are all just everyday expressions of mindfulness, such as one would expect from any civilized person, not to speak of a Buddhist - and not to speak of an Order Member!

I think that what sometimes happens is that people tend to over value spontaneity. They rather like the idea of spontaneity - perhaps quite rightly - but I think sometimes they go to extremes in that respect, and in their eagerness to cultivate spontaneity they tend to forget the importance of mindfulness and awareness. In talking with some of the women, I know they are very fond - probably this applies to the men, too, *pari passu*, *mutatis mutandis*, of this image of the naked dakini flying through the air with her hair streaming out behind her; they rather like to think of themselves in those terms. But it isn't very conducive to awareness of mindfulness! So one needs that emphasis too. Perhaps men tend to think of themselves as Superman, rocketing about the universe! But one is so concerned to be lively and spontaneous and free and all the rest of it that one forgets that awareness or mindfulness is also necessary.

Susiddhi: The trouble with mindfulness is that it leaves you so many decisions. It is such a responsibility. Say, in your community, if you notice things which need doing, you've got to make the decision either to do it or not to do it.

S: In some ways I think awareness relieves you of decisions, because you should try to be just aware of things that you very often bother about or worry about.

\_\_\_ : How do you mean? I don't quite understand,

S: Well, awareness is in a way non-reactive. Supposing you're just aware, 'It's raining.' You're not thinking, 'Oh, what a pity, it's raining. Shall I go out or shall I not go out? Shall I risk getting wet, or would I get wet if I went out?' There is just no question; it's raining. Just be aware of the fact that it's raining.

[42]

But it's true: if you are aware of your surroundings, you may be aware that there are a lot of things to be done. But then you should even take that calmly and in a sensible way, realizing you can't do everything all at once, and just say, 'There are certain things I can do, there are certain things I can't do. There are certain things I shall have to bring to the attention of the community; certain things that perhaps aren't worth bothering about within the present context; certain things I will do tomorrow, or the day after, or next week.'

Donald Hewitt: It's clear that we should, hopefully - Order Members - be in a position to work on our mindfulness and not be concerned

about a pseudo-spontaneity ...

S: Or a pseudo-awareness, either, for that matter.

Donald Hewitt (pause): Ah! (Laughter.)

S: Well, you can go to extremes in both respects, can't you? You can be sort of pseudo-aware or over-mindful. You can become a bit rigid, a bit stiff.

Donald Hewitt: Perhaps that is what I was leading into, because we have quite a few beginners coming to our classes especially, who have done vipassana, or who have just even read about Buddhism, and they are so concerned about trying to be mindful; and it is almost as if they need to be spontaneous, even if it means they have got to be pseudo-spontaneous. It is a question of when one has to draw the line and suggest to them to work on their mindfulness rather (...) spontaneity.

S: Well, most of the people within the FWBO in England have had more than two years' spontaneity! I am thinking mainly of them. The Indians also are pretty spontaneous. They need more mindfulness, more awareness.

Kulamitra: There's a question on the conflict between developing the ability to just look and having a busy life at the Centre, I think this is very much associated, actually. Is there a conflict between developing the ability to just look at things, as you describe in the lecture, and leading a busy life as an Order Member around a public centre? If so, does this matter in one's spiritual development?

S: I think if you are to just look, it takes time. Well, one doesn't always require very much time, because, say, even around the LBC, one might have one's walk in the park, with or without attendant Mitra (laughter), and one can always be aware of the trees and the flowers; one isn't always eagerly talking with that particular person, whoever it is. I think one can have one's moments of just looking, even in [43] the course of the busiest life: One doesn't

necessarily have to look at trees and flowers, though that is rather pleasant; one can just look at the wall opposite, or the demolition work that is in progress outside: It is to be aware of one's surroundings. It's an aspect of awareness of things, isn't it? - awareness of (...) in the widest sense; even awareness of other people, in the sense of awareness of their bodily presence; awareness of what they're wearing, whether they've shaved that morning, whether they've combed their hair, whether they've washed, whether they've left some jam around their mouth. There's always scope for awareness: whether the surface of your desk is dusty, whether a picture on the wall is askew: So long as your eyes are open, you can practise just looking: You can just take a few minutes off from the furious race of thoughts and the frantic planning.

Maybe - I have suggested this before - just for a few minutes, in between different kinds of work, you can just pause, even for two or three minutes. It has a quite beneficial effect. For instance, supposing you've written something and you are going to type it. Well, don't jump up and start typing it as soon as you've written it. Just pause. Just sit for a couple of minutes, just do nothing, think nothing, have a complete break just for two or three minutes, and then start on your typing. And as soon as the typing is finished, don't jump straight up and put a stamp on it and dash straight to the post office, but again pause, give yourself a break for a minute or two - even one minute is enough - and then carry on with the particular action; so that you don't remain too long divorced from that state of more, let's say, pure awareness.

Kulamitra: Presumably, if you pause like that as frequently as you've just described, it would have an effect on that continuity of

mindfulness through the day.

S: Oh, yes: and also you'd sort of refresh yourself. Also you'd pull yourself up, you'd prevent yourself from being too carried away by your own thoughts, prevent yourself from worrying, even, or becoming too hectic mentally.

Abhaya: The next question is from Mahamati, on the criteria we could use for advising people on seeking professional help.

Mahamati: This question, Bhante, arises out of your comment towards the end of the lecture, that in certain cases people should seek professional help in order to overcome their (inertia). It's also in my mind because of a situation involving someone with apparently serious psychological difficulties who has been attending the LBC. The question is in three parts. Shall I go through all three first of all?

S: Yes.

Mahamati: Firstly, I wondered what sort of professional help you had in mind. Secondly, can you give some guidance as [44] to what criteria we can use in deciding whether to encourage someone to seek professional help? And thirdly, can you envisage a situation where one might have to ask someone who wanted to attend a centre to stay away in the interests of other people coming along, for example if they were very demanding of attention?

S: The first two questions more or less hang together. They have got more or less the same answer, an answer which perhaps couldn't have been given, really, at the time that I gave this

lecture. I think - well, let me go off on a slightly different tack - we now have within the Order several people who are in a position to give professional help of a certain kind, so I think we can very freely avail ourselves of their services where it seems to be necessary. Before, there was always a bit of a question mark about referring people for professional help, because the professional help was available only outside the Movement, only outside the Order. So if you referred people for professional help, say, to a psychiatrist outside the Movement or a psychotherapist outside the Movement, all sorts of other factors might come into the situation that one wouldn't regard as altogether helpful or skilful or desirable. But now the position is rather different, because we do have within the Movement some people with these sort of professional qualifications, so recently I myself have suggested that people see certain of these Order Members.

There was, for instance, a case of a woman, a Mitra, who wanted to take up the prostration practice; at the same time, she told me she had a bad back. So I wasn't happy about her taking up the prostration practice unless I was sure that it wasn't going to do her back any further harm. So I suggested that she contacted Dharmadhara in the (capacity of) an Order Member and a doctor; so he actually examined her back, and he as it were certified that doing the prostration practice - which he, of course, knew anyway, having done it himself - would not in fact do her back any harm. So I was then quite happy to tell her that she could go ahead and do the prostration practice.

In the case of another woman Mitra, she was thought by some of the women Order Members, whom she knew, to be in need of professional help. She said that she didn't think she was in need of professional help. So I suggested that in her case she went and saw (Advayacitta). She was quite happy to go and see him, and they had quite a useful talk, apparently, and he said that he didn't think she needed professional help. So that settled the matter. So it's all settled, you see, within the Movement, within the same sort of spiritual framework, the same sort of spiritual contact. So I think that now that we have people of this sort within the Movement, even within

the Order, who are professionally qualified, we can refer doubtful cases to them much more freely and much more easily. Because, in the case of this woman who after all didn't need professional help - well, she had a good talk with an Order Member, which she found quite worthwhile. Do you [45] see what I mean? It wasn't going to him merely for some kind of professional help; there was another dimension to it.

So I think we can certainly very easily refer people in this way to Order Members who have professional qualifications... Similarly, I have referred people to (Mamaki? ), who virtually (is not), you know, very regularly in touch with the rest of the Order and is after all an Order Member still, keeps up her meditation practice and so on, and practises as a Jungian analyst. So I think that deals with the first two questions.

The third one - how did that go? Ah yes, whether one should ever ask disturbing people not to attend. I think sometimes one might have to, in the interests of everybody else; because such people can wreck a class, and if they do that too often, people just stop coming to that class. But I think one has to be very careful how one does this, and try - if one feels able to take it upon oneself - to give them some individual attention outside the class situation, not simply sort of cast them out. You would probably have to be very tactful, because the mere fact that they are disturbed and perhaps demanding attention means they are going to be difficult to



handle anyway. So you might suggest, 'The class isn't really suitable for you; you need some more personal contact, and I'll be quite happy to give you that. Don't bother to come to the class if you don't really need it' - something like that. I know it's a quite difficult situation that class leaders sometimes do find themselves in. You don't want to ask someone not to come; in some ways that is the last thing you want to do. But you can see that the whole class is being disturbed by that person, and it isn't fair on them. Sometimes you have to estimate the degree of disturbance. Sometimes the person just needs a good talking to: 'Look, there are other people in the class. Don't try to monopolize all the class leader's attention. Give other people a chance to ask questions. Don't try to take the centre of the stage.' Or even ask them: 'Do you realize that you are doing this?', and sometimes people can respond to that if they are not too disturbed. If they are very disturbed, you may just have to ask them not to come; that is, I think, as an extreme measure, justified.

But do we nowadays find many people coming along - or do we have many people within the Movement, Mitras or Friends who need some kind of professional help, or - ?

Kulamitra: Not many. In this particular case that Mahamati mentioned, it is actually the result of doing a prison visit, and not actually realizing before doing the visit the nature of the offenders in that prison, who were actually offenders to do with violence, even sexual offences and things like that. I think it is something to bear in mind, actually, because we've talked about trying to do more prison visits.

[46]

(break in recording) Kulamitra (cont.):...where else can they turn to?

S: Indeed, yes.

Kulamitra: So, in a way, that...

S:...show them that you're a sympathetic sort of person, yes.

Kulamitra. So I think that's how this particular thing occurred. It's unusual that we come across such an extreme case these days at the LBC.

Suvajra: I find at the Centre that there is always at least one person in every beginners' class, sometimes more, that is disturbed, sometimes badly so. We always get them. It is not unusual at all.

S: This is Manchester speaking.

Suvajra: This is Manchester speaking, yes. Sometimes one has been (...) they've almost started to congregate; we've had three, four and five at a class. That makes it very difficult.

S: Why do you think that happens in Manchester in particular? Does there appear to be any reason, any explanation?

Suvajra: I was wondering if doctors actually are recommending people to take up meditation as a therapy.

Voice: They do.

S: They do, apparently.

Suvajra: This is why they get people coming off alcohol, etc.

S: I think we are likely to be getting at least a few such people; not necessarily very disturbed, but not perhaps in a very happy state of mind.

\_\_\_ Do you think those are sort of phases of the development of a Centre, because at Archway we used to get a lot of disturbed people. I wondered if at a particular phase Buddhism and things alternative are very much fringe, and people who are a bit disturbed are quite attracted to them, but a bit later on they become rather more mainstream.

S: I think probably a big Centre is less likely to be troubled because after all it is big and it's therefore organized, therefore things are under control; therefore you can't crash in, as it were, you can't gatecrash things so easily or disturb things so easily. You feel that you're not quite strong [47] enough. If you come along to a small Centre, with one Order Member and four or five other people around, you can sort of take over more easily or dominate the situation more easily. Perhaps it is something to do with the size of the Centre.

Buddhadasa: I have had a similar experience ... in New Zealand, where you have an ongoing difficulty with one particular person. But what I'm concerned about is the observation that there is, I think, a too willing tendency to brand people as either alienated or even - what is probably worse - schizophrenic, without having a real understanding of what schizophrenia is as an illness. Quite recently I heard about this in Helsinki - 'Somebody coming along to the class, a Friend, is schizophrenic.' I didn't see any good evidence of that.

S: You see, that is interpretation. The fact of the matter may be that that person acts in a disruptive way. Whether they are genuinely schizophrenic or whether they are just doing it out of sheer cussedness, you are not concerned. You are only concerned with the fact that they are behaving disruptively, and if that passes beyond a certain point you've just got to stop it, which means that you've got to ask them perhaps to cease to come.

Buddhadasa: Apparently this particular person wasn't behaving disruptively; she just ( ).

S: Well, if a person isn't behaving disruptively, that is all you can ask of them to begin with. They may or may not be schizophrenic; you can't really, I think, unless you're very experienced, come to any sort of conclusion at that point. I think one should hesitate

very much before arriving at definite conclusions of that sort, especially as the whole topic of schizophrenia seems to be such a controversial one. It isn't, I gather, something that you definitely either have or have not, like a cold or the 'flu. I think sometimes even there is some room for doubt or ambiguity!

Suvajra: What do you actually feel about teaching people meditation who are disturbed, especially with this...

S: Ah, you see, there one is using the word ambiguously. People can objectively disturb a

situation without themselves, in a sense, being disturbed. They can be disturbed and sort of peacefully sit in a corner and not bother anybody.

Suvajra: I mean the second sort.

S: How will one know that they are disturbed, or how will it manifest? I mean everyone is disturbed to a degree [hearty laughter] - I mean everyone that comes along; they are disturbed to a degree. There's a measure of alienation, emotional negativity, even strange little physical behaviours; you've got to work with the material that you get, and in some cases you may find after some time that certain material is, so to speak, intractable. Then you realize your limitations and you sort of give up. But you certainly mustn't jump to [48] conclusions about people.

In beginners' meditation classes the meditation practice is very mild: just for short periods a bit of mindfulness of breathing, a bit of metta-bhavana. It is very doubtful whether that can really harm anybody. It is not as though you were taking them away on retreat and making them sit and try to meditate for hours and hours on end in unfamiliar surroundings; it's not like that at all.

Perhaps some of these 'disturbed' people need initially a bit of human contact and so on. Very often they get over it quite quickly. But if you're doubtful about some person, say, after a few months, and you're very doubtful whether they are disturbed or not, or whether meditation is doing them good or doing them harm, well, it is useful then to be able to refer that person in a tactful way to an Order Member with professional experience and professional qualifications in this sort of field. Not that you set up the situation in a very crude way, but you can do it tactfully and, for instance, say to that Order Member with those qualifications, 'Would you mind coming along this evening and just having a chat with that person, and let me know what you think, or just observe that person's behaviour?'

Mahamati: With this particular person that we visited in prison, the starting point of his interest was Buddhism. It seems that his interest was more than simply to have contact. I wonder whether it is possible for you to say whether you feel that an Order Member has some sort of responsibility if somebody like that is showing what appears to be a very sincere interest in Buddhism, and he says that it is as it were making a significant effect on his life, but at the same time he does seem to have severe psychological problems. What I'm asking is: does an absolute responsibility - is it possible to make a priority and say one shouldn't make too much effort with somebody like that, but on the other hand one could appear to be a sort of lifeline to him?

S: I think as a general principle one must see through any responsibilities that one takes on. I think when you go prison visiting and establish contact with prisoners, you must accept that they are going to regard you as a bit of a lifeline, especially when they come out, and you can't really repudiate that responsibility. Perhaps you can limit it, according to your other responsibilities and so on, but you can't repudiate it altogether. If someone wanted to see you every day for two or three hours, that would not be reasonable. You'd be justified in explaining that that was not possible because of your other duties, but that you were certainly willing to meet and talk with that person, say, once a week. Maybe you could have lunch with them once a week or something like that. Also, you can introduce them to other people with perhaps more time, or suggest that they go along to a situation where they will meet a number

of other people, so that it isn't all put on to you. You can try in that way to spread [49] the load - even though they do perhaps have a special feeling for you, just because they know you and don't know others.

I'm afraid most Order Members, in the course of their careers as Order Members, are going to find that quite a few lame dogs of one sort or other attach themselves to them. They are going to be always having to help them over all sorts of stiles. But sometimes, you know, even the lame dogs turn out very well.

How are we going?

Abhaya: We've got two more questions.

S: Oh, we're doing quite well this evening.

Abhaya: I have a question about the section on psychological conditions, developing awareness of one's psychological condition. I just wondered if you'd noticed, over the years, any prevailing psychological conditioning, apart from the religious, among people in the Movement, that you think...

S: Well, there are one or two things that spring to mind - one or two of them a bit ridiculous, in a way. One of them is what I call the English sense of humour. I suppose one's sense of humour is a conditioned thing, and I have sometimes seen it creeping into the Newsletter, usually via Nagabodhi, and I constantly draw his attention to this because I regard it as a form of conditioning. One isn't aware of the fact that, say, to someone not brought up in a middle-class family in south-east England, that isn't funny. Do you see what I mean? One's sense of humour is conditioned, and you must realize this, and if you're writing for the Newsletter - which is, so we hope, going all over the world - you won't include these strange sort of English jokes, without even being aware of it in some cases.

For instance, there was an example - where was that? - just recently. Yes, in the introduction, you know, the preface, to a little publication of mine; I think it was a seminar or something like that; and Nagabodhi wrote - writing something about the cover - that Dhammarati helped with the design, though probably he would not wish to admit it! You know, ha ha, that's a joke! But the reader in India, or Iceland, or Finland, will think, 'How strange! How come that he had something to do with the this cover and wasn't willing to admit it?' (Laughter throughout this.) It would strike them as quite odd, quite bizarre. Do you see what I mean? So this English humour creeps in, and it is a form of conditioning, I am sure. It must be, because it is so limited and so restricted. I don't know whether it's noticed in places like Glasgow, that the Newsletter is sometimes peppered with items of English humour, which may not be at all funny north of the Border. in the same way, north of the Border they may have their little jokes that don't sound at all funny south of the Border.

[50]

Susiddhi: That's true.

S: But this is a form of conditioning that I have sometimes been quite painfully aware of, reading the Newsletter. This is just southern English, even middle-class, conditioning; perhaps, in some cases, a person with a working-class background wouldn't find a particular

little sort of joke - sometimes it's not as obvious as a joke, it's more subtle than that - wouldn't find it funny. But this is something I've certainly noticed. I'm sure there are lots

of other things; because almost everything, one might say, - er ...

Well, one sort of conditioning: I was trying mentally to compare people's behaviour in India and people's behaviour in England, because I almost commute between the two countries and the two cultures. But certainly one sees a lot of conditioning in the area of relations between men. You know, in our culture, men are conditioned not to show affection to one another. This sort of negative conditioning is certainly not present in India. Within the FWBO, things have relaxed considerably in this respect over the years, and that's a very good thing. People do now venture to give one another hugs and so on. But they've still a long way to go, because sometimes the hug is a bit self-conscious and sometimes more out of duty than anything else, but you know what I mean. An effort has been made, and progress has been made in that field, where conditioning is in many cases very strong.

Dharmapriya: Could I add one? It's on the verge of language, but (I would say) forms of middle-class English politeness, even to foreigners who know English - an extreme form such as 'Could you be so kind as to pass me the sugar?' instead of 'Please pass me the sugar', they find humorous - something like that. There are other forms that lead to absolute direct misunderstandings. One German Mitra - or Mitra-to-be, at that point - got a letter saying she'd become a Mitra. It was put in a very polite way, and she read it very literally and took it as a very cold statement that 'There it is, you're going to become a Mitra at last', rather than as a form of congratulations, which it was meant to be. It was a rather stereotyped formula of 'You will be glad to hear', and [they had to] sort out that misunderstanding.

S: I'm not so sure that that is such a clear-cut case, actually. 'You will be glad to hear.' Well, supposing you were to say to somebody: (enthusiastic tone) 'You will be glad to hear you're going to become a Mitra!' Would that be taken as cold and formal?

Dharmapriya: I think the point that the person made about it was that she expected to read something like, 'I am glad to tell you, ' rather than getting it just in a letter form like that.

Susiddhi: There are confusions sometimes with convoluted forms of English. I remember a foreigner telling [51] me once that when they asked someone at a bus stop: 'Is this the correct bus stop to get the bus to so-and-so?' the person at the bus stop said, 'I should have thought so' And the foreigner didn't know what to make of it at all... (Laughter.)

S: Well, that's a polite way of saying, 'You silly so-and so, why don't you look at the board and see?'

Susiddhi: It's still indirect like that.

S: Well, I think in many cultures the indirect is regarded as more polite. But that raises the question, 'What is politeness? What do we mean by politeness?'

Susiddhi: I think up north in Scotland the indirect is regarded as not polite. It's definitely not polite.

S: Again, what is politeness?

\_\_\_ Consideration of the other person.

S: Consideration of the other person, especially consideration of the other person's feelings. Also one must recognize that the different languages have different conventions. If one receives a letter in English, say, from someone in Germany, you make allowances for the fact that it's not their mother tongue. Or if you receive a letter from someone in India written in English, you make similar

allowances. So perhaps if you receive a letter written by someone in a foreign language - I mean, in your language when is a foreign language for them - or if you write in your own language to someone whose language that is not (that sounds a bit Germanic!), you should be aware of that fact. In other words, be aware of the fact that misunderstandings can occur as between people of different languages; because there are certain conventions which don't translate very easily, or are not very understandable. So, for instance, someone writing in English to someone in Germany, if they knew that that sort of indirect speech was considered impolite, wouldn't use it, obviously. But similarly, the person on the receiving end should realize, 'This person, after all, is English, and is writing in accordance with English conventions, and surely they are writing with a positive intent.' Do you see what I mean?

\_\_\_: The genuineness should be there, shouldn't it? The genuine...

S: But then again, that isn't as easy as that, because there are certain conventions, you know, within each language and culture, in respect of the expression of genuineness. So you've got to recognize, when you write to someone not of your language and your culture, that they may not be able to take what you've written in the way that was intended. People on the receiving end have to make similar allowances. I was trying to think of an example from Indian languages, but I wasn't quite able to. There's got to be a certain amount [52] of cross-cultural give and take. For instance, if I'm in Finland, it doesn't bother me that people don't say 'please' and 'thank you', because I know that they don't do that in Finnish. So when they speak to me in English and just say, 'Give me the book,' I don't think that they are being impolite, because I know that they don't speak like that in their own language. But if I didn't know that, I might think that they were being impolite.

(Padmavajra): You get the same in Indian languages: you don't say, 'thank you', do you?

S: No. In fact, it's considered impolite!

Kulamitra: in this case, I think it might have something to do with the letter, and to do with writing, because I think actually this problem can occur between people who speak the same language, and I think you said under other circumstances that sympathy is necessary for communication; that if you don't give someone your sympathy you can't really have a communication. I think sometimes people find it more difficult to give their sympathy to a letter. So they are very touchy about something in a letter which maybe, in a personal communication, they wouldn't be touchy about. I think that happens.

S: Well, as I suggested, in a personal communication you can put (in) the emotion which isn't in the words taken by themselves. But when you write there's only the words. So you in

writing have to be aware of that, and the person receiving the written statement also has to be aware of that, and not expect from that as much as they might have been able to get from the spoken word.

I know Subhuti has written letters from the Order Office, perfectly polite, friendly, nice letters, but sometimes he has had a very negative reaction from people, saying that he was writing in a cold and official way. Sometimes the complaint was so strong that I took the carbon copy of his letter and read it for myself just to see, but no, I didn't find it cold and official at all. Clearly, the person at the receiving end had expected far too much. Or perhaps (?) quite different reasons. One occasion I remember in particular, the complaint was so severe that I thought, 'Good heavens! what on earth has Subhuti been writing?', but actually, when I read it, it was perfectly in order; to me it sounded quite friendly. It was just to the point. It was, after all, a communication of, say, a business nature, and it stuck to the point, but it certainly wasn't

curt or anything like that, much less still unfriendly. But none the less, that's the sort of reaction it provoked. I don't know about my own letters; I haven't had any feedback on them. I tend to be rather to the point and perhaps more businesslike, because I am pressed for time - as Subhuti is, very often. One hasn't got time to waffle on about 'This morning I had a lovely walk' and all that sort of thing.

[53]

Kulamitra; But that's where people don't seem very sympathetic; whereas maybe if they met you and they could see that you were pressed for time, they wouldn't worry. But that's why I say sometimes it seems like people won't give their sympathy so much to the written form as they would to you personally, which I agree is very unfortunate; but that seems to be ...

S: But certainly, within the Movement people should understand that. In my case, people should understand I am busy, and in Subhuti's case understand that he is busy. With people way outside the Movement, yes, we always take a little extra care, and spend even a little extra time.

Any other forms of conditioning, since we're on the subject?

Buddhadasa: Class conditioning, which is noticeable if you do go to another country like New Zealand or Australia, where it doesn't exist. When you come back to England it really is quite...

S: But do you think class conditioning doesn't exist, though, or that simply they've just got one class?

Buddhadasa: Er... (pause.)

S: Or is that rather too big a subject?

Buddhadasa: It is, in a way, quite a big subject, but they do have variations within society that modify people's behaviour. But it certainly isn't anything like the insidious and debilitating class system that you find here in England.

Abhaya: Is the class system that debilitating in this country?

Susiddhi: Yes!

Voices: Yes. Yes, I think it is.

S: What does one mean by debilitating in this context? Debilitating means weakening. You could say it weakens the social fabric, makes for divisiveness and so on.

Kulamitra: Shall I give an example?

S: Mm, do.

Kulamitra: OK, this is a current example. Vajracitta and Danavira, who work at the LBC, both come from a working-class background. They both seem to fall, very, very easily into seeing other Order Members, who work in an office in a very particular way which is debilitating to them, in that they are not able to take the initiative fully with those people; they are not able to express what they feel fully. You know, I mean it can be broken down, but the tendency, [54] the conditioned tendency, is very strong, and as soon as you turn your back it seems it's quite easy for that to be set up. And I think it is well described as debilitating, because it takes energy from a situation.

S: So where does it come from? Who has conditioned them in that way? Their parents?

Kulamitra: That I don't know. It does seem to be associated with a generalized working-class attitude to a generalized middle-class attitude.

S: Is it that the middle-class man is usually in charge, he's usually the boss?

Kulamitra: Yes.

S: And, if you work In an office, you're almost automatically middle-class?

Voices: Mm.

S: Well, that is not, of course, strictly true, because there are lots of people working in offices very productively with working-class backgrounds. So if you work with your hands, you're working-class; if you work, say, not with your hands, you're middle-class? This is how people think. But what do people do to get themselves out of that? Because often I think what happens is that they blame people of some other class instead of trying to deal with their own class conditioning. They think as though their class conditioning is the normal human conditioning; others are class-conditioned, but not themselves. They represent the norm. People of almost every class tend to see things in this way - see the others as deviants or as conditioned, not themselves. Very often working-class people, and also some middle-class sympathisers with working-class people, regard the working-class man, for instance, as representing pure unadorned human nature, in all its glorious crudity; which is far from being the truth, I think. He has just been conditioned in another way. [It's] not that he's the raw material which hasn't been conditioned, but he sometimes thinks of himself in that way.



I agree, class conditioning in England is very, very strong - in Britain it is very strong - and class conditioning is very strong in India, in much the same way.

\_\_\_: But it's even still strong enough to influence, at least unconsciously, the relationship between Order Members.

S: I would suggest you're not necessarily conditioned, in a class sense, because you behave or speak in a certain way. For instance, you may speak grammatically, regardless of your social origins, because you try to speak grammatically so as to convey your meaning more clearly; so you cannot for [55] that reason be automatically labelled middle-class, or described as having a middle-class conditioning. This would not be true at all in such a case. Or if you go to concerts of classical music, you're automatically middle-class; but that is certainly not the case. But these stereotypes do exist, or are applied to people, quite unjustly, quite wrongly.

Susiddhi: Isn't what is actually debilitating suspicion?

S: How does suspicion arise in this particular situation?

Susiddhi: Well, generally speaking, a working-class person would be suspicious of middle-class people.

S: Well, I think only if they are in a particular position in relation to him. If he sees them as his employers, or as his bosses, he tends to regard them as out to exploit him or do him down, or as looking down upon him, and therefore he's suspicious. He's always looking out for some evidence of that.

Sudhana(?): I do think actually there is a difference in the education of somebody who has come from a wealthy middle-class background, who has had perhaps a public school upbringing and been encouraged to go to university. I think there is a difference to

people who have just been left to grow up as best they can on their own...

S: But sometimes they have more self-confidence.

Sudhana: Mm, in a streetwise sense.

S: Well, no, I think sometimes even in a healthy human sense. And also, nowadays quite a few people from working-class families or backgrounds go to university, and they do very well and get very good jobs afterwards, have very successful careers.

\_\_\_: But that doesn't seem to be sufficient to counteract the prestige that is associated with class identity through birth. That's the debilitating thing, if you're of a (...?...?) nature.

S: You mean you have a permanent handicap, or what is regarded as a permanent handicap by at least some people? Just as the upper-caste Hindus regard the ex-Untouchables. I've heard them say, 'I don't care what you call yourself; you can call yourself a Mahar, you can call yourself a Buddhist, but so far as we are concerned you're just an Untouchable.' I've heard this said by orthodox Hindus.

Kulamitra: It seems to me that it's actually the identification that is debilitating, because - you know - you can keep your accent; why should one try and get rid of those things? But it doesn't mean that you are a representative of that particular class. And as an Order Member you should definitely not be seen in that way. So, if this is a problem which [56] affects the Order, it must be, I would have thought, because people are identified with that particular background, as opposed to identifying with their common Going for Refuge.

S: Yes, they are thinking, say, of themselves or thinking of others, as members of a particular class rather than as individuals.

Voices: Mm!

S: This is what it amounts to, exactly as in India.

Susiddhi: It comes down to the whole thing about projection, Bhante, doesn't it, inasmuch as there is a perceivable difference? (...?... ) leave it at that, (...?... ) go further than that, because of the perceived difference, they project things on to it. You don't actually leave it at the end and say, 'Oh yes, this person's different from what I am', they actually put other things on because of it.

S: If you see a fellow Order Member primarily as a member of a particular class, you are not really seeing him as an Order Member at all. You can't really have a spiritual relation with him. This applies not only to class but to nationality, and to culture, and to language; it applies to all those things. But perhaps in Britain we come up against this question of class more than we come up against anything else of that kind.

I think this is very insidious. It is very unfortunate, I think, if you can't see another Order Member just as a fellow Order Member - if he looms large in your eyes as the representative of another class or THE other class. I think it is very unfortunate indeed, and that really cripples the Order.

Kulamitra: I think in this sort of case, it's not a conscious thing. I don't think it's that people necessarily try and justify things - you know, say, 'This is the way things are'. It's just - you can see certain ways that people operate, which is still in line with those views, even though they no longer hold those views, rationally. A bit like what you said about ex-Christians who haven't

really got rid of their Christian conditioning. People may not think of themselves consciously as any longer belonging to that class, but they haven't actually got rid of that particular conditioning.

S: So what is one to do about this? Because it is quite a serious matter, really. Also, if it spills over into things like regionalism. I remember, in the very early days of the FWBO, and perhaps even before the FWBO was started, there were some Buddhists - there were one or two Order Members in the early days of the FWBO - scattered around the country outside London, who were very, very anti-London, with very strong feelings of inferiority. I can think of one particular person in Birmingham, who was convinced that London Buddhists [57] looked down upon the Buddhists of Birmingham, that the Buddhists of Birmingham would have to show the Buddhists of London, and so on. It was very strong in the case of this

particular person. (Pause.)

Abhaya: So what is one to do about it?

S: Obviously, one has to make a conscious effort to overcome one's own particular class conditioning - since that's what we're talking about - and not see Order Members, especially, or anybody as far as you can but least of all Order Members, in terms of class, make a conscious effort not to assign them to a particular class per se, just because they speak or dress in a particular way or have certain personal habits.

I do know that at times some Order Members have definitely identified themselves with a particular class, or thought of themselves as belonging to a particular class, and have made that the basis of all sorts of attitudes and resentments. I have known this to happen in the study groups that I have led.

Susiddhi: Bhante, it's as though we've got to wait for them. You know, if you're within the regional (...?... ) and when they ask you (...?... ) start coming from there, then you can actually go up and correct them on the Dharma in a helpful way, and point out what they are actually doing. But until they actually start doing that, you actually treat them as an individual, (...?... ) they're not like what our projection on to them was at all. Perhaps that's just between Centres: you hear that somebody from us (...?... ) you hear that a certain Centre's been different from your own Centre. ( ? ) make assumptions about the person. If one stands back and waits to find out what the person is...

S: You should always regard the individual as an individual, especially an Order Member, and not the representative of a particular group, whether class or anything else. I have often given the example of when I was in India, being asked, at the time of the Suez crisis, why 'I' had, you know, this, that and the other. I, of course, knew nothing about it; but I was asked why 'I' had done that particular thing, why 'I' had invaded Egypt or invaded Suez. (Laughter.) People used almost to stop me in the street and say, 'Why have you invaded Suez?' That was the first I knew about it!

(Sudhana?): You had to make up something quick on the spot.

S: I don't remember what I said. I probably just disclaimed all knowledge or responsibility. But one does that so easily: one loses sight of the fact that an individual is an individual, and treats them just as the representative of a class.

I felt this a bit recently in connection with - you know all this talk that's been going on, in relation to the news, about [58] war guilt in Germany? I really think it is quite unfair to burden the Germans of the younger generation, who were born since the war, with war guilt or with guilt for what happened to the Jews. I think this is really quite unfair in their case. Because one is treating them

not as individuals but as members of a group that is continuing through time; so, in that case, if we are British, we are responsible personally for whatever was done in the name of Britain in India, or we are even responsible for what was done in France during the Middle Ages by British archers. We are responsible for burning Joan of Arc! I don't personally feel responsible for burning Joan of Arc. I refuse to be saddled with the guilt for burning Joan of

Arc. So, in the same way, why should we saddle young Germans with the guilt of the concentration camps? No doubt they are, in a way, closer to that, just because they are German and belong to their country, but they are not personally responsible for that and they cannot be made to feel personally guilty. I certainly regret that the English burned Joan of Arc - if, in fact, it was the English who burned Joan of Arc; the French seem to have had quite a bit to do with it, too, and the church. I regret that Joan of Arc was burned, but I don't feel personally responsible. I refuse to have that responsibility put on to me. You see what I'm getting at?

Dharmapriya: There's the similar problem with the current war guilt thing in Germany. In terms of Joan of Arc, modern English people do not want to be saddled with the guilt, but at the same time you get a reaction - it came out in 'The Sun': 'We are proud that we won the battle of Agincourt.'

S: Well, I didn't. We might have done, but I didn't, if you see what I mean. That is paradoxical, but it's true. We - that is the English, and to the extent that one belongs to the group, yes, one belongs to that particular group so yes, WE won the battle of Agincourt; but I [stressed] didn't win it. So a young German could similarly say, 'Yes, we are responsible for the work of the Jews, but I am not responsible. So I acknowledge the guilt of my country, considered as a continuing entity; I acknowledge perhaps that I have a very small share, not in the actual responsibility but in the consequences of that, inasmuch as I am a member of that country; but I have no personal guilt, no individual guilt.' So this whole question of treating people as members of groups and not as individuals shows itself in all sorts of ways, and one should always give somebody the benefit of the doubt, and treat him as an individual until he proves that he is otherwise by his behaviour.

But one can, quite consciously, continue in a certain mode of behaviour because that is, apparently, the best and most appropriate, despite the fact that it was what you were originally conditioned into. You are behaving in the same way, not because of conditioning but of conscious choice. For instance, the fact that you eat with a knife and fork, or [59]perhaps as a child you were conditioned to eating with a knife and fork, but you continue to do that not because of childhood conditioning but because it seems the most convenient and clean way of eating. In the same way, you may retain your original accent, or certain personal habits.

I think, if there is this sort of feeling, even within the Order, about Order Members belonging to different classes this really must be resolved, this really must be tackled, because it strikes at the very basis of the Order.

I must say that I don't feel very patient or very sympathetic when I hear, as I sometimes do, people - perhaps more outside the Order than in it - say, 'I'm only a poor working-class boy. What can you expect? I haven't had the advantages that all these middle-class chaps have had. I'm not very educated. I never had the chance to go to university,' etc. etc. Why should one identify oneself in that way? You didn't go to university, full stop.

[60]

(break in recording)

S(cont.): ...as deficiencies and failures: 'Oh, if I'd only gone to university like some lucky people, I would have done so well; I could have done this, that and the other.' So you are

justified in

having a grievance against society because society has held you back. I must say I don't feel very sympathetic towards that sort of attitude.

Kulamitra: Bhante, could there be anything in this area like blasphemy for an ex-Christian? I'm thinking that there are people who would no longer say all the things that you've just said but who nevertheless are still operating under the influence of that class conditioning. In the case of an ex-Christian, they no longer believe in that, but you said that maybe you do have to tackle things on that non-rational level - in that case, through blasphemy. Could there be something on this one?

S: Yes, I think you could often make jokes about class and laugh people out of it. If there is a particular piece of work to be done, [you could] say, 'Come on, this is a job for you crude working-class types. It's not a proper job for us over-refined middle-class types.' That way, you can turn the whole thing into a joke. If you can laugh at something, you're already starting to become free from that particular kind of conditioning. You can make the joke at your own expense, as well as at the expense of your own alleged class, as well as the alleged class of the other person. Bring it more into the open, not be afraid to refer to it. The ex-Untouchables do sometimes make jokes about untouchability; they joke about it quite openly. I remember once, years ago, when I was living in Kalimpong, there was an ex-Untouchable young man staying with us. A room was to be swept out, and he said, 'Come on, let me do it; after all, I was born to this!' He had distanced himself sufficiently from it to be able to joke about it, which he wouldn't have been able to do if he had not distanced himself from it to some extent. He knew that we didn't treat him as Untouchable in the least, so he could - he didn't feel that he was Untouchable, and therefore could afford to joke about having been born as one, because he didn't really feel that he was one any longer.

Or you can say things like, 'Oops, there I go, dropping my 'H's again!' That is one way of exorcising that sort of feeling - that you joke about it. Not making jokes at the other person's expense; that is another matter. You mustn't do it in that way; at least, start with yourself.

Are there any other kinds of conditionings that need to be dealt with?

Sudhana: Sexual polarization?

S: I think that is another one, too, especially within the Order. Though this is in some ways even more difficult, because it has a biological reinforcement. I think one should try not to think of oneself as exclusively identified with [61] this or the other sex. I think the feminists are very much prone to this: they identify themselves very strongly with the female sex. This is an aspect of feminism that needs to be tackled. Because so long as you think of yourself as a man and nothing but a man, or a woman and nothing but a woman, then to that extent it's impossible for you to be an individual. If you identify so much with being a man that you can't even think of yourself doing something which is usually done by women, you've got a problem; you are not able to function as an individual. Similarly in the case of women.

Just in the same way that, if you see a fellow Order Member as the representative of a class, you can't really relate to him or her as an Order Member, in the same way if you see a fellow Order Member as definitely a man or definitely a woman, and relate to them primarily as

such, you can't relate to them as an Order Member. Of course, the biological polarization is so strong that, until you are very much an individual yourself, you cannot but see a member of the opposite sex, even an Order Member, as a member of the opposite sex, primarily; especially, I think, when you're young. As you get older, I think the polarization slackens, for obvious reasons. I think in relating to fellow Order Members, one has to be very careful that one is not relating to them in terms of class, and not relating to them in terms of sex, because that is a negation of the relationship between Order Members. So, in you find you can't relate to, say, women Order Members as Order Members, because of your youth or the degree to which you are sexually polarized, you just can't see them as anything except women - well, you just have to steer clear of them and hope that things will improve as you become more of an individual and perhaps older.

Padmavajra: So if you relate to a woman Order Member sexually - if you relate to them in those terms, you are not seeing them as an Order Member, you're not seeing them as an individual?

S: No. I don't want to overstate the position. It is, perhaps, theoretically possible even to have a sexual relationship with a woman Order Member, but you still on the whole see her as an Order Member. But I think the chances are, in most cases, that the sexual relationship is far more important and far more to the fore than the spiritual relationship. I therefore think that sexual relationships between male and female Order Members are not really to be encouraged, because they are a negation, really, of what the Order stands for; because it isn't a sort of individual relationship, a relationship between two individuals. I think that is why, even though we have one Order, one has to some extent to have a single Order with two wings, as I've called them; except in the case of those more mature people or older people who are able to relate to members of the opposite sex primarily in spiritual terms, or primarily as individuals. I think that's clear enough, isn't it?

[62]

But, for oneself, try not to think of oneself as definitely male or definitely female in an exclusive sense. If men in general are attacked, don't feel that you are being attacked. If someone says, 'Men are male chauvinist pigs', what is that to you? You don't identify yourself in that way; it doesn't apply to you. There is no need to get all hot under the collar at all.

Anyway, let's go on to the next one, the final question.

Abhaya: Kulamitra has a question about thinking for oneself.

Kulamitra: This is another one of a slightly more personal nature, Bhante. When you were talking in the tape about the difference between just having thoughts flowing through your mind and actually beginning to think for yourself, it just occurred to me that I would like to ask you: when did you start to think for yourself?

S: I think it was quite early on. I haven't really thought about this before, so I'm just thinking back. But I can recollect quite definitely coming to moral judgments when I was - oh, I think five or six: that 'This is not right,' that 'This is not fair' or that 'This is not just,' or that 'That was foolish'. I can remember this quite clearly, certainly by the time I was about five or six. So this is not to do with abstract matters or opinions of my own. Yes, I think I did have opinions, but these were more of the nature of independent moral judgments. I remember my

mother once saying that, when I was very small, I used to rebuke her if she misbehaved!  
(Laughter.)

Susiddhi: Was that earlier than five or six, Bhante?

S: I think, from the way she said it - I got the impression that I'd always been like that. Oh yes, again, I remember at a very early age - no, I don't actually remember it, but I remember my father telling me the story some years later, he was really rather surprised by it - that once I rebuked him for being lazy! He was really quite taken aback, and he used to tell this story to friends: 'What do you think my son said?' So I remember him telling the story. I must have been very, very young then. It sounds as though I was rather a censorious child.

But I remember an Order Member telling me - I won't say who it was - that at the age of about seven or eight he realized that he could fool his parents and that he could tell lies and that they couldn't tell the difference. After that, he felt in control of them!

But independent thought: I think independent thought, in a conscious or philosophical sense, came quite late in my case. I think my personal tendency was always to believe what I was told and to accept what I was told, and to absorb and take it [63] in. I don't think I was in a hurry to come to my personal conclusions - at least, I had no such conscious intention; perhaps sometimes I did think independently, but it was as it were by accident, perhaps, not that I thought in terms of doing that kind of thing. For instance, in connection with Buddhism, I never set out to develop my own interpretation of Buddhism; I just tried to understand Buddhism, and I just tried to expound Buddhism as it was. I had no idea of being original or anything of that sort, though I think perhaps, in retrospect, I have been original in my approach; but it was certainly not because of any conscious intention, or any desire to be original. All I wanted to do was just to hand on the teaching, as it were, exactly as I had received it. That would be the sort of way in which I thought. But I gradually started having my doubts about this particular person or that particular interpretation; one thing didn't quite fit with another thing; and then I started thinking about it; and in this way I slowly developed my own particular way of thinking.

But I think that, in Nietzsche's terms, I made the transition from being the camel to being the lion very slowly. I think my tendency was always to believe and accept rather than to question. I had no particular yen to question; I was quite happy to accept and to believe.

Susiddhi: That's a thing that always puzzled me, Bhante: how you changed your thinking with regard to the rupa dhyanas and the arupa dhyanas.

S: What (thinking)?

Susiddhi: I think what the change was - correctly - you decided that the four arupa dhyanas were transcendental rather than mundane - is that right?

S: It is not quite as definite as that. I sort of wonder about that. This is something I have to follow Up. I wonder about that, yes. Because there are certain inconsistencies in the early Pali texts with regard to this matter. It has never, I think, been properly explained.

Susiddhi: So it's because of those inconsistencies in the Pali texts that you wonder about it,

then?

S: It's usually - well, I have become aware of inconsistencies confined to ( ? ) of them, but then I start wondering and try to develop (some) experience or insight or at least theory of my own to account for them or explain them.

\_\_\_: Can you remember when your awareness of being almost forced to consider these inconsistencies began - you began to realize that that was actually quite substantial thinking on your part? Was there some sort of ...

S: I think I've always gone on happily thinking my own [64] thoughts, and haven't been in a hurry to compare with the thoughts of other people, or to measure how far I'd got in comparison with other people. Perhaps I don't even know that now, fully. I think that often happens, when you're very interested in something: you don't stop to compare how far you've got in comparison with other people. You don't really think in those terms. You might wake up to find, well, yes, you have developed your own point of view, but that was just inch by inch, over the years: not that you were really intending to do any such thing. I think I would regard myself as being by nature conservative, but having been forced by circumstances to be a little bit of a revolutionary; but I think by temperament I am not revolutionary in the least. I may be quite wrong, but anyway that's how it seems.

\_\_\_ That's Allen Ginsberg's conclusion, I'm afraid.

S: Oh, hm!... If there had been a perfectly good spiritual community, a perfectly good Sangha in the Buddhist world, and if the Buddhist tradition had been flourishing, I would have felt no urge to set up something of my own; I would much rather not have done that. But I was forced by the existing situation into striking out in the way that I did, with the FWBO, not because I had the ambition to set up something of my own. I would much rather not have done that, but I had to do that. Because, for one thing, it prevents one from getting on with certain other things, and it is such a very big responsibility, so very difficult.

Padmavajra: What other things? (Laughter. ) What other things would starting something like the FWBO prevent one from doing?

S: Well, I would have, for instance, spent more time just studying the sutras and giving lectures (on prominent men?). The machinery or structure would have been there, I would just have been able to use that, whereas I have had to devote a lot of time and energy to setting up a structure - which, of course, others are now able to use. I have had, personally, to spend a lot of time and energy setting up that structure.

Buddhadasa: This, presumably, is what you meant once by saying that the FWBO was not the whole of your life?

S: I don't remember saying that, but it might have been what I meant. Like, it's much more pleasant, in a way, to inherit a house in which you can live and do things, and entertain your friends. It's a much more difficult thing to have to build the house yourself from scratch. It no doubt has its own rewards in a way, but perhaps, on balance, one would rather not have to do that; certainly someone of my temperament would rather not have to do that.



Abhaya: I'm very pleased you did!

S: Well, think how nice it would be that there were beautiful [65] Buddhist monasteries and centres (all over), you just went from one to another, you could give your lectures and meet friendly, sincere, genuine people and have a good communication with them, deepen your experience of the Dharma, communicate what you knew and then pass on after a while to another monastery, another centre: how pleasant that would be! If the structure was all there, ready working, for you just to take advantage of. But that hasn't been the case. Look how we've had to function in India, even more so than in England, perhaps: building things up from scratch against all sorts of opposition and counteracting all sorts of misunderstandings and even opposition.

Anyway, anything else, or is that it? - But I don't remember the sort of dawn of self consciousness. I can remember all sorts of dreams when I was about three or four - I think it was before I went to school - I can remember reading and writing. I can't remember reading, in the sense of learning to read. I think I must have learned to read by reading my father's newspaper when he came home in the evening. I can't remember learning my ABC. I can remember having a porringer what do we call it now? a bowl - with ABC round the border, when I was a very small child or a baby; but I can't remember learning the alphabet from the border. As far as I can remember, I could always read, though I must have learned at some point; but I must have learned, therefore, very, very early on. But I can't remember the point when I realized that 'I am I'. Perhaps one doesn't, by the very nature of the experience.

Mm! One thing I can remember: I can remember realizing, at a very early age - this is when I was, oh, maybe four or five, or six - that I was very quick-witted. I realized - this was definitely an example of self-consciousness, I was aware of something about myself, a sort of personal or mental characteristic - I realized that I was in fact very quick-witted and my brain worked very fast. I realized this, quite clearly, when I was very young indeed.

Anyway, maybe we should call it a day, so everyone can get a reasonably early night. - Right, then,

Voices: Thank you, thank you very much.

## SIDE 2

Abhaya: Today, Bhante, we have listened to and discussed the third lecture in the series, 'Individuality - True and False'. But before we start, I would just like to make a general point. Bhante does answer interpolations, and that takes up a certain amount of time, so I would like to remind people to make sure their interpolation is good; I mean don't just speak off straight away, but maybe think a little before [66] speaking because sometimes it does get a bit ragged and takes up more time, which means maybe valuable question time is lost. So just keep that in mind.

S: How many questions are there this evening?

Abhaya: Well, there are twelve, possibly thirteen. But there is one question that I forgot last night and left off the list. I wondered if you would mind answering that first?

S: OK.

Abhaya: That's from Tejananda about awareness but non-experience of feelings.

Tejananda: Could you explain exactly what you meant in the lecture last night by saying that alienated awareness is an awareness of oneself and especially of one's feelings and emotions, but without actually experiencing them? I can't understand in what sense one could be aware of feelings and emotions without experiencing them.

S: The example I sometimes give is, we'll say you're listening to music or reading poetry. When you are fully in touch with your emotions, you experience the music or the poetry fully and completely. But when, for any reason, you are out of touch with your emotions, as we say - possibly due to tiredness or something of that sort - you listen to the music and you read the poem, but you don't experience what you normally would experience, or what a normal person would experience. You are aware of the sound of the music, and you are aware of the meaning of the

poem, but you don't respond fully. It's as though something is held in check, something isn't there; and what isn't there is your emotion. It is not, of course, that the emotion in the full sense is there but you are not aware of it - at least, it is not fully there in consciousness. You can sort of feel it there, you feel there's a sort of potentiality for emotion, but you don't actually feel the emotion itself consciously; or you could say that you feel it or experience it as though through a thick veil, almost through a blanket. It is not that emotion is entirely absent; there is as it were something there, but you can't fully get at it. So yes, if one is thinking in terms of, say, a fully conscious emotion, of course you are not experiencing that. So when it's said that you are aware of an emotion but not experiencing it, I don't mean that you are experiencing the emotion fully but you are merely aware of it and not experiencing it; that, as you say, would be impossible; but it's that vague situation where all the stimuli of the emotion are there and you are, let's say, a normal person capable of a normal emotional response, but that response isn't there; you are aware of it in a very incipient way, you are not fully in touch with it. That's what I mean by being aware of your emotions but not experiencing them. Not that you are fully experiencing them but at the same time you're merely aware of them. You experience rather the blockedness of your emotions. Your experience [67] is that you realize that if you weren't blocked you would be having an emotional experience. It's as though it's sort of there, waiting. You can feel it behind whatever is blocking and preventing you from experiencing it, not that there is a complete absence of emotion even in the sense of the potential for emotion. It's there below the surface and you can almost feel it's there, but it doesn't quite reach the surface.

Presumably everybody has experienced this? Presumably everyone is familiar with that experience where, for instance, you've gone to a concert at the end of a day's work but you're really so tired you can't experience and you can't enjoy the music. That is what I mean. You're in a temporarily alienated state; you are not experiencing your own emotions. They are your own, not in the sense that you fully and consciously experience them there and then, but you normally can or normally could experience them under the right conditions.

Of course, that's a comparatively simple example. There are perhaps people who never have experienced their emotions fully and who are permanently alienated. That is a much severer state. But the normal state would seem to be where you think and feel, where you are aware

and also feel, or emote, at the same time; but when emotion is as it were in suspension, either permanently or temporarily, awareness alone remains. That is what one calls alienated awareness. Or experiencing the feeling of being aware of feelings but not experiencing them. Perhaps that expression is a little misleading.

Abhaya: So we come now to the questions for lecture 3. The first one is from Suvajra. It's a question about semantics.

Suvajra: At least, the first part of the question is about semantics. The second part is a bit harder to encapsulate. The first part: it comes from you saying in your lecture that semantic questions are of 'the greatest practical importance, even in the spiritual life'. Given the greatest practical importance, in which ways do you think we could be increasing our awareness of the value of semantics? And the second part is perhaps bearing this area out: do you think that there would be any value in studying any other branches of language, and perhaps which ones?

S: What is the literal meaning of the word semantics, does anybody know? What is the technical definition of semantics?

Abhaya: It's to do with the meaning of words, isn't it, the study of the meaning?

\_\_\_ : The study of the meaning of words.

Suvajra: The study of the meaning and interrelationships of words and words within sentences.

S: So when do you start becoming interested in the meanings [68] of words? How does it come about? (Pause.) It surely comes about when you want to express yourself, when you've got something to say; or when, in the course of a conversation, or in the course of communication, a confusion or misunderstanding arises and you realize that you and the other person are at cross purposes; and sometimes it dawns upon you that the reason for this is that you're using the same words but in rather different senses, that you're attaching to them rather different meanings.

I don't think it's a question of taking up semantics in a systematic, scientific way. It's more a question of training yourself to ask yourself: 'What am I really trying to say? What do I want to say? What is my meaning, my own meaning?' and getting that as clear as you possibly can, both in writing and in speech. I think if one was to do that, a lot of confusion of thought would be avoided.

I have spoken about this before on a number of occasions. Suppose you sit down to write a letter. You might start off: 'Dear So-and-so, I am sorry I haven't written to you for such a long time.' Well, are you really sorry, or is that a merely formal opening? Ask yourself, 'What do I really want to say?' And at every stage of the writing process, ask yourself, 'Does this particular word really express my meaning?' Don't be satisfied with the first word that comes to mind. That may not be the word that best expresses your meaning at all. Do you see what I am getting at? I think probably this is the best way to go about it. And, of course, as I've said again frequently, consult the dictionary at every step. Sometimes well, the dictionary is full of surprises, because one becomes aware that people using the English language in the past have

made all sorts of subtle distinctions which are there for you to avail yourself of in the course of your own writing and speaking. In a way, the work has already all been done for you. It is very rarely that you can't find a word in the dictionary or the thesaurus for what you want to express.

And avoid hackneyed expressions - I know we all fall into them sometimes - but avoid them as much as one possibly can. Avoid saying, 'Isn't it a nice day?', or 'I had a lovely time yesterday,' or 'It was a really positive retreat,' or 'It was a really powerful situation' - or whatever.

I was reading just a little while ago an advertisement for a cottage situated on the edge of Dartmoor with 'a powerful landscape' 1 That seemed a bit of a cliché. No doubt it all went on to the rent.

But I think this sort of discipline is very important. This is why I have sometimes said that I do believe that writing, whether writing prose or writing poetry, is a spiritual discipline, because it helps and it encourages clarity and precision of thought, and also of feeling. You have to ask yourself what you're feeling - not just what you're thinking. It encourages honesty; it encourages self-knowledge, It encourages [69] depth, it encourages research, it encourages awareness. It encourages self-criticism.

But what was the question? Let's not forget that.

Suvajra: The question was: would there be any value - or would there be any means by which we could increase our awareness, within the FWBO, of semantics? I was thinking previously we've not been very clear and this had led us to thinking about doing courses on logic.

S: That certainly does help, because part of formal logic is the question of definition, isn't it?

Suvajra: I wondered if there were any in the FWBO who might be able to lead anything on semantics?

S: I think something has been led on logic, hasn't it? Who did that, was it Mike? Or you - you. Perhaps there should be a logic workshop periodically in every centre. You could even have a semantics workshop, just making simple, useful points, not going into the theory of language or different or conflicting theories of language, but just trying to make people realize what a wonderful, what a very flexible instrument language is, and how they should take a pride in using it as well as they possibly can. There's no merit in being inarticulate.

Suvajra: The second part was: would there be any other branches of language in which we could increase our awareness? It seemed to (follow).

S: One could, for instance, - in the course of study one takes a text and one really looks at that, one looks at the terms which are used. Supposing, for the sake of argument, that the text is actually in English, it's not a translation - something like Dr Johnson's 'Ode to Friendship'. Well, as we found when we studied that poem, you can weigh every word; there's so much that one doesn't realize at first sight, at a first reading. One finds that Johnson is using language with remarkable precision. So one should learn to appreciate that, and that will help one when one comes to express one's own ideas, whether in poetic form or in prose form.

One can listen very carefully to what people say; that's also important; try to appreciate the fine shades of meaning which come across, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Try to appreciate idioms, figures of speech, similes, metaphors, hyperboles, synecdoches, metonymies and all the rest. That's becoming a little technical, but you get the general idea. We should be, or should become, more semantically aware. Buddhism as a religion has a very good reputation, a very good tradition in this respect.

Suvajra: Has there ever been a Buddhist semantics as there has been a Buddhist logic?

[70]

S: Sort of. I think it's perhaps more correct to say that there's an Indian semantics, which I think Buddhists contributed to, but which I don't think they especially developed. Isn't it one of the four 'pratisamvids' - isn't it 'nirukti pratisamvid'?

\_\_\_: It's (?).

S: That's how it's translated, but it's actually more like semantics. 'Nirukti' is one of the 'vedangas'. You've all heard of the four Indian Vedas, the Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atnarva, so that the Vedas collectively have certain 'angas' - in other words, ancillary sciences which help one in understanding the meaning of the Vedas. For instance, there's phonetics, because you have to know the correct pronunciation of the Vedic mantras. So similarly, there is Nirukti or etymology, as it's called, to help you understand the meaning of the words occurring in the Vedas. It is not etymology in the ordinary sense, it's more of the nature of tracing back words to their original verbal roots, because according to the science of 'nirukti' there is supposed to be a limited number of verbal roots to which all words can ultimately be referred. It's sometimes said there are 120, or something like that. In other words, there are sort of word archetypes, if you like; it's more like that. It's not quite a science in the modern sense.

So this etymology in this sense, 'nirukti' in this sense or semantics in this sense, was much cultivated by the ancient Indians - more especially by the Hindus, more especially by the brahmins - because of its importance for the understanding of the Vedas. As far as I recollect, there was no distinctively separate Buddhist version of that particular science or sastra. But, yes, it does occupy a very important place in Indian thought generally, or Indian tradition generally. It would bear looking into. I've often thought I know the titles of a number of works: there's the classic work by (Vayashka), I think it is on

nirukti, he's a Vedic scholar of many centuries ago. I know the titles of a few works and I've often meant to look into them, but I haven't yet got round to it as I haven't got round to so many things. Perhaps some of you might care to look into these things.

All right, let's proceed.

Suvajra: Is that all?

S: Was that all?

Suvajra: I think that was all. The second part was the spreading out, language and other areas.

S: Spreading out?

Suvajra: Well, we were speaking about language in general, after we had been speaking about semantics, and we thought [71] about a different number of areas in language - if there were a hierarchy in language, if there was a very sort of structuring language, and perhaps study of any of these areas might be useful. I don't know what you think about hierarchy in language - there's a hierarchy in language; we were thinking of perhaps poetry, mantra, prose being different levels of language.

S: I tend to think it's more a question of levels or degrees of intensity of language. I'm not so sure that prose can be completely separated from poetry; though perhaps prose and verse can be separated, but I think perhaps not prose and poetry. But that's a separate question, perhaps, to go into with Abhaya some time. Perhaps another little workshop! There is sort of rhythmical prose, isn't there? It is very difficult to know whether it's to be classified as prose or poetry - like some of the so-called poetical books of the Bible in the Authorized Version, the Book of Job, for instance; or certain passages in Sir Thomas Browne or de Quincey, Dr Jeremy Taylor. Anyway, we'll leave it there.

Abhaya: The next question comes from Tejamitra on the language you use in describing the mechanism of the process of integration.

Tejamitra: In the lecture, you refer to us being - when we first start the spiritual life, I assume, a bundle of selves, and that we gradually integrate this. We had a bit of a discussion about whether there is another self behind this bundle of selves which has the awareness, or whether each self has got a grain of awareness in it at the beginning.

S: Perhaps this question is really a semantic question! Or else you could say it's the awareness itself, or your awareness - meaning the awareness of, say, at least the dominant self of the moment, or perhaps even the overall dominant self, which gathers together all these little scraps and fragments of selfhood and gradually integrates them.

In a sense, one might say they have their own reflected awareness, because they are parts of you and you are aware. But perhaps one could think in terms of a disc of light or patch of light which was rather broken up, rather fragmented, or at least very badly cracked, but there was one particular area which was brighter than the rest, and that area which was brighter than the rest would be the area of your central self, your central awareness, and it would be that which was trying to pull the rest of yourself, or pull your different bits and pieces of selfhood, more and more together, so that they became more and more highly integrated. It's something like that.

I think that whether each fragmented self has its own as it were separate awareness or consciousness is probably an artificial question, a question which language makes possible. You [72] can formulate a question of that sort, but whether it corresponds actually to a real question is, I think, another matter.

Tejamitra: Well, but - you did mention that there are times when people, say, lose their temper, and after a period of time they say, 'I wasn't myself'. From that I can gather that, in that mood or whatever they were in when that self was dominant, they had no awareness of their overall individuality.

S: But could you say that the angry self was aware of itself, as distinct from you being aware

that you were angry? In other words, if even you were not aware that you were angry - not in the full sense - how is it possible for you to speak of that angry self as (aware of) being angry? Suppose that there may be, say, a modicum of awareness in the situation, but if there is, to whom does it belong or pertain? Does it belong or pertain to you or to the anger? You can only say, 'I was aware that I was angry to some extent', so you claim the awareness. It's as though the awareness belongs to you and not to the anger, considered as a sort of split off part of yourself. So awareness, therefore, would seem to be the unifying factor, and inasmuch as it is the unifying factor, it belongs to you because you are the unifying agent. It belongs to the ego, so to speak, in the sense in which I've defined the term.

\_\_\_: Is it best to see a description like that as a little metaphorical, not to be taken too literally?

S: All descriptions are metaphorical, one might say. At least so far as I am concerned, one might say - my own particular temperament or attitude being as it were profoundly anti-scientific. (Laughter.) Or at the very least, having serious reservations about the validity of the scientific approach, certainly where human affairs and human beings are concerned. That's why I've been saying recently there can't be such a thing as a science of man, or a science of the mind, or a science of history, or a science of economics. Perhaps physics is a science, perhaps chemistry is; but even that seems a little doubtful. I don't think you can have a humane science, or a natural science of any branch of human nature or human interest or human activities.

Padmavajra: Bhante, would you care to define how you are using the word science?

S: How I am using the word science: I am taking science in the sense of a sort of mechanical model. When I say you can't have a science of man, I mean you can't have a completely exhaustive mechanical model of man with the help of which you can infallibly predict human behaviour, whether individual or collective.

[73]

Dharmapriya: Excuse me, can I remind people when they make statements to put their names beforehand? And also, if people speak up a little bit more today, because there seems to have trouble picking up quiet voices today.

S: It's temperamental; you see, science ... (laughter). It's got its feelings. It's a wet day, so it's probably feeling a bit miserable. I think it's better to attribute feelings to so-called inanimate things and not to attribute feelings to obviously animate things. It's better to be thoroughly animistic than pseudo-scientific.

Abhaya: Both of the groups had some difficulty in their discussion of your definition of Western psychological terms, such as ego, self, personality and so on, and the following four questions arise out of that.

S: Perhaps I could preface that by saying that, as far as I can recollect - I have been reading through my notes - I took those definitions from Jung, and obviously in other systems of psychology they may well be differently defined. But those definitions suited my purpose - that is to say, the definition of self, ego, person or personality. But anyway, let's have the questions,

Abhaya: So the first question: Tejamitra has a question about the terms person, personality, ego-centred, ego-directed.

Tejamitra: In the lecture, you introduce four terms - the self, individual, ego and person - and say that their derivatives can be divided into two groups as either having a positive or a negative aspect. So there are two questions on this. The first one is: you gave egocentric and ego-directed. What is ego-directed?

S: Ah, I think, as far as I can recollect now, I used ego-directed in the sense of autonomous, that is to say, not directed by another person but directing oneself; to change the terminology, autonomous as distinct from heteronomous. What would be the opposite of ego-directed? Other-directed, I suppose one would have to say. So the fact that one is autonomous also suggests that one takes responsibility for oneself; one acts on one's own initiative, as we say. So clearly, used in that sense, ego-directed is positive or has a positive connotation.

Tejamitra: The next one was: you gave 'person' and 'personality'. Could you say which was positive and which negative, and why?

S: Have I used 'person' as positive and 'personality' as negative?

Suvajra: It's not clear.

Padmavajra: You say 'good' and 'bad', I think. In the lecture [74] you say that one of them refers to 'bad', equals a lower level of integration. 'Good' refers to a higher level of integration.

S: I think probably that the line of demarcation is a little less clear in this case. What occurs to me is 'persona' which literally means mask; this is more easy to understand. I follow Jung in defining a persona as one's social self: not your private self, but the self which you show to society or which you show to other members of the group, through which you operate in society, so it has a certain relative validity. It is you to some extent. It does express a certain aspect of you. At least, normally it does, if it isn't utterly and completely a mask, as occasionally happens.

But by 'personality' I understand a much more extreme development of that something which is actually more like a mask, something really quite artificial; and in this connection I think of, say, the 'TV personality' - I think you would never speak of 'a TV person'. You might speak of someone as 'a person appearing on TV', but that would be quite different from 'a TV personality'. 'A person appearing on TV' presents himself to you, but 'a TV personality' is almost entirely a figment of somebody's imagination. It is a personality that does not have any existence outside the TV screen. So it's a question, perhaps, of degree of alienation, and this is what we're getting at, in a way: the degree of distance from your total self. The social self, the persona, has some quite real connection with your actual self, but the personality can have the most tenuous connection. I am using the two terms in this sort of way to express this sort of distinction.

So, in the case of a TV personality, the person who is being a TV personality or presenting himself as a TV personality, really needs just to stop doing that, stop appearing on the TV screen; because it is not a question of integrating - there is not even anything much to integrate. You just stop it, just like a bad habit that someone's got into.



Mahamati: Bhante, does this leave us with an apparent inconsistency in the use of terms if you use 'personality' in that way? Because later on in the lecture, I believe you define personality as the process of integration. So are you wishing to give 'personality' a negative connotation?

S: Well, perhaps there's a third meaning. We say, 'He's really got personality', or we speak of 'personal development', you see? So perhaps here the word personal, derivative of it, assumes a somewhat different connotation from either of the previous two connotations. When we speak of personal development, it's your own development, your development as an individual; it's something real, something that really does belong to you, that pertains to you. So we've really got the persona, in the sense of the social self, which is relatively real; we've got the television 'personality', which is almost completely unreal; and we've got personal development, which suggests a transition from the relatively less unreal to the relatively real, in other words suggests a process of integration.

[75]

I suppose the difficulty, or the apparent inconsistency, arises inasmuch as one starts off with four terms, each of which can be looked at both positively and negatively; but then you also have to envisage a process of transition from the negative to the positive, from the less integrated to the more integrated. So it is in that connection that the term 'personal development' comes in. So one is using a derivative of the word 'person', not only for something static, that is to say both the positive and negative derivatives of the word 'person', but also for the actual movement of transition from the one to the other; not only in respect of person and personality but positive and negative aspects of the ego, the self, and so on.

You could take the word 'self' in much the same way and give that a third connotation and speak of self-realization, for instance; again suggesting a process from the comparatively negative to the comparatively positive. You could even speak of ego expansion; that would be doing the same thing for the word 'ego'. Or individualization, doing the same thing for the word individual.

Abhaya: And then Kulamitra has two related questions about the connection between Western psychology and the Dharma.

Kulamitra: The first question: is it important that Order Members understand the terminology of Western psychology? Can it, for instance, help them to make connections between the Dharma and their own culture?

S: I think they should understand at least the meaning of the terminology that they actually use. (Laughter.) people use terms like 'archetype' or 'complex' or 'unconscious', but they don't always have a very clear idea of exactly what they mean by those terms. So that, if one does use a word of this sort, at least one should have quite a clear idea as to what it actually means. If, for instance, in a question and answer session or beginners' class, someone asks you a question which involves modern psychological or even philosophical terminology, and you're not familiar with that, don't hesitate to say, 'I'm sorry, I don't know much about modern psychology; could you please rephrase that for everybody's benefit and I'll then try to answer your question.' As that person tries to rephrase it, it may be found that he has practically answered his own question already. Do you see what I mean? But if you are not really sure what he means, or you're not sure what the meaning is of the words that he is using, don't

hesitate to confess your ignorance. Don't blunder in and try to answer without really being clear or sure what it is you're trying to answer.

But perhaps it wouldn't be a bad thing to have some general knowledge at least of Freud and Jung. There are quite useful little books which one can read and which do give a quite clear idea, a clear picture. There is Yolande Jacobson's book on Jung in Penguin; it is quite a small book, and is simply [76] written, and it's quite readable. At least one can read two or three books like that if one feels it necessary to equip oneself in that way, I can't for the moment think of a similar book on Freud, but I am sure there is one.

Susiddhi: There is one Freud wrote at the end of his life, summing up, just a simplified outline of psychoanalysis, which is very good.

S: Freud himself is a very good writer, very clear, very succinct.

Padmavajra: There is a book by, I think it might be Anthony Storr, called 'What Freud Really Said'.

S: That's true, I think we've got that in the Order Library. And there are also dictionaries of psychological terms. There are all sorts of works of that kind, that one can just look a word up in.

Dharmapriya: Can I just throw in a word of caution about using psychological dictionaries? I would strongly suggest that people look at the blurb in the front which says who has written it and what his or her background is, because many psychologists never read Freud, and there are terms used by Freudians in one way and by other psychologists in very different ways.

S: Perhaps one should just look up a general dictionary, especially the - what is it?

Dharmapriya: The Collins English Dictionary. (Laughter.)

S: The one I generally use. I often wonder why it has to contain so many obscene words! I suppose that's all part of contemporary speech. At least you're told that they're obscene and not to be used in polite company. What's the term for such words - not 'informal'; it's 'taboo' words, they are described as taboo words, yes. 'British taboo slang', it says, or 'American taboo slang'. But yes, as a general principle, always look things up.

I think this is why, in every community, there should be an abundance of dictionaries and encyclopedias and all that sort of thing; all these sort of aids. I think it's a pity that we still haven't got our FWBO glossary or dictionary or whatever. [Murmurs of assent.]

Abhaya: Have you got another question, Kulamitra?

Kulamitra: Yes, though maybe in a way it's a separate question, but related.

[77]

END OF TAPE 4; START TAPE 5

(break in recording) Kulamitra (cont.): ...'personality' and 'individuality' as still important and

of practical significance to us? If so, why are they not currently used in the Movement at all? Are they a sort of lost teaching?

S: Could be. It's not a question of whether those words really mean those things - that in a way is a bit of a red herring - but there are those particular aspects of mental experience or of psychological experience, which can be described in terms of those words. Do you see what I mean? There is such a thing as what I have called ego-directedness. There is as a fact of psychological experience that you are, in certain situations, autonomous and feel yourself to be autonomous, so a term is needed to describe that. I happened to use, in this context, the term ego-directed. So whether or not one uses that particular term, one needs a term of some kind for that phenomenon, simply because that phenomenon exists, and if you want to discuss it or describe it or ask a question about it, you've got to have some term with the help of which you can do that, I think, if this is in fact a lost teaching, the reason might well be that though people talk about themselves and their mental states and experiences quite a lot, they still don't do so - I mean within the FWBO - with any great degree of precision. Perhaps we should be more careful of that.

We talk quite a bit of our integration, or becoming more integrated. I think we often talk about it only in a very general way and don't go into the specifics of it, don't go into what I have called the mechanics of the process sufficiently.

Padmavajra: Bhante, I was wondering with those terms, though, that perhaps maybe they've been replaced by the qualities of, say, the individual, which really discuss integration in more or less a more moral

sense. I personally find those kinds of terms not all that helpful, because they seem to be divorced from some kind of moral evaluative nuance, if you like.

S: What about, for instance, the term 'persona' in the sense of the social self? One needs a term to describe the sort of self or aspect of yourself that you present to other people or to society at large which is not, at least, fully and completely you, and you need to be able to express some such feeling as, well, you should not have a social self, a persona, which is so much at variance with what you really are. The ethical value or principle involved in it is truthfulness, honesty, genuineness; but you probably still do need that sort of psychological terminology to express that particular aspect of it or that particular point of view with regard to it. Or you can say, 'Well, just be more honest or be more open', but that doesn't cover it fully. If one explains to someone, 'Look, in the course of your contacts with other people you have built up a self which is, yes, you to some extent, but not completely you, because a persona is really a mask, and actually you hide behind that and you should think in terms [78] of dismantling that and showing more of yourself, and not hiding so much behind your persona.' One could quite usefully speak in those sort of terms, couldn't one, to make it clear to somebody what they were actually doing and what they needed to do? This is quite simple, basic, elementary, Jungian analytical psychology, which has almost passed into current speech. You might hear somebody say, 'He acts very bravely but it's all a bit of a persona'.

Abhaya: I was a little puzzled, well, not puzzled, but I thought there was a discrepancy between your definition of individuality in this lecture and your present definition. Here you define it as representing the present relatively unintegrated state of the self, whereas now, obviously, we talk about it as the individual being, presumably, the fully integrated self.

S: I do, I think, currently make a distinction between the individual with a small i and the Individual with a capital I. Here I say 'relatively integrated', so presumably that corresponds to the individual or individuality with a small i. So, in that case, there wouldn't really be an inconsistency. Perhaps there is a slight difference of emphasis.

Padmavajra: Er ...

S: Padmavajra's having a doubt about that.

Padmavajra: No, it's actually about the last point, to do with the terms of Jungian analytical psychology. Perhaps I ought to leave it, though, until it's finished. I'm sorry.

Abhaya: The other possible inconsistency was about the term 'horizontal integration'.

S: I noticed, reading through my notes, that though I used the expression 'horizontal integration', I didn't use the term 'vertical integration', though it is implied, I think. At least, it isn't in my notes; I might have actually used it in the lecture.

Voices: You did. You used it in the actual text.

Abhaya: You say in the lecture that this horizontal integration on the level includes integration of subconscious elements, that is acknowledging and experiencing those aspects that we haven't owned.

S: Yes, I would tend nowadays to speak of horizontal integration as an integration of all those contents of which one is conscious, and to speak of vertical integration as the integration of those contents which are below the normal level of consciousness, as well as above.

Abhaya: Which you do in 'What Meditation Really Is' - that's how you define it.

[79]

S: One could say that perhaps at that time I was thinking of there being not a sort of definite dividing line, but of there being a sort of band of consciousness or a stratum of consciousness which extended down into the subconscious. It wasn't a thin line without dimension; do you see what I mean? A stratum has depth as well as extension. I might have been thinking in that way.

Abhaya: In the last Question and Answer session we asked you a question about so few Order Members attaining dhyanic states, and you said that unfortunately that was because in a lot of cases there's a certain amount of unfinished business to clear up. So that would imply the certain subconscious elements which have to be made conscious. So this process of actually making the subconscious elements conscious is part of vertical integration or horizontal integration?

S: Of course, there are certain contents of which one is half conscious. I meant that it is not as though there's a clear cut distinction between it's conscious, i.e. fully conscious, or it's unconscious, i.e. completely unconscious, but there's a sort of band stretching across the middle which is as it were semi-conscious. You could say that it was part of consciousness, in which case you deal with it via horizontal integration. You could say it's part of the

subconscious, in which case you can be said to deal with it by way of the vertical process. So to the extent that it is semi-conscious or half-conscious, you can't say that the integration of it is strictly what I call a horizontal process or strictly what I call a vertical process. It is not that you are completely unconscious of it, any more than you are completely conscious of it; you've just got a vague awareness of it. In other words, it has not only extension but also depth.

Abhaya: Now we come to a question from Buddhadasa about the function of will in relation to self, ego, personality and so on.

Buddhadasa: Bhante, today we often speak of feminine will or wilfulness, and the Will to Enlightenment. Is will, therefore, a function of either the unintegrated and integrated self, or could one even speak of will as a positive or a negative force?

S: I think, as I've mentioned before, will is usually defined as the sum total of energy available to the conscious subject, that is to say, to the ego. Therefore, the more integrated you are, the more will you have. Here, of course, 'will' is obviously being used in a positive sense. The more integrated your energies are, the greater thrust they have and the greater drive you are capable of. Then what do we mean by 'wilfulness'? Because by 'wilfulness' one does not mean being full of will, because all your energies are integrated. It probably means something quite different. So what is wilfulness.?

Suvajra: It just sounds like forcefulness, really, doesn't it?

[80]

S: Well, that's a synonym. What is forcefulness?

Ratnaguna: Could I? Is it not one's rational faculty, one's intellect, forcing one's emotions along in a certain direction? So it's not the whole of you using that energy, it's just your rational faculty.

S: I'd say it could be almost the opposite of that, but perhaps it's a different usage of the same word. What I mean is, we've been talking in terms of being split up into as it were different selves, so suppose one thinks of those selves as being some of them as it were bigger, and some smaller, some apparently more important and others as less important. Suppose there's a deep cleavage within you and at an unconscious level quite a large portion of your energy goes into what would seem to be a comparatively small part of you or one of your quite small selves. In other words, behind that self there is an altogether disproportionate amount of energy. That, perhaps, is what one could describe as wilfulness; or wilfulness is the product of that. Do you see what I mean?

\_\_\_: I don't understand that, Bhante. Do you think you could be concrete, more specific?

S: More - ?

\_\_\_ Give an example.

S: Supposing - I'm trying to think of a clear one, a concrete one. Supposing you're with someone and the question arises of a certain choice; supposing, for instance, the other person

expresses a very strong preference for something which would seem to involve a very small difference indeed, where the preference is quite out of proportion to what on the surface would seem to be the difference between doing this and doing that.

Just to give a concrete example, supposing you say, 'Would you like an apple or would you like an orange?' and they're absolutely definite that they'd rather have an apple. But then you find that there are no apples but only oranges, so you say, 'Do you mind having an orange instead?' Well, an ordinary person would say, 'OK, I'll have an orange'. But supposing that person starts to get absolutely hysterical, and says, 'No, no, no, I must have an apple, I must have an apple' - you see? That suggests that an altogether disproportionate amount of energy is invested in that particular preference and in, so to speak, a particular aspect - what would seem on the surface to be a minor aspect - of that person's personality, i.e., the aspect which consists in a preference for apples or oranges. So at a very deep level a lot of energy has got disengaged from the main self and has been diverted and expresses itself in that way. That is wilfulness. They are being very wilful: 'No, no, I must have an apple. I don't want an orange. Under no circumstances will I have an orange'. Sometimes children behave in this way, don't they, and you don't know why? You as the parent, looking at it so [81] rationally - why do they insist that they must have the toy that you have given their little sister? It's exactly the same toy, but no, they want the one that she's got, not the one that you've given them. There's no difference between the two that you can see. Do you see what I mean? So, clearly, unconscious factors are at work, and a lot of energy has been channelled, in a sense, wrongfully, resulting in what I call wilfulness. At least, one can, I think, use the term wilfulness for that kind of situation which actually does arise.

Buddhadasa: That would also perhaps explain why, apparently, some people who are unintegrated have more energy, it seems on the surface, than so-called integrated people. We had this debate because at one point in the lecture you said: 'How can you tell if you're integrated? You have more energy'. And I said, well, perhaps some people use that as a rationalization for, in fact, their unintegrated state, which results in them already having more energy.

S: You can always tell the difference between an energy which is the expression of a harmonious personality or an integrated personality, and an energy which is being channelled away from what I call the central self into a subordinate aspect of personality. For instance, in this particular case I gave an example of hysteria. If that wilfulness is frustrated, very often hysteria results; whereas if the energies of a healthy integrated person are frustrated, he or she doesn't become hysterical; they just stop and take stock of the situation and try to overcome, quite rationally, whatever obstacle is in their way. Or sometimes they just break through, almost violently, but they don't become hysterical.

But then another question arises in what I may call a (dis-) situation, in which you take a rational decision to do something and try to mobilize your energy; and that is also sometimes spoken of as wilfulness. But I think that's a different situation from the one which I've been speaking of. It's almost exactly opposite, because there the conscious, rational self is trying to impose itself on the larger, unconscious self; whereas in the other instance I gave, a quite large broken-off fragment of the unconscious self is trying to express itself through a limited aspect, so to speak, of the conscious self, or what I call the small conscious self.

So what exactly happens when you try to be, perhaps we could call it not wilful but forceful,

and take a mental decision? Why do you take that mental decision in the first place?

Tejamitra: That's because often it's down to this bundle of selves again. When one self is dominant, it makes the decision to do something over a long period of time, and the next day that decision becomes hard put because that other self isn't behind the decision, so it has to be a willed effort to carry that through. The emotions aren't behind it.

[82]

S: No, but then some emotion must be behind it, so what are the mechanics of the process? How does emotion get transferred from here to there? Supposing one of your conscious selves has made a certain decision, which the whole of your personality is not really behind. How does that particular conscious self manage to mobilize sufficient energy to carry out its decision, in some cases for quite a long time, maybe years together? Because if it is only one self among many, what chance has it got, if that actually is the situation? After a while it would just run out of steam because it wasn't getting any co-operation. How does it get the co-operation?

Padmavajra: There's usually an element of the use of fear, I think. Because the conscious wilfulness is often based on other

people, and you're afraid that the group's ideas in some way will reject you.

S: Well, that's an aspect of guilt. So therefore, there's another mechanism that in this sort of case comes into play. Because there is already a split in your psyche of which, so to speak, that particular conscious self of yours which has made that decision is able to take advantage. For instance, it decides, 'I'm going to get up early in the morning.' But actually, the whole of the rest of your personality, which is the larger part, doesn't want to get up early in the morning. So, if that was simply the situation, you might manage it for a day or two but after that you would run out of steam. But no, the complicating factor is your feeling of guilt. (Break in recording.) only one of your-selves, because that self has succeeded in mobilizing, behind that decision, the energy locked up in your feeling of guilt.

I am probably describing the process very crudely. It is probably quite a bit more complicated than that. There is probably a more technical and more accurate description of this sort of thing somewhere in the works of Freud. There must be. But I think this is roughly what does happen, and I think this could be called wilfulness.

Ratnaguna: What about if someone takes a rational decision to do something which they think is right, but it's only a small part of them; but it's a 'positive' thing to do. But it's not that they feel that they should do it through guilt, but they just think that that's the best thing to do.

S: Well, it is possible skilfully to mobilize one's energies. For instance, you think, yes, it's a good thing to do, this particular thing, whatever it is. But I know, I acknowledge, that there's a lot of unconscious resistance. How can I skilfully overcome that unconscious resistance? How can I skilfully, in an integrated way, mobilize my energies? You may then have to accept that it's going to take a long time. Your energies have to be coaxed along the right path. You may have to take certain measures to do that. But, in the end, you will succeed in getting them all behind the decision which... [82a] ...[bit missing]... "but I ought to get up early" and a lot of your energy is invested in that feeling of guilt, so if that particular

conscious self succeeds in tapping the energy locked up in that feeling of guilt then it can keep going for a long time - a transfer of energy takes place. That seems to be the mechanics of the situation in this (what they call) forcefulness.

Voice: So is it an alliance between negative emotion and rationality?

S: It is, yes. This is why I've sometimes said that very rational people are basically very irrational. As you can meet, for instance, scientists who are very irrational. Scholars and academics are often very irrational, motivated by very irrational emotions indeed which come out of their scholarly squabbles.

Voice: Bhante, you said the thing about getting up in the morning and how the... mechanism is... so it can keep going for quite a long time. One can get up in the morning for quite a long time and one can get up for...

S: One can get up in the morning and continue getting up in the morning even though the decision [83] has been taken by that particular - well, perhaps one shouldn't say conscious self in this case, because it's probably more likely to be your central self, or just you, but the rational 'you', recognizing that there's a lot of unconscious resistance that you can't ignore and which you've got to overcome or resolve in an intelligent, systematic way; not through appealing to guilt or fear or any such negative emotion.

Susiddhi: It's something like taking a vow. In a way, you feel it's like ( ? ) self, this particular ( ? )

S: Well, yes, but it again depends what you mean by taking a vow, because people have sometimes taken vows and not been able to keep them. So taking a vow doesn't just mean that you stand up one evening in the Shrine room and announce it. You have to take stock of the situation, take stock of yourself, have a very clear understanding of what you are vowing to do or to observe, and estimate your own capacity to observe that easily; estimate the resistance that you are going to encounter; make up your mind, or have a clear idea about what you are going to do to overcome that resistance or to counteract that resistance, and what sort of general measures you are going to adopt to help you to observe your vow; what sort of situations you have to avoid. You should be very clear about all those things, not just have an impulse to make a vow and stand up and do it without giving any proper thought to the whole thing.

Dharmapriya: In practice, however, Bhante, it may be quite difficult to distinguish between these two processes that you have described. Going back to the example of wanting to get up early in the morning regularly to meditate for quite good reasons: one is not that likely to be aware that one mobilizes the energy out of guilt, because one can be aware of very good reasons to get up and meditate, and you get some benefits, and you may not feel a kickback because of the guilt for quite a long time.

S: That may be. Also, of course, it may be that the guilt is quite minimal, and your general spiritual practice and general spiritual life, including your getting up early in the morning, partly on account of feelings of guilt, actually in the long run resolves those feelings of guilt.

Kulamitra: Getting back to the previous kind of wilfulness, although your description of all



this emotional energy going into a very small, insignificant matter describes it, it doesn't say why that should be. Why is it that someone should be so wilful?

S: Well, the reason why the energy has been diverted in that way is to be found in the psychological history of that person. There can be a hundred different reasons; it can happen in a hundred or a thousand different ways. I think it is quite [84] difficult to generalize. But somewhere along the line, for some reason or other, undue significance has happened to be attached to some particular thing: in the case I quoted, to apples or oranges. It may not actually be anything to do with the object; that might be quite misleading. It might be the way the choice was offered, or the fact that a choice was offered at all. There are all sorts of possibilities. It might be due to something in the relationship with the person offering you the choice; maybe that form of reaction to that person, quite independently of that actual situation. But there's no doubt that people do behave like that, and a disproportionate amount of energy becomes invested in certain objects, certain situations, certain types of behaviour on the part of the other person and so on. Some people can't bear to be refused anything, they can't bear to be contradicted, they can't bear to be left alone, they can't bear to be neglected, they can't bear to be rejected. These are all very loaded situations to some people; a disproportionate amount of energy therefore goes into them. They feel those things more than a healthy integrated person would.

Kulamitra: Is that why often quarrels and even break-ups between people happen over apparent trivia?

S: I think it's certainly one of the reasons, yes. Very often people don't break up, say in the case of a relationship in the

ordinary sense, over something very big or important, but over something quite trivial. It sort of bears the weight of all sorts of unconscious, unspoken factors. And of course things accumulate over a period of time, because in the nature of relationships this factor is continuous, so that things are often building up and can take advantage of a very tiny outlet. It's like the small stone being dislodged, and the result is a great avalanche. Or, to change the metaphor, it's the last straw that breaks the camel's back. Or you can say something and somebody flares up. It's not just because of what you've said, but because of a whole backlog of perhaps resentment or whatever. Some feminists are like that, [as we] mentioned the other day: you might say something apparently quite innocuous, and they just flare up.

Some weeks or months ago ( ?), I won't mention any names, but a certain man, let's say, asked a certain woman, let's say, in quite positive circumstances, in a quite positive manner, would she mind mending his bag? And she absolutely flared up and there was quite an outburst, because he was treating her as a mere woman. He was quite surprised, quite taken aback. The situation was such, actually, that it was quite natural for him to ask this particular woman to render him this particular service, but she didn't see it that way. But this is happening all the time.

Anyway, let's pass on.

Abhaya: Padmavajra has a question about the Pudgalavadins.

[85]

Padmavajra: Were the pudgalavadins a movement who tried to counteract a too-literal interpretation of the anatta doctrine? Are the FWBO descendants of the Pudgalavadins?

S: I'm not sure that the Pudgalavadins were merely a movement of reaction. As far as I recollect, they probably do go back quite a long way, because they have got certain canonical sources in the sense of canonical texts which are there in the Pali Theravada version of the Tripitaka, which they quote in support of their position, like the text about 'There is a pudgala, O monks, who has arisen for the benefit of the world', and the Sutra of the Birds, and - the bearer of the burden - they quote these texts, which are recensions and which are found in the Pali Canon. So it would seem that the Pudgalavadins were not simply a movement of reaction against a one-sidedly analytical anatta doctrine, but that they were an independent and an original tradition or movement of thought, going back apparently to the utterances of the Buddha himself. No doubt, in the course of interaction between Pudgalavadins and what shall we call them? - (Vibajya) vadins, the one started reacting against the tenets of the other and trying to refute the tenets of the other. But I don't think we can see the Pudgalavadins as arising entirely as a movement of reaction against this extremely analytical anatta doctrine. They were a very strong school in India for centuries; I think that is not always remembered. They weren't just a tiny group, they were a quite large and respected component within the overall Sangha.

Padmavajra: Their conception of the 'pudgala' - was that for very practical reasons? - in terms of, like, to describe, say, the movement of the self to get enlightened, if you see what I mean?

S: I don't think that their position can be sustained Philosophically if taken literally. But, then, neither can the extreme Anatmavada position be sustained if taken literally. At least they drew attention to the fact that, for all practical purposes, there was what I called the ego: that is to say, the autonomous self. The ethical life presupposes that, whatever one might feel about the ultimate reality of the self.

But perhaps the Pudgalavadins, in the end, like the Anabmavadins, missed the main point, which was that that which we call by whatever

name - the ego or the self or the individual is a process, and not a thing. The Pudgalavadins seem, sometimes, to represent a substantialist position, almost an eternalist position, just as the extreme Anatmavadins virtually represent a nihilist position. I think both seem to have found it difficult, perhaps for linguistic reasons, to think in terms of what we might describe as a dynamic for the self in terms of process and development and evolution. Neither of them seems to have been able to (try) to get it just right, if you see what I mean. Perhaps, in the case of the English language, we can, because English seems to have greater linguistic resources than there were in ancient Pali. We can speak much more [86] easily in terms of growth and development and evolution and so on. That is a quite familiar notion to us. Whereas Mrs Rhys Davids points out it was not a familiar notion at all for anyone in the days of the Buddha. There were hardly words to describe it. So we can't be surprised that the Anatmavadins tended to go to one extreme and the Pudgalavadins, perhaps, to the other. This is why - I touched on this at the end of the lecture - I have always hammered at the point that the anatma doctrine is not so much the negation of the self, but the negation of an unchanging self. You recognize the existence of a self - you have to, at least for practical purposes - but it is the self that is constantly changing; it is a process. And in that fact lies the possibility of change and development, and therefore, ultimately, of Enlightenment. So Anatmavada, in this

sense, is absolutely (basic) not only to Buddhism but actually to any form of spiritual life, if by spiritual life you mean change and transition and transformation from a lower to a higher mode of existence.

How are we going, by the way?

Abhaya: Pretty well, actually. I think we've only got one more. No, two more. Do you want the next one? Dharmapriya has a question about energy and integration.

Dharmapriya: I think you've answered part of this, Bhante, but can I formulate it anyhow, because I think there is a bit that was not covered in previous ones? At the end of the lecture, someone asked: How does one know if he is becoming more integrated? You answered that one indicator was the availability of more energy. But many unintegrated people do have a tremendous amount of energy, and some of these people can consistently pursue one line of activity. For example, ambitious politicians who are not necessarily integrated, individualistic artists, and neurotic scientists and scholars. Would you like to revise your criterion of energy as a sign of integration?

S; One thing that does occur to me is that there is a sort of low-level integration on the part of a person who is - as far as this life is concerned, at least - quite limited in his capabilities or potential. It is as though certain aspects of him are atrophied for the purposes of this life. So behind whatever there is of him all his energies can be mobilized, even though what there is of him is actually quite limited. It doesn't seem as though, as regards this life, other aspects of human personality could actually be actualized and integrated. This occurs to me in passing; it's a suggestion more than a statement.

Suvajra: It does suggest that those persons may not ever be able to develop.

S: (Not) very far in this life.

Suvajra: In this life.

[87]

S: Perhaps one should ask oneself, are there not certain people, say, in public life whom one knows of or has heard of or perhaps seen on TV, that one cannot seriously imagine changing to such an extent as to be able to go through the process of integration in the way that we have been speaking of it? It is as though either

they've been as it were beyond that from the beginning or they've put themselves, so far as this life is concerned, irreversibly beyond that possibility. It happens in all sorts of ways. For instance, when you're young, you've got all sorts of possibilities open to you. You could become, say, either an artist or an astronomer. But, once you reach the age of 40 or 45, if you've chosen to be an astronomer, you can't then switch and be an artist, even though perhaps at the very beginning of your life there was the possibility of your being an artist. So some people, I think, have shut off certain aspects of themselves for so long that there is no possibility in this life any longer of integrating those aspects, and virtually all their energy, therefore, finds an outlet through what is really just one part of themselves, though that appears as their total self, because it's the only one in use. It's rather like, for instance, a tree, and you can see all the branches have died except one, and it is only that branch that has

green leaves on it. Such people are like that. You can recognize this in certain people that you meet.

Dharmapriya: So you could call this, really, a kind of pseudo-integration of a stunted person?

S: Yes. But I think the neurotic person is a bit different from that. (With) the first kind of person, let's say, you get a feeling of deadness and limitedness; but in the case of the neurotic person you get, for want of a better term, a very edgy sort of feeling. You can feel, if you're in contact with them, that there's something not quite right. Then the expression of their face, the tone of their voice, tells you that there's some tension there, and that such people are going to have a breakdown or a reaction or become hysterical quite easily, or they can become very ruthless, very cruel, very unfeeling, very harsh. So I think that, at the beginning of life, one should be very careful not to adopt a way of life that is likely to close off permanently, so far as this life is concerned, any genuinely human possibilities. There are certain things that one accepts one is not going to be able to do, but they should be those things which are not essential to your development as a human being.

For instance, one has read in the case of Darwin - I think he mentions it in his 'Autobiography' - that, as a very young man, perhaps as an (epileptic),

SIDE 2 (break in recording)...ization in scientific studies, That's a sort of classic example. He should actually, one might say, though it might have been difficult despite his scientific studies, have kept up his interest in, his ( ? ) of poetry, because that does represent an essential aspect of [88] human life, of human nature, human development.

Kulamitra: This would, then, be one of the main dangers of the Career: that, by beginning to put so much energy into a single thing, you actually atrophy, and more and more energy goes into it, but in a narrower and narrower field.

S: Yes, and it becomes more and more difficult to change.

Dharmapriya: Going back to the neurotic or the artist, I was thinking of Mozart when I was formulating the question, who seemed to be quite unintegrated but really to be able to put most, if not all, of his energy - a tremendous output of energy - into his music, into writing. And I wondered, was there a reaction? Did the reaction express itself in his dying very young?

S: What does one mean by 'unintegrated' in the case of Mozart? What were the signs? I mean, I haven't seen the film. (Laughter.)

Dharmapriya: The undisputed fact that, as a private person, he

behaved extremely childishly; had a loving for obscene phrases; and, at the same time, his music did not seem to reflect this. His music - subject, ( ) deeper.

S: I would say, is childish behaviour, or even obscene phrases, all that important? In the sense that, if you are creating, a tremendous amount of energy is involved, tremendous pressures, even, are involved; and Mozart, after all, was creating to a prodigious extent for year after year. Everything he wrote is still worth listening to, even what he wrote when he was 12 or

13, or even younger. So in between, surely, at least for a few minutes, one would want to as it were relax, and perhaps that accounts for the childish behaviour and possibly even the obscenity, which was perhaps another manifestation of childish behaviour. So perhaps - I am only saying perhaps - it was really no more than that. It was just a sort of light-hearted relaxation on the part of a genius who, for the greater part of his life, perhaps for the greater part of every day, every waking hour, was subject to or, let's say, was the mouthpiece for the expression of tremendous musical forces. He used to hear music, didn't he? He sort of listened and...

(break in recording)

I think he once said or wrote that he heard a symphony simultaneously; he apprehended it simultaneously and then wrote it down bit by bit at top speed. So, if you're undergoing those sort of experiences, you must relax a little from time to time. Perhaps he did die an early death because of the sheer weight and pressure, the intensity, of his living; he burned himself out. It wasn't really that he had a short life at all; it was simply that he had a long life but it was compressed into a relatively small number of years, just as some people have very short lives, but they (break it up). (Loud laughter. ) (??) Actually, [89] they're dead already but they don't know it. They just go on boring you with their long-winded stories.

This is really what I am saying: I'm just questioning whether one can really say in the strict sense that Mozart was technically an unintegrated person because of those little minor manifestations. It's no more than the froth, you see, of the sea, it's sort of something working on the surface. It doesn't mean that there's something wrong with the depths, it's just froth, spray. This is what I would tend to say, although, as I said a moment ago, it's only as a suggestion or putting a question mark against the idea that Mozart actually was an unintegrated person for those reasons.

Susiddhi: Are you intending to go to see the film, Bhante?

S: I've no intention at the moment. Someone has kindly given me a tape of the sound track, (so I might listen).

Abhaya: Do you want to go on to the next? There is just one more question from Virananda about identifying with inner moods.

S: Inner moods, not inner muse?

Virananda: Well, that's part of my question, which is as follows: you speak of a succession or bundle of our temporary selves battling for supremacy, and then, later on in the question and answer session, say that a temporary self is formed by our identifying with an inner mood. My question concerns this identifying, either with an inner or outer object. If a self forms in accordance with what, or with whom, we are identifying, this seems to make the process of identification significant. First, could you say more about the process of identifying?

S: I am not quite sure what I had in mind at that time, but it occurs to me now, just listening to the expression, or listening to the question, that I probably had in mind something like what one

could alternatively express as possession by a mood. It is not so much that you consciously decide to identify yourself with a particular mood - though I think sometimes it almost amounts to that - so much as that the mood as it were takes you over, takes possession of you. When it's done that, you very often know that that's happened. Supposing you are in a bad mood; you don't really know why you're in a bad mood, but you're sort of complacent about it, you don't really make much of an effort to get out of it, but you really identify with it, you accept it almost, it's you for the time being; and you find it, therefore, very difficult to separate yourself from that mood, just because you are that mood and that mood is you, and you've almost no inclination to separate yourself from it, even though you can recognize that it's not a particularly happy state to be in. I have encountered quite a few people who characterize this to a quite extreme degree. They are so identified with that, say, negative mood that they [90] can't even want, even in the slightest degree, to get out of it; and even if you speak to them and say, 'Look, you're in this particular mood, why don't you do something about it?' and you try to encourage them to be more positive, you meet with absolutely no response at all.

I think most people find themselves in that sort of state at least occasionally, at least in the earlier part of their lives. I say 'earlier' in the sense of before they got involved with the FWBO or before they were ordained. I think this is what I meant by identification.

Virananda: Yes.

S: But then there was more to the question than that? Perhaps we could have the latter part of the question.

Virananda: Second, what about the Order having a more accessible collective identification, so that it is easier for an average unintegrated person to identify with it?

S: Well, in a sense, it does, in the form of the thousand armed and eleven-headed Avalokitesvara, which perhaps seems bizarre to some people. but I believe quite a few Order Members do identify with that figure relatively strongly. Perhaps people would like to say something about this. Was that the sort of thing you had in mind?

Virananda: Well, perhaps I ought to go on to the third part of the question. For that part of the question, I had here in mind what could be called the persona of the Order as a whole, which it presents to the person who is not consciously treading the spiritual path; you know, the person who is unintegrated and who could, perhaps, become more integrated by identifying with the Order if the Order had something to identify with.

S: One could identify with the Order in the real sense only by becoming ordained. But I think probably the image, let's say, of the Order that one should try to present, which means try to be, is I think initially, in the simplest terms, for the benefit of the very new person, just a group - one can't help using that word but in inverted commas, a 'group' or a team - of happy, friendly people who are working and cooperating harmoniously together for the benefit of all or for the benefit of as many other people as they can succeed in coming into contact with. I think what draws the new person or the newcomer is just the spectacle of this 'group' of healthy happy people working together and enjoying themselves. I think this is what they find attractive. They don't think, initially, always, in very spiritual terms. But they like to see you happy, self-confident, energetic. Energy, yes, energy seems to appeal to people quite a lot.

They like to see you enthusiastic, giving an impression of knowing what you are doing, working happily together without conflict, without [91] disharmony. They like your youthfulness, they might even like your good looks. All these things do count. You see what I mean? You can get some idea of the

sort of picture, as it were, or persona as Virananda said, that one should be presenting to the general public; which I think, to some extent, the Order, or at least some Order Members or groups of Order Members, do succeed in presenting. It's in a way quite simple, it's human, it's (non-ethical), it's not very distinctively Buddhist, even, not initially. It doesn't matter, in a sense, how good your Buddhism is, your knowledge of the Abhidharma and so on, if you present an image or if you give an impression of weakness, irresoluteness, unhappiness, mental conflict, instability and so on. Much more important is the sort of positive impression that I've mentioned. That's what matters, I think, so far as most newcomers or new Friends are concerned, or even regulars; even Mitras to some extent, though they have begun to get the distinctively Buddhist element in the Order into view to some extent.

Virananda: This seems to go a bit further than the point you've often made in the past that Order Members should take care of themselves in their health, so that in a sense they have a basis for being positive in a purely ordinary human sense. It would also seem to apply that it's not good enough for Order Members to work themselves to the bone for a good Spiritual cause in giving one class after another, one talk after another, though the content of the talk may be good it may be teaching people meditation who wouldn't hear it otherwise - because people will pick up perhaps primarily the fact that they are tired and exhausted rather than saying something valuable.

S: Well, the medium is the message - to coin a phrase. But it is sometimes very difficult to know exactly where and how to strike a balance, isn't it? And some times a talk by a very good Order Member who is a bit tired can be more effective than a not-so-good talk by a not-as-experienced Order Member who is full of life and energy. It's a question of striking a balance. But obviously, you should prepare yourself as well as you possibly can and take every measure that you can to make sure that, when the time comes, when you are in front of the class or in front of the audience, you are in as positive a condition as you reasonably can be expected to be. Of course, when you're young, you can take a few chances, but as you get older you have to be more careful about these things because your physical energies diminish and you have to utilize them more carefully. Some of you even may have already started feeling this! But then you learn to husband your energies as you get older. When you are very young you almost don't need to bother, but you learn it, bit by bit, and in a sense it becomes after a while almost automatic; automatic in the sense of self-regulating, you don't need to give it ( ? ) attention.

Virananda: I think you may have answered the third part of my question - it only has three parts. Might an Individual [92] Order Member become more integrated by the Order having a more obvious and stronger collective identification?

S: I think this is true. I think it happens in India. I think, in India, with regard both to the Order Members of Indian origin and those of Western origin, there is a much more definite objective, and I think the Order there has a much more definite collective identity, for that reason. I think it does help. The more clearly defined objective is because of the rather special situation there, that Buddhists are ex-Untouchables, mostly, that they have a history of

persecution, they are struggling against all sorts of social difficulties and obstacles and discrimination. They see Buddhism very definitely, in broad terms, as the means of overcoming those difficulties on higher and higher levels or deeper and deeper levels and their energies are mobilized in that way and directed along those channels. So I think there is quite a lot more - despite some initial difficulties - quite a lot more cohesion among Order Members in India than among Order Members in this country, especially as they tend to work in quite a number of different centres and communities and co-ops and so on. I think, there, everything hangs together very much more closely, mainly on account of the general nature of the situation there. I think we're all sufficiently familiar with the work and the general situation in India to know what I am talking about. If we suddenly in England were subject to a wave of persecution, it would unite us wonderfully! I'm sure any little differences would very speedily be forgotten. It's a bit like that.

Kulamitra: Apart from actually provoking a wave of persecution, is there something - since this appears to be a positive thing - that we could do to cultivate it in this country?

S: I think projects help; you know, projects in which the whole Movement is involved in one way or another. I think that helps. Because the fact that, in a general way, you're all propagating the same Dharma and teaching the same kind of meditation isn't enough. Perhaps it should be, but human nature being what it is, it isn't enough. I think an overall objective, from time to time - not something that's going on all the time but every year or two, perhaps, a project that involves the whole Movement. So in the case of, say, the women in the Movement, the Order Members and the Mitras, they've been brought together to a great extent through their project to have a women's country retreat centre. That's functioning in a very positive way. It has mobilized quite a bit of energy and drawn in, perhaps, both the women who might not otherwise have been drawn in to that extent. It's even attracted women who might otherwise not have been attracted to the Movement. So maybe every year or two or three years we need to have a sort of project. I think working for Aid for India has drawn quite a lot of people together, because people have gone from different centres and different communities, and I think the Movement as a whole in England is aware of what is going on through Aid for India. But perhaps people aren't quite [93] actively enough involved. That's an ongoing thing anyway. But perhaps they could be if, as I said, every year or two (there was) a specific project, in which everybody was involved in some way or other, not necessarily a fundraising project, and which perhaps lasted, say, two or three months and towards which everybody could do something, everybody could help to some extent. I don't have any suggestions or plans, but you know the sort of thing, perhaps, that I'm thinking of? It should be something interesting, something that will appeal to people - something which is easy for people to do, for which they can just take off a few hours, or a day or two, and contribute something in some way.

I've got an Order Office appeal.

Voices: Mm, yes. For Bhante's birthday. Yes!

S: (We could) have one of those every year, you know.

(we're starting) your sixty-first \_\_\_\_ : Save up for the hundredth.

S: Yes even if I'm not here, you can still.. (laughter.) At least it can go to reprinting my work,



I had a letter from my mother today, and she said in it: 'I see that they are having some kind of appeal for your sixtieth birthday.' She said: 'Oh, you're sixty, time does fly!' (Roars of laughter,) ... oh yes, it does, doesn't it! It had only just struck her that I was really, you know, no longer very young...

Anyway, is there any further point?

Virananda: No, not from me, Bhante.

S: Well, at the beginning, when you started your question, when I

made that little quip, I really did think that the muse was going to come into it to some extent. Because, in a way, the muse is a mood, do you see what I mean? The muse represents a mood that comes not, let's say, from the subconscious but from the supra-conscious, a higher source of inspiration with which you can temporarily identify, and in that inspired state you write your poem or you paint your picture or you compose your symphony or whatever, So possession or identification can be looked at positively, too, if it is this kind of higher mood which can sometimes take possession of you; perhaps short of inspiring you, but none the less it gives you a very buoyant, joyful feeling. You sometimes get it just when you wake up early in the morning on a very fine day; or you wake up realizing that today you're going on your long solitary retreat, or something like that.

Virananda: Perhaps I might retract what I said. Yes, it [94] did strike me when you said that the self was anything with which we identified that identification had this positive aspect; and what I wrote down was 'the importance of putting more effort into consciously identifying with'. So - er ...

S: Well, your question was about people in contact with the Order being able to identify with the Order in a positive way, so presumably the individual as such can do that, not only in connection with the Order but in all sorts of ways; identifying with some high ideal, in the sense of being as it were possessed by it or feeling it or being inspired by it, at least from time to time.

Virananda: We have the traditional formulation of the Four Right Efforts. It appears to me that I can think of these Right Efforts - well, some of them - as a process of identifying with, choosing to identify with, certain thoughts that we have ...

S: Yes, because there are these various possibilities within you, lower and higher. You can choose to identify with the one or the other, it's really up to you. So it is a question of making an effort to identify with what is skilful or, in Buddhist terms, to develop what is skilful rather than what is unskilful. I think perhaps also we can bear in mind that there is another way of looking at it, because the Four Right Efforts speaks the language of effort and exertion; but there is, as it were, the aspect of receptivity and openness, and as it were sort of waiting on the higher experience and letting that, in a manner of speaking, take you over. Perhaps it is only a question of a difference of technique, rather than you trying to identify with that or capture that or achieve that. Because you're not just sitting back waiting for things to happen. It has been described as a sort of alert passivity or receptivity, perhaps, as we more usually say. But inasmuch as there is a receptivity to something, you're at least aware of that something; hold that in mind, try to be receptive to it, let it as it were take you over and

express itself through you. This is also another way, one might say, in which integration takes place and one passes from ego or self or whatever in the negative sense to ego or self or whatever in the positive sense; which was of course what the lecture was all about. But perhaps we should leave it there, if there's nothing more.

Tomorrow what do we have?

Abhaya: 'The question of Psychological Types.'

S: Ah, yes. Let's see what comes of that.

END OF TAPE 5

[95]

TAPE 6

Abhaya: So, Bhante, this morning we did the fourth lecture, 'The Question of Psychological Types', and the first question on that

lecture is from Ratnaguna, about the use of psychological terminology.

S: How many questions do we have?

Abhaya: Nine, possibly ten.

Ratnaguna: In this lecture, and others in this series, you talk the language of psychology, using psychological terms and a psychological framework. In the first Tuscany retreat, I remember you saying in your closing remarks that you thought we should stop using the language of psychology and communicate the Dharma in its own terms. Is this lecture now outdated, or would you still consider that using certain psychological terms and frameworks can be useful or even necessary?

S: I think the use of some psychological terminology is inevitable, partly because some psychological terms have become widely current and in fact quite popular and found their way into the dictionary; and partly because some psychological terms relate to aspects of our experience, or perhaps I should say ways of looking at our experience, that are not specifically dealt with, or at least not quite in that way, in the Buddhist tradition. So I think what I was getting at in Tuscany was that one should not so much not use terminology where the use of terminology was unavoidable or at least helpful, but that one shouldn't look at the spiritual life and its problems, or human life and its problems, from a narrowly psychological point of view mainly to the exclusion of the transcendental dimension. I think I have made the point before that people in the Buddha's day seemed on the whole rather healthy, rather emotionally positive, and it seems as though, after coming into Contact with the Buddha, they could go straight into the spiritual life. But when people come along to us, they come along very often not at all healthy, happy human beings, but rather neurotic, anxiety-ridden creatures with all sorts of psychological problems which are not described in Buddhist literature, presumably because people didn't suffer from them, at least to that extent, in those days. But those problems are described in modern psychological literature. The terminology has been developed to describe the sort of psychological structure or psychological model

within which it is possible to understand the nature of those problems.

But certainly I think that where dharmic terms exist we should use them, where Buddhist terms exist we should use them; and we certainly shouldn't use Western psychological terms for what one might call specifically Buddhist experiences and attitudes, because those terms will not convey those insights and attitudes correctly. For instance, instead of speaking of, say, Enlightenment or 'sambodhi', it doesn't, I think, really help to speak of the self in the Jungian sense, or the archetype of the self or the archetype of wholeness. That does [96] not convey what is conveyed by the Buddhist 'sambodhi' or Nirvana or what not. It all boils down, I think, to using Western psychological terminology as little as possible, but not being afraid to use it - correctly - when there is no suitable, no appropriate Buddhist terminology of that kind to hand.

I also think, in relation to these earlier lectures, that it's not a question of 'If I were speaking on those topics, would I - ' etc., because having spoken once, I don't really need to speak again. Do you see what I mean? Because if I was (free) to give a lecture nowadays, say, on Buddhism and the question of psychological types, I would probably just repeat that same material. But I've given the lecture, so the question doesn't really arise. I don't need to do the same work twice.

Ratnaguna: I was under the impression in Tuscany, perhaps wrongly, that you had used psychological terms in your lectures, but you thought in retrospect that that was a mistake.

S No, I can't say that. I think it would be a mistake if I were, say, to address the Order, or even Mitras, or even regular Friends, in those sort of terms now, because they have gone beyond it. But, in those days, I was having usually to address an audience not very deeply involved in Buddhism. If I had to address that same sort of audience now, I would probably have to address them in that way; but it is quite unlikely that I would think it a good use of my time to address that sort of audience in that sort of way. That particular lecture stands as representing the sort of thing I would say, whether then or now, to that sort of audience. If I changed at all in that respect, it would be because I was addressing a different kind of audience. What I was probably getting at in Tuscany was that people, Order Members, in giving lectures and taking classes, shouldn't restrict themselves to a purely psychological approach. It is that rather than the question of using terminology. You can use psychological terminology, but in a definitely spiritual and Buddhist context.

\_\_\_ So, in a sense, it's not so much a question of the terminology as of the psychological outlook and ethos?

a. Mm. Especially, some schools of modern psychotherapy and psychoanalysis don't ( ? ), but it is also a question of not being concerned simply to patch up someone in the ordinary way, so that he can just go back to his previous unhealthy secular life-style. When I gave that lecture, I was addressing people who were not living in communities, who were not necessarily meditating even, and certainly who were not working in co-ops, and who might not have gone on a retreat. Some might have gone on one or two, but not everybody by any means. So they were rather different sort of material from what we have at present, even among ordinary Friends.

[97]

Dharmapriya: That brings to mind the fact that it will be Mitras who will be studying this material, and that you gave this talk to people who were quite far removed from Mitras suggests to me that perhaps they should be very much made aware of that fact, and that it is perhaps not so pertinent to them for their own practice as maybe (for) when they are teaching and passing it all on.

S: I think it is still pertinent to them, because I have indicated very clearly towards the end that, if you are thinking in terms of spiritual development, it isn't enough to think just in terms of spiritual development in a very general way, but to know specifically what you have to do and what direction you have to take, what you have to work on, and (to gain) a knowledge of psychological types to help you in identifying your own particular weaknesses, in identifying which particular psychological type you belong to, and what therefore you need to do, what is the next step going to be in connection with your spiritual development. But it certainly isn't development to Mitrahood anyway, actually it's following that spiritual path from that point of view. It can, no doubt, help you to know whether you are an introvert or an extrovert. It alerts you to certain possible dangers if it is clearly in your mind that you're an introvert and you can see that you're an introvert; you can see how it shows itself in your behaviour, and how there is a certain one-sidedness to your whole approach to things, including the spiritual life, a one-sidedness that needs to be rectified. So this is certainly practically relevant not only to Mitras but to others as well.

No doubt I have illustrated this whole question of psychological types fairly profusely or abundantly. I have referred to Jung's 'Psychological Types'; I have referred to Karen Horney's classification or Freud's classification, and the Buddhist one. No doubt Mitras don't need to go into all of those in detail and to follow up; it's just to give them a broad idea of ( ? ) character types and how they can be classified as assisting them to a general psychological understanding. But they can take up one or two.

Perhaps it would be a sort of exercise or piece of homework if the Order Member leading the Mitra study group asked each Mitra to do a little research into one particular method of classifying psychological types.

I don't know whether people actually do this very much - whether they look at themselves in this way. Perhaps it suggests that there is still a broad and general, perhaps even vague, approach to the spiritual life and what one has to do, very often.

Padmavajra: This partly relates to some of the things you were saying yesterday about scientific language. I think one thing that I personally find off-putting about the language of psychology is that it somehow seems quite scientific. You know, self-analysis; in Tuscany you were talking about [98] 'psychologists' like Johnson, you know, observers of human nature; and that kind of approach, if you like, to self-analysis somehow seems more human, more approachable than this scientific, cold, um...

S: I am not so sure that it is cold. I'm not even sure that it is scientific.

Padmavajra: Or pseudo.

S: I was reading the other day a life of Havelock Ellis. He apparently annoyed Freud intensely by telling him that he thought he wasn't a scientist but a literary artist. I think there is a great

deal of truth in that. And Freud himself has said, or written, on a number of occasions, that most of the insights of modern psychology, including his own, were well anticipated by the great writers, especially poets, of the past. He acknowledged that quite frankly. But Freud, and perhaps other psychologists, have systematized these things. One can read Dr Johnson's 'Rambler' (essays) and derive considerable help from them, considerable self-knowledge; but one might find them rather difficult going, (whereas) a lot of people could find Freud more easy. But I'm not so sure that they are cold and scientific. I would say Jung certainly wasn't cold and scientific. But he has been reproached for being not sufficiently scientific, not sufficiently detached, and allowing himself to be carried away by his enthusiasm, (being) extra-scientific and things like that. I think a lot of these people make a great parade of scientific objectivity because that was the climate of the times. They wanted scientific respectability. They couldn't openly set up as a sort of shaman or magician or something of that sort; they had to set up as some kind of scientist. But there was a certain scientific aspect to their work. I don't know whether it can strictly be described as scientific. As I said the other day, I don't think there is a science of human beings or a science of the human mind; not only psychology, but whatever they say or whatever the terminology may be. I think we shouldn't allow ourselves to be misled by this red herring that it's all very scientific. I'm not so sure that it is! I don't think one needs to read it as such. If one finds it useful one can make use of it.

Some writers on psychology are admittedly drier than others - as some writers on religion are very dry; as some writers on literature, some writers on poetry are very dry, come to that. But they may ( ) be quite useful.

What I am trying to get at is whether perhaps this is another of the lost lectures or lost teachings; whether there isn't something here, ( ) as I have suggested towards the end of the lecture, that people have been neglecting; whether it wouldn't be a good thing to try to get a clearer view of ourselves via one or another of these theories of psychological types. As I say, each of them from his own point of view gives a sort of cross-section of the human personality that [99] can sometimes be quite illuminating.

But do people ever think in these terms or try to think in these

terms, and if not, why not? Is it that their spiritual aspiration remains very vague and general, a sort of sentiment, rather than something reasonably clear-cut?

Buddhadasa: One reason that we talked about during our discussion, possibly: because psychological types inherent in the Wheel of Life have become more popular, and we have begun to think of ourselves more in terms of the psychological types found there than in these traditional classifications.

S: This is something that occurred to me going through my notes. I think it was in connection with Fromm's classification. When I came to one of them, I thought, 'Oh, that's the Preta mentality', and the next one, 'That's the asura mentality'; but then the correspondence broke down. It may be that we've got not abstract ( ) but concrete symbols for those types in the form, yes, of the preta, the asura and so on. But I wonder whether that's sufficiently rich, sufficiently detailed? Perhaps it would bear looking into. But yes, I think that a lot of people do think in terms of the beings or the five or six divisions of the Wheel of Life. Though, again, it isn't really quite the same thing, because these are really, broadly speaking, degrees or levels of development.

Voice: The six realms or ...

S: Yes, the six realms. Whereas, in the case of psychological types, it is not a question of one type being necessarily superior to another. This is a horizontal sub-division, not a vertical one. So it seems that the beings of the five or six realms can't really replace a classification of beings according to their psychological types.

Subhuti: You do have the three unwholesome roots of ( ) as well. The two combined form quite a comprehensive map.

S: Yes, that's true. But are they, or have they been, systematically combined? Has anyone worked that out? That you've got, for instance, an asura type in whom craving predominates, an asura type in whom anger predominates, an asura type in whom illusion predominates. Does that give one a satisfactory characterology? Could one have an introverted Asura? [Laughter]

Dharmapriya: You've stressed the practical use of self analysis with the help of these psychological types. But thinking over it, I would be at a loss myself actually to apply practically, when going through the Jungian list and several of the others; it is almost as if in every single one of the categories I recognize myself. I think it's called the medical student syndrome: when presented with a disease he sees himself as being sick with it.

[100]

S: Nonetheless, in practice one has certain diseases and does not have certain others. What has just occurred to me is that there is another Buddhist classification that we have forgotten, which I haven't mentioned in this lecture, which perhaps has some connection with this question of psychological types: that is, the Five Spiritual Faculties. Sometimes, broadly speaking, people do wonder at least whether they are a faith type or a wisdom type or whether they are an energy type or a meditation type.

Padmavajra: From what you were saying, though, perhaps they are too general. Perhaps they are not detailed enough.

S: It could be suggested that perhaps people don't study themselves sufficiently so as to need a rather thorough and rigorous theory of psychological types.

Ratnaguna: But do you need a set of psychological types in order to

know what you need to do next? You might know, for instance, that you need to meditate more and to put more energy into study.

S: But then, for instance, when you conclude that you need to meditate more, why do you come to that conclusion? On what sort of basis? The theory of character types, presumably, gives you a framework within which you can see wherein you are deficient, wherein you are excessive, and so on. It isn't a question of, for instance, there being some abstract requirement that you ought to do five hours' meditation a day, but you're only doing two, so therefore you know that you ought to do three more.

Ratnaguna: Could you say, 'I need to do more mindfulness of breathing, because I'm very

distracted, or more Metta Bhavana because - '?

S: Yes, you could certainly do that. But that relates just to one condition or quality or characteristic. What about trying to take an overview of your whole personality, and see whether your personality as a whole is actually deficient in some particular way, or over-developed in some particular way? I think that's where the usefulness of the theory of psychological types comes in. Even supposing you decide you need to do more meditation, your whole approach to meditation, the way you saw meditation, might be influenced by the fact that you belonged to a certain psychological type without your realizing it. Perhaps we ought to try and have a sort of workshop.

Abhaya: I was wondering about that, Bhante ...

S: Just experimentally. I won't say that I'm convinced that it's necessary in every case that people should try to find out, with the help of these various theories of psychological types (which one they belonged to) but it might be worth inquiring whether we could make use of one or another of the [101] theories of psychological types in the way that I have suggested. Perhaps it would help at least some people. So it might be worth while having a weekend workshop or something like that to go into the matter, and see whether it did in fact help people in getting a more objective view of themselves.

I think actually self-knowledge is very difficult. It is quite easy to see that one has this or that specific characteristic, to know that you are unmindful and you've got a bad temper; but what you are like as a whole, I think it's extraordinarily difficult to see.

Kulamitra: Do you think, Bhante, that that might be more useful in conjunction with your spiritual friend rather than you trying to do it yourself? Because if you've got certain weaknesses, you might not want to sort of look ...

S: Yes, indeed. It might be quite illuminating. If, for instance - I'm sort of thinking aloud - supposing that in one of these groups or workshops you had, say, a number of people who knew one another reasonably well. I think you would have to know one another; I don't think you could be relative strangers. Perhaps a community or the chapter could do this as a sort of project. Supposing you decide that you're going to take up, say, for the evening or the afternoon, a particular theory of psychological types. So maybe you do a bit of preliminary reading so that you are quite familiar with these types and what they represent, what they are all about; and then you go round the circle. Perhaps you just have seven or eight people, you know, to keep it reasonably intimate. And everybody says in turn which psychological type they think, say, Tejamitra is and why they think that. Because it might not at all correspond with his idea about himself. And it might give him some insight into himself and help him to see himself as others saw him, and perhaps to see himself more as he really is.

I can say in my own case that I think I went through the first half of my life thinking I was a certain kind of person but, when I came to the second half, realizing that my character is of quite a different type. Certainly, reading some of my old writings and letters - well, not all that old, but from the fifties - I can see that I wasn't actually at that time the sort of person that I then thought I was. I used to have the idea that I was very sort of mild and gentle and so on, but reading some of my letters I don't at all get that impression. If I'd not known who I was, as it were, I would have thought that this was, not exactly a cantankerous person, but not

someone whose path one should really cross! But at the time I didn't think of myself in that way at all. As I say, it is very difficult to know what one is like overall. It is easy enough to recognize specific traits or habits or qualities or characteristics, but not to get an overview of oneself. Therefore, you don't really know wherein, broadly speaking, you are deficient, or wherein you exceed.

[102]

So perhaps it would be a good idea to have that sort of workshop, whether just for an evening or for a weekend or whatever, and just see whether it did work, whether it did help, whether it was of interest or...

Abhaya: You've started something there!

S: Well, I hope so. (I hope it doesn't get) forgotten, because everybody's just so busy.

Dharmapriya: This would suggest to me that, when we choose or ask for our visualization practice, it is definitely on the basis of 'I feel an affinity or pull', whereas if one has been through such a workshop, one's Spiritual brothers might say very clearly, not that you are wasting your time, but 'Why not try such-and-such a (person)? You would see such benefits coming from it, perhaps.'

S: Also it might help you in resolving your differences with other people, because sometimes it is just that people of different character types see things in such different ways and behave in such different ways, react in such different ways. There is therefore a lot of mutual miscomprehension, which leads to misunderstanding; you are expecting the other person to react or respond in the way that you would, not realizing that they belong to a quite different character type, and that it would be unreasonable to expect them to respond in the way that you would. They are not just being cussed or difficult, they are just running true to form, as it were.

Kulamitra: It seems that the factor of objectivity is very important, because when you are talking about spiritual friends going round in that way, you could do that anyway, but it could still seem very subjective if someone says to you, 'I think you are like this, but maybe these things can help you'.

S: If you have to explain or justify it in terms of a definite theory - this is the advantage of science! - then it ceases to be just your subjective impression. It ceases to be a matter of, say, 'I just feel that you've got a pretty bad temper. I can't say why, I just feel it. It's true, so you'd better look at it'. No, if you've got to express that in terms of a theory of psychological types, you're able to communicate to the other person much better what you think about them.

Let's go on

Abhaya: We'll move on to a question from Padmavajra about the importance of Freud as a thinker.

Padmavajra: This has two parts. It is said that Freud is one of the makers of modern thought. First of all, in what way in particular is this so? Secondly, what elements in Freud's thought are helpful, and what unhelpful, to the spiritual development of the individual?



[103]

S: Freud's thought is a very big question. I think we can't deal with it in just a few words. In any case, he changed his ideas, didn't he, especially towards the end of his life? One could say that Freud, scientifically speaking, discovered the subconscious. That's the long and the short of it. Freud discovered that there were often unconscious, or subconscious - he didn't originally distinguish subconscious and unconscious - motivations for things that you do. I think his approach was through the study of cases of hysteria, wasn't it? And he found that if one could dig down to the subconscious roots of certain manifestations one would be able to bring about a cure in the case of hysterical patients. So this was the seed from which his whole teaching sprang. So I think Freud's basic contribution is that he obliged people to recognize the importance of unacknowledged factors in their lives and behaviour. Also he discovered that many of these were associated with sex. So in many ways Freud is the discoverer of sex. People didn't know much about sex before Freud. They thought that sex was a comparatively limited phenomenon, just connected with reproduction of the species, and took up a small place in your life, perhaps no place at all. But Freud showed well, Freud saw sex everywhere, virtually. He seemed to see it in some places where it didn't actually exist. So nowadays, thanks to Freud - and I think it was a rather dubious blessing - people also see sex everywhere. If they see two men holding hands they think there is something funny going on. Well, that's due to Freud, because they wouldn't have thought that in the last century, and they don't think it in the East.

So I think Freud has certainly performed a useful service in alerting us to the fact that there are many unacknowledged factors at work in what we say, what we do and in fact our whole lives. Therefore, if we are to gain control of our lives we need to be aware of these. In other words, indirectly, Freud suggests that we need to be more mindful, which is what Buddhism also teaches.

But I think it's unfortunate that Freud's teaching has led to an over-consciousness of sex or an over-emphasis on sex. But I can't really say more than that.

What was the second part of the question?

Padmavajra: What elements in Freud's thought are helpful and what unhelpful to the spiritual development of the individual?

S: Well, obviously, it does help the spiritual development of the individual if he is able to recognize hitherto unacknowledged factors in his life, in his ( ? ) (and that this can) help him achieve eventual integration. Buddhism doesn't quite put it in these terms, for reasons that I mentioned earlier. But I think it is quite useful to have it put in the terms in which Freud put it.

[104]

There are lots of very suggestive, stimulating ideas in Freud's writing which are not of a strictly psychological or scientific character. For instance, his ideas about the development of monotheism, in his book 'Moses and Monotheism'. Perhaps it isn't necessary to go into all that now. But he is, I think, a quite fruitful and stimulating thinker for his ( ? ).

Abhaya: I have a question about Fromm. Do you think Fromm is closer to your thinking than the rest? Secondly, would you place the others in any sort of hierarchy vis-a-vis the Higher

Evolution, or helping towards the Higher Evolution?

S: I think it is very difficult to say. I must say I like Freud, in the sense that I enjoy reading Freud. I enjoy his clarity and precision and concentration. Jung I find often, though suggestive, rather woolly and diffuse. Fromm I find a little bland. But different people find different works helpful. Fairly recently, quite a few people in the Friends have read and appreciated Fromm's 'Art of Loving'. I read it many years ago: I can't recollect whether I thought it bland at the time. Perhaps I would now, but not perhaps quite as much as some of his later works. Probably Freud is the most original and the real pioneer, though obviously Jung has made a very important contribution, too. But all the others count: Fromm and Karen Horney and Sullivan and Adler and Reich and Stekel. There are scores of them. It is very difficult to say. I think you just take your choice, without spending too much time on them.

Abhaya: Susiddhi has a question about Fromm's five orientations.

Susiddhi: I didn't know much about Fromm's system. I find it a bit difficult, although interesting, especially how it relates to the spiritual life. (This is) an introduction to (the question). Fromm lists five orientations which people adopt towards the world. One may have a predominantly receptive attitude, an exploitive attitude, a holding attitude, a marketing attitude and, lastly, a productive attitude towards oneself and others. First question: should the first four orientations be left behind in the spiritual life or should their positive sides be used in the productive way? The second one is: would you connect the productive orientation with the development of reflexive consciousness?

S: Let's go through that again. Just briefly, what, one by one, are Fromm's five orientations?

Susiddhi: Right. Receptive orientation.

S: That's pretty clear, isn't it, the receptive orientation? He tends, as far as I remember, to think of receptive in terms rather of facility, because he speaks of the receptive person being compliant, which suggests a certain weakness, as going along with, and not very positive or - what is the term we [105] used before? - even not in a very ego-directed way. So yes, one can see there are people like that. I mean there are people who always agree with you, at least on the surface; they always go along with you, they will avoid an argument. So yes, one could say some people have that sort of orientation. And then, what was the next one?

Susiddhi: Exploitive.

S: Well, that's pretty clear, isn't it? The exploitive, the aggressive, and so on. Does Fromm actually say that these have got both positive and negative aspects?

Susiddhi: Yes. You list with the exploitive the list of negative characteristics and positive characteristics.

S: Yes. Then what were the others?

Susiddhi: Holding.

S: The holding, yes.

Susiddhi: And marketing.

S: That's pretty clear, yes. Yes, it's an interesting classification, isn't it? Partly because it's a little unfamiliar or unexpected. Then he comes on, fifthly, to ...

Susiddhi: The productive orientation.

S: Mm. It's as though he regards that as sort of superpositive. It doesn't have a negative side to it, does it, by very definition, as it were? I would say I would perhaps not go along quite with that ( ? ), I would distinguish between the productive and the creative. A rabbit is productive, or a pig ( ? ), but it's not very creative, is it? Not that productivity is a bad thing, but creativity is even higher. So what was the question?

Susiddhi: (a) Should the first four orientations be left behind in the spiritual life, or ...

S (interrupting): Leave behind, say, receptivity in the positive sense? Or does one leave behind even aggressiveness or exploitation in the positive sense? One mustn't perhaps be (misguided) by the customary meaning of these words. We tend to think of exploitation as something inherently unethical, but I don't think Fromm is using the term quite in that way. It is more like making use of, isn't it? He lists, I think, the positive qualities as heroism and vigour and so on - well, 'virya-like' qualities. So it would seem that, in the case of these four orientations, the negative aspect is definitely to be left behind but the positive one is to be cultivated as far as it can take one. Then, in the case of the productive, it's not any old sort of productivity. Buddhism would say it's the production of skilful mental states. But beyond even that, there is the creation, one might say, of something [106] altogether beyond - something like insight or imagination.

SIDE 2 (break in recording) I also found Karen Horney's threefold classification quite interesting - I hadn't thought about it for years, but just on looking through my notes - moving towards people, moving against people, moving away from people. You can certainly recognize people with these predominant characteristics. You can recognize the person who is always moving against, the combative type of person. You can see this in politics. Politics seems to encourage, to bring out, this sort of person. Look at Mrs Thatcher: she's a very good example of that sort of person, who moves against people. Others, of course, move away, or move towards. They are also very easily recognized. I think balanced people, healthy people, do one or the other according to circumstances, and, yes, spiritually oriented people do the one or the other as that is required by the needs of the whole process of spiritual development; not excluding, of course, the other-regarding aspect. Anyway, what ( ? )

Kulamitra: With Fromm's classification, the first four, he says, are not productive, and the productive he seems to define in terms of, in a way, self-development. So how can that actually be a type? This is what maybe Susiddhi was thinking of: if these are all meant to be on a level, the productive almost seems to be a different level of its own from the other types.

S: But it doesn't make it perhaps absolutely clear in what that difference really consists. Because the other types, too - the receptive type and the exploitive type and so on - can be productive, to the extent that they discard their negative aspect and develop their positive aspect. So you can't describe them as entirely non-productive. So it seems as though his classification isn't completely symmetrical. For instance, Karen Homey's, which is simpler, is

symmetrical, because there are three quite different movements on, as it were, the same plane - moving towards, against, away.

Subhuti: I took it from your explanation that he'd got both elements; that he'd got an explanation on one level, rather similar to Karen Horney's in terms of four movements, and an explanation on another level which was a synthesis of the positive qualities of the others taken together.

S: It could be so.

Subhuti: It wasn't so much that they are positive or negative, it's that they are double-edged. You know, somebody who is very pushy does get things done, but they are also a bit insensitive, and so on.

S: So that there is an actual negative aspect, which presumably could be discarded. I must say, I haven't read Fromm since the early days, fifteen years ago, so I can't really recall the discussion of ( ? ) just going through my notes. [107] But this could be one of the classifications that (could be discussed) in one of these work shops; after, of course, at least the leader reading up Fromm himself as ( ) I'm afraid I don't even remember in which of his books he discusses these things, but they should be quite easy to find. Books are always available, in fact we have quite a few in the Order Library.

Abhaya: I was wondering, Bhante, about Fromm's link-up. You refer to Fromm's link-up with the early thought of Marx and the later thought of Hegel. Could you say a little more about that?

S: I must say I haven't read these things for years and years, a decade and a half. But from what I remember, the common factor here is the whole question of alienation. I think the early Marx was very much concerned with the question of alienation, as was Hegel to some extent. I think that's where Fromm makes the connection with them and makes the connection between himself and both of them. In the later Marx, this idea of alienation found expression in his economic teaching, inasmuch as he saw man as alienated from his own labour and alienated from the fruits of his labour. I can't really say more than that.

\_\_\_: When you say that the common factor between them is alienation, could you say...

S: The point of connection, perhaps, rather than the common factor.

\_\_\_: Could you say how alienation is meant in that context? Is it alienated awareness, or alienation from ...

S: It includes an element, I would say, of alienated awareness inasmuch as you don't realize that something is in fact yours. I think Hegel wrote more on that aspect, whereas it seems that the early Marx thought much more in terms of your being alienated from your own labour and its fruits in the sense that your own labour had been taken away from you, and the fruits of your labour had been taken away from you, so that you no longer recognized or realized that they in fact were yours. You had lost control, so to speak, to that extent. But, as I say, that is one point that ( ? ) I can't really say more than that. But I believe I've got the relevant literature in the Order Library. There is a particular book by Fromm in which he goes into

Marx and, I think, Hegel's teaching about alienation. It is one of his later works.

Abhaya: So we move on now to a couple of questions on Buddhaghosa's classification. Kulamitra has a question about the deluded type.

Kulamitra: Yes. Does the deluded type really exist as a separate category, or is it more the confused central area between [108] the two extremes of the greed and hate types?

S: It is certainly reckoned as a separate type, but in a sense it is a product of the other two, though existing as an independent type, because it is usually said - I think Buddhaghosa himself says it - that the deluded type sometimes acts like the greed type and sometimes like the hate type. The suggestion is that it is in that that his confusion or bewilderment consists. But the deluded type is recognized by Buddhaghosa as a distinct third psychological type or character, as he says.

Kulamitra: Going through it in the tape, it did almost seem as if - well, the hate type is very clear, the greed type is very clear, and there's a very clear description of how they act in many different ways. And then the deluded type just seems to cover anybody who doesn't actually come clearly into either category.

S: Well, in a way that sort of unclarity is what is characteristic of the deluded type.

Mahamati: The question that was in my mind, leading on from Kulamitra's observation, was whether the deluded type would eventually become the hate type or the greed type, when he discovered as it were more of himself.

S: Buddhaghosa does give, as far as I remember, a list of positive counterparts, that is to say the types that these three types grow into as a result of practising the Dharma. To the best of my recollection, the deluded type turns into or becomes the intelligent type (the 'buddhicaritra'), just as the greed type becomes the faith type and the hate type becomes - I'm not quite sure, I don't remember ...

Voices: The wisdom type.

S: The wisdom type, yes. There is a distinction between wisdom and intelligence here. This is perhaps rather interesting. But, yes, the deluded type becomes the intelligent type, the (buddhicaritra).

\_\_\_ What does that mean?

S: One could discuss the question in terms of the meaning of intelligence, that is to say, the ( ? ) of intelligence, but one really ought to go back to the word 'buddhi' and ask how 'buddhi' is distinguished from 'prajna', which I've used instead of the word translated by 'wisdom' in this context. Buddhi would seem not to go so far as wisdom. Wisdom would seem to have rather a connotation of understanding, depth of understanding; whereas intelligence or buddhi seems to be characterized more by quickness, by ability, adaptability, flexibility. If we say someone is wise, and then we say someone is intelligent, there is a difference of connotation, isn't there?

[109]

Tejamitra: It strikes me that the deluded type is actually on a different level. I get the impression that Buddhaghosa had a system in his head, and got greed, hatred and delusion and tried to ram them all in. I mean this idea even of the positive counterpart of the deluded type still doesn't really wash, because you've got a doctrine-follower, the faith side and the wisdom side; you know, the two wings of Enlightenment, and that's...

S (interrupting): You've also got the ('shin'), the body ( ? ), which is the third type, as it were, in this context, along with the faith-follower and the doctrine follower.

Tejamitra: Well, that's the intuitive type, isn't it

S: That's the intuitive type, yes. You could say - though it's much more than that - you could align that, perhaps, with the deluded type.

Tejamitra: I feel that delusion is more like the basis below greed and hatred.

S: This is the traditional view, yes. It's more basic, it's ( ? ).

Tejamitra: And that this third view is just trying to push something into a system which doesn't quite work.

S: One might even say in that sense that there can't be a deluded type because, you know, all types are deluded types; they are non-Enlightened. Perhaps, though, something else is meant. The deluded type is more like the mentally overactive type; hate when transformed by practice of Dharma becomes the intelligent type. I think it's more like that. Perhaps one shouldn't relate - what shall I say? - the delusion which characterizes the deluded type to the delusion which is one of the three roots. The delusion which is one of the three roots is much more basic and fundamental, and underlies all the three psychological types, as it were, equally.

\_\_\_ But again, is it not the same word that you used?

S: It is the same word, yes. But then, prajna wisdom hasn't definite levels; it can mean learned and it can mean a transcendental...

Padmavajra: I was wondering: though the same words are used to describe the types, should one actually take them in the same way as the three unwholesome roots? Perhaps the context in which they are used as types, perhaps that's rather different.

S: Yes, because, as I have pointed out, there can't really be a deluded type. ('Mohacartra') taking 'mona' in the sense in which the term is used when we speak of the three [110] unskilful roots. You can't really have a deluded type in that sense, any more than you can have a religious type, as I mentioned towards the end of the talk.

Padmavajra: So in the same way, with the greed type, it's not as if it's a particular style. It isn't just that they are a greedy person: that's too gross. It's a particular ...

S: Not necessarily that they are always stuffing themselves with cream buns. They are

naturally an appropriative character, and that can manifest mentally.

Virananda: I've always thought those three came down to three, as it were, approaches to life: one being appropriative, the other repellent, and the deluded type's life strategy was to hide his head in the sand, just not to look at situations which threatened or undermined it, to maintain security in that way.

S: Mm: you could look at it like that. But, on the other hand, the fact that the ('mohacaritra') becomes the ('bodhicaritra') suggests that what Buddhaghosa has in mind is the mentally hyperactive person; he is always spinning all sorts of theories and gets himself entangled in them.

Dharmapriya: Going back to Kulamitra's comment of the two types, hate type and greed type, as being a polarity, would suggest that very few people are purely greed types or purely hate types, so that without being a deluded type you can actually sometimes be more like a greed type and more like a hate type. I find it hard to conceive of a person who, while deluded enough to be greedy, is never hateful.

S: I think Buddhaghosa makes the point that you never get a chemically pure psychological type. It's really quite inconceivable. It's just a question of a predominance of the one or the other. Because when there is greed there must be hatred, because your greed will sometimes be frustrated, and then what will you feel? You'll feel anger, you'll feel hatred.

Abhaya: I think Suvajra had a question about the positive counterparts to greed - or has it been answered?

Suvajra: No, it hasn't been answered. If it weren't going to be mentioned, I was going to ask why did you not include in this lecture the positive counterparts to these types, in that they do seem to offer an interesting way forward in the Higher Evolution?

S: I don't know, I can't remember why I didn't include them. I probably felt that I had included quite a lot of material and shouldn't include any more. But, yes, they are quite useful.

Susiddhi: You were very pushed for time in the lecture, Bhante, perhaps that's why.

[111]

S: It is certainly longer than yesterday's lecture. It (took me) much longer

Suvajra: It was an hour and a half.

S: Well, that's more than half an hour longer. In those days people didn't have the stamina that they have now! People were wanting to catch tube trains and buses and all that sort of thing.

Suvajra: If these are perhaps useful ways forward, should we not be thinking more of them, making use of them?

S: Yes, if one finds on examination that this particular classification or theory of psychological types is a useful one. I suspect that if one does get around to having some workshops on these things people will find certain theories or certain classifications of

psychological types more useful than others; whether this particular one will be among them, I am not sure, I can't say. But if it was, then, yes, one would need to consider those positive counterparts.

Padmavajra: Bhante, do you think that the five Buddha family classification could also be seen as a sort of description of psychological types, inasmuch as they equate the different Buddhas with particular poisons, etc?

S: Yes, one could think of psychological types in terms of the predominance of the five poisons, as well as the three, because the five are expanded from the list of three, one might say. And also, inasmuch as the five Buddhas are in a way symbolic figures, they gather around them all sorts of associations on different levels pertaining to their different aspects. And in that way, if one took them as representing five character types at the highest possible level of development, one might then be able to get all sorts of useful clues not only as to one's own character type but how best to develop it.

Buddhaghosa's classification, the fact that he has those three positive counterparts, does suggest that in a way your character type, your psychological type, persists, that you never completely transcend it, even in a sense that it isn't necessary. I think I have mentioned once that there is a Pali text - not a canonical text - where it is said that even Buddhas are of different types, and that there are Buddhas in whom wisdom predominates, and Buddhas in whom action, 'virya' or energy, predominates. And Gautama the Buddha is said to been a Buddha in whom wisdom, prajna, predominated. So I don't know how literally one is to take that, but it does certainly suggest that your psychological type remains with you and that, even when you are Enlightened, you are a Buddha of a particular type, but none-the-less a Buddha. You don't entirely dissociate yourself from your original starting point. That is to say, though you are Enlightened, you retain in a manner of speaking your individuality. You are still recognized as being Suvajra; you haven't become an anonymous, abstract [112] human entity that are just Enlightened, but one Buddha is clearly distinguishable from another, one Arhant from another. As you can see from the Pali Scriptures, Moggallana had a completely different temperament from Sariputta and both from Kassapa - I mean (Mahaka). And Ananda: well, Ananda wasn't an Arhant, but he was a stream entrant. But they all have quite recognizable characters, don't they? They are not all swallowed up in anonymity or uniformity the minute they gain Enlightenment.

Kulamitra: Perhaps in a way that gives a clue to why we haven't taken this all that seriously in the Movement: maybe people have thought, in a way, 'Well, this is just psychological; I'll soon leave that behind, therefore there's no need to go into it too much'. Maybe if we thought in that way: 'If we could discover what our overall character type is, that would be useful to us year after year after year, even as we developed' ...

S: Yes. As though you asked yourself, 'As and when I become Enlightened am I going to be more like Amitabha or more like Ratnasambhava? Or am I going to be like that deep green, mysterious Amoghasiddhi?'

Vairocana: Could I suggest that you could actually use things like astrology; if you are a certain type, perhaps, ( ? ) begin to base perhaps ( ? ) traits ( ? ) modify?

S: It's not so much the same traits but the same structure, I would say. I must say I agree (we)



don't know anything about astrology and I tend to regard it with rather ( ) suspicion, especially in its more popular manifestations.

Padmavajra: Would it be possible for you to (speak) of the difference between traits and structure?

S: By a trait I mean a characteristic, and a characteristic can be either positive or negative, so a negative characteristic would not persist. It would be eliminated, one might say. But the structure could remain the same, whether you were Enlightened or un-Enlightened. I am not sure whether that's clear enough.

Padmavajra: You mean the structure, let's say, one's tendency to move out or to move away from something or move towards?

S: Yes, you could have. I don't know whether that could be regarded as a structure. It is more like a movement. But it is analogous. But yes, you could say that after you gain Enlightenment you move towards other beings with compassion; but then that is not really quite the same, because you wouldn't be moving against people, you would just be moving against certain negative qualities in the environment, say, or in other people. So you would have to combine all three, [113] you know, (there would just be the) one, once you were Enlightened. But the fact that you can have a Buddha in whom metta predominates or a Buddha in whom prajna predominates suggests that there is what I called a structure persisting right the way through. Structure seems to be a neutral word. Why I use the word structure is that you can separate structure from content. I think that nowadays - I don't know much about it but I gather there's a sort of discipline which consists in the study of structures as structures, and you could find the same structures in ( ) religion, in anthropology, in if I'm not mistaken - biology, and so on; in the arts; and the same type of structure is repeated regardless of the specific content, regardless of the specific field, within which it occurs. So, in the same way, presumably the same structure can occur on different levels, or the same structure can persist through different levels. This is why I use the term structure.

Abhaya: We'll go on to the next one. Virananda has a question on possibly enlarging the fields of types.

Virananda: To some extent, Bhante, this question has been answered by what you have said so far, so there might not be much to be said on it. You say that there is a tendency to over-generalise when it comes to spiritual practice, and also that a vague intention to develop is not enough. You therefore emphasize the importance of knowing psychological types in order to decide upon specific method. How do you rate the usefulness of other, non-psychological, less scientific, more imaginative, classifications of human types, such as William Blake's three classes of man - of the Four Zoas - in providing help for deciding upon specific methods? And in particular, why do you rarely, if ever, mention the value of astrological types (laughter), especially as now we have at least one astrologer in the Order?

S: Well, as regards Blake, I must confess I have rather neglected Blake of late, because one can't keep up with everything. Nonetheless, I do think that Blake's imaginative classification - I'm not sure whether it's a classification of character types; it's a classification, or analysis, if you like, of the different aspects of - what would one say? humanity? You know, with the figure of Urizen representing alienated reason; there's Luvah representing - what it is Luvah

represents?

\_\_\_ Passion and emotion.

S: Passion and emotion. There's Tharmas representing ...

Voice: Sensation.

S: Sensation, the body. Well, I've gone into this a little and tried to tie it up with Buddhism in my little article on Buddhism and William Blake, haven't I? So, yes, I am quite [114] aware of the fact that there is this sort of material in Blake, and it could well be of utility. I think at the time that I gave this particular lecture it was many, many years since I'd read Blake (I reread him subsequently) and, probably for that reason, I didn't make any reference to Blake. But, yes, one could have a workshop on Blake's classification. We could go round the circle. We could say, you know, whether (of) any person ( ), people felt that he was predominantly Urizenic or Luvah-like or Tharmas-like, or whatever. It does seem a bit general; perhaps it's a little too general, but it might be interesting none the less. I think it's of great imaginative value. One can't help thinking that the figure of Urizen, you know, really dominates the world in many ways.

I once had the idea of giving a lecture - I might give it yet called 'Buddhism and the Spectre of Buddhism'; 'spectre' in Blake's sense, because Urizen represents in a way, or corresponds to, the spectre, the alienated intelligence or alienated reason. So by 'the spectre of Buddhism' I would mean not Buddhism itself - not Buddhism proper, not real Buddhism, but an alienatedly intellectual presentation of it, which would in fact be a big (veil). I think some presentations of Buddhism fall into this category. I think, for instance, ( ? )'s 'What the Buddha Taught' to some extent falls into this category.

Suvajra: The spectre.

S: It's the spectre of Buddhism rather than Buddhism itself. But perhaps I won't give that talk, so I'll just mention now that I did have the idea. You can see the sort of ideas that I might have expressed in it.

As for astrology, I really distrust astrology, whatever its objective philosophical value or symbolical value might be, because there is such a tendency, even to some extent within the Movement itself, for people to depend upon guidance from astrological sources, as though they seek a justification for what they are doing or want to do, inasmuch as it's 'fated', it's all written in the stars and you can't help it, so you might as well just go ahead and do it. I think this is the reason why I am quite reluctant to give any endorsement to astrology, at any rate for practical reasons.

Tejamitra: Do you think that that couldn't be overridden, accepting the fact that people, say, in the Order accept that change is possible, and don't take a fatalistic view of life anyway? Do you think that that couldn't be overridden and that there could be some use in just getting psychological types from astrological data? I mean it's - I don't know very much about it myself, but it's supposed to take information from where you were born and the time and the day and ...

S: Even that, though - the suggestion is one of determinism. It's not that, I mean, sometimes they do say it isn't determinism, it's not that you're fated, but it's just that the [115] stars give a sort of reading of where you're at, not that they determine where you're at. But I think it's very easy to overlook that distinction, to ignore it altogether. And in the case of those people within the Movement, even within the Order, who I know consulted, well, not so much astrologers as mediums well, they are really seeking justification probably for something which they want to do but which they felt perhaps wouldn't meet with general approval or which was not really very acceptable from a Buddhist point of view.

Sanghapala: Bhante - does the same apply to the I Ching? I noticed recently, to my surprise, that, in correspondence with Lama Anagarika Govinda, you mentioned the I Ching. It seemed to have a positive note in it, your mentioning of it.

S: I think the I Ching is rather different. In some ways, it is almost the opposite of astrology. Because I think what it does very often, in practice, is to draw your attention to an aspect of a situation that you might have overlooked, rather than to confirm you in what you already wanted to do. Perhaps it's a bit vague, so it stimulates your thinking. For instance - it's a long time since I looked into the I Ching; I don't know whether I can give a proper quotation - but if you turn up something like 'It furthers one to cross the great water' - well, you might just have been thinking of going to India. So you think, 'Ah, I read in the I Ching that "It furthers me to cross the great water"' - although I might not take 'great water' in the literal sense. I mean, what could water signify?' You see what I mean? It's like going into it a bit more deeply.

On the other hand, it might never have occurred to you to leave Britain, so you turn up, 'It furthers one to cross the great water' and you think, 'Well, maybe I should take a wider view, maybe I should think of going abroad.' It puts a new idea into your mind. So I think the I Ching can function in a way quite differently from the way, I think, in which astrology usually functions.

(S ): Bhante, if you pick out the specific question with the I Ching, does it help, is it wise, to approach it with a specific question in mind before one consults the I Ching, or - ?

S: I find it quite difficult to say. I think this is what people usually do. I think people usually consult the I Ching when they've got a problem and they just don't know what to do about it, or there's a lot of alternatives before them and they don't really know which one to choose, so they hope that the I Ching will give them some kind of pointer. But, as I said, very often it would seem that the - what do you call it, the number or whatever that you turn up?

Voices: The hexagram.

S: The hexagram gives you a suggestion which was perhaps quite [116] unexpected and sets you thinking. The impression I've got is that almost the last thing the I Ching does is to tell you what you ought to do. So I think in that respect it's much less dangerous, in a way at least, than consulting an astrologer or a medium.

I think also it's different inasmuch as you consult a book in the case of the I Ching, you don't consult a person or an individual. Whereas when you consult a medium, you consult a person. Why is that person a medium? Why do they want so much to give advice to other people? I

think that some mediums are very tendentious and perhaps even like the idea of guiding and directing people and even having control over them. They have got their own little axe to grind, sometimes. It might even be the same with astrology, though perhaps not to the same extent. But you are, I think, in a way much safer with the I Ching, partly for that reason.

Virananda: I was thinking of using astrology in a very limited way, not for seeking advice as to how I ought to lead my life, but merely to decide upon my type, which can be done by knowing, say, one's sun sign, one's moon sign and one's rising sign. And I personally have found that helpful.

S: I am quite aware of that distinction. I am quite aware that one can use astrology in that way. But supposing someone says, 'Oh, Bhante's endorsed astrology,' everybody would think, 'He says astrology's OK'; it would not be taken just in that sense. You know, people would think that Bhante approved of consulting astrologers about your future and what you ought to do and so on. This is why I am being careful.

Abhaya: We've got one more question from Kulamitra, on recommended practices for men and women.

Kulamitra: Yes, just towards the end of the lecture, sort of almost in passing, you point out that it may be that we discover that men and women need to think of themselves as different types with different needs. So the question is: do you now have definite ideas of what practices would be helpful to women but are not necessary for men, or vice versa?

S: I have given quite a bit of thought to this since giving this lecture. It is one of the things I've continued to think about, especially in this last two or three years; and more especially because women in the Movement seem to be making such slow progress in comparison with the men, especially in view of the fact that so few women get ordained; even though they may be trying quite hard, but they don't seem to just get there. So one of the questions that I asked myself was whether they were being as it were forced into a masculine pattern and whether women needed a different approach to the spiritual life and that we needed to find that different approach, or they needed to find it, so that they could just evolve on their own more quickly. Do you see the line of reasoning? I discussed this matter with the women Order Members [117] quite extensively - I asked them to think about it, and they discussed it - but they are quite unable to say. They could not come to any conclusion. Neither have I been able to come to any conclusion. So I can see it as a theoretical possibility, but neither myself nor the women Order Members have been able to identify any particular practices which aren't particularly helpful to women and which they could drop off, or which would be particularly helpful and which they should therefore take up vigorously.

So it rather looks as though one can't look at men and women as different psychological types from this point of view, even though there are very obvious physical and psychological differences between men and women. Possibly the division of psychological types cuts across the division between the sexes. That was why I explored the matter more recently, because I was wondering whether, because there was a predominance of men in the Movement, women were being expected to approach the spiritual life in a way which was in fact more appropriate to men. But one can't actually see any concrete evidence for that, or for the fact that another approach would suit women better; and the women themselves have been unable to think of any.

Abhaya: Actually there was another question from Ratnaguna which I overlooked, I'm sorry. It's about meditation and the forty ('K...s')

Ratnaguna: In this lecture you say that Buddhaghosa, in recommending certain meditation practices for the greed type, others for the hate type and yet others for the bewildered type, was in effect saying that following the path of Higher Evolution is not a vague, general sort of process, but that it requires a particular course of action and that this course of action will be determined very much by one's own psychological type. You have outlined for us in the FWBO a system of meditation - mindfulness of breathing, metta-bhavana, the six-element practice, visualization practice, and just sitting. But in the FWBO we don't give people a specific meditation practice for their specific psychological type or particular conditioning, weaknesses, etc. Meditation practices in the FWBO seem to be more general than in the time of Buddhaghosa. Why is this?

S: I wouldn't agree that we don't give more specific practices, or don't encourage people to practise certain forms of meditation more than others. I myself have certainly suggested in the case of certain individuals that they should practise more mindfulness, more awareness, because they seem very restless and distracted, or more metta, or for instance that they should do the prostration practice, because that would seem to be appropriate to that particular temperament for one reason or another. But as... [Break in recording] [118] The Six Elements practice actually is a Vipassana practice. So, one is not really experiencing infinite space in the way that one is experiencing it in the context of the arupa dhyanas; it's as though infinite space or just space in the context of the Six Elements practices is more of a nature of a symbol, it's difficult to say perhaps more than that. One does have an actual experience of space and if I was to intensify and deepen that experience of space, well, yes one could well develop it to the extent that one experiences it in connection with the arupa dhyanas but I must not forget that in the case of the Six Elements practice, one is engaging in reflections and of course in the arupa dhyanas, all reflection is really absent, discursive mental activity is absent; so it could not by very definition be 'arupa dhyana'. At the same time, there is a sort of connection; there is a small overlap one might say in a way when one is practising the Six Elements practice but, no, it certainly would not be an experience of an arupa dhyana.

Kulamitra: It occurred to me from what you said and what you said this previous week, could it help to say you did dwell on that sort of symbolic experience and take it as far as the arupa dhyana, would that give you a particularly good basis for insight in that particular way?

S: Oh yes, it would, if you could as it were come back from that experience and then reflect and develop vipassana, you'd have an especially strong base, that would help. You could in a way linger over the practice in that way, in a way prolong the practice or stretch up the practice in that way. In fact, it is sometimes said, it is sometimes recommended, one should alternate periods of samatha with periods of vipassana because if you have too long a period or too long a spell of vipassana without experience of samatha, it can become merely discursive and be quite unable to penetrate into anything in such a way as to develop real insight. So one needs to plunge into samatha for a while, then allow one's mind to take up the previous train of reflection so as to develop vipassana because you then have an additional thrust behind that reflective mental activity. But you find this happening in an ordinary sort of way; maybe you're reading something, maybe some philosophical work, you're thinking quite a lot but then you just break to give you some little pause as it were; you rest for a bit and then, you go back to the book, and carry on again. It's the same sort of thing on a very much

lower level. (Pause.)

Abhaya: Padmavajra has a question about your terms you're using for the 'dhyana for beginners' seminar, with reference to the dhyanas.

Padmavajra: Could you say more about your description of the dhyanas as the first stage being the human, second dhyana being the artistic, the third the mystical and the fourth, the magical

S: What did I say the first was?

Padmavajra: You described the first dhyana as the human.

[119]

S: I think because there one is concerned with integration - especially horizontal integration - to be human is to be integrated; to be integrated is to be human one might say. So I think that's what I had in mind at the time. And then?

\_\_\_ Second, the artistic.

S: Well, I think that's pretty obvious because there is that well of inspiration or spring of inspiration bubbling up within you, if not all the time at least intermittently; you have your moments and then you scribble like mad, and think like mad. So, I think there the correspondence is pretty clear.

Padmavajra: The third being the mystical.

S: By the mystical one means the sustained experience of higher spiritual states, absorption in higher spiritual states; or the spiritual states sort of take you over, they possess you just as the water saturates the lotuses which are growing in the water; it's all immersed; the mystical is a state of immersion, complete immersion in higher spiritual states.

Padmavajra: And then the fourth the magical.

S: The simile for the fourth is that you are in this pure white garment, it's just like a cloak and you're as it were radiating energy; I also called it the stage of radiation in fact. So you repel all that is antagonistic; you've got a sort of magic circle around you and nothing can get inside that and harm you. In fact you can take the offensive, you can direct your energy outwards, like a great magician or like Padmasambhava subduing the demons; I therefore call that the magical. Don't take these sort of descriptions too literally; I tried to inject a little bit of life into the subject as it were but they do correspond to some extent.

Padmavajra: I found them very attractive and appealing when I first heard of them and I was sort of wondering (I'll risk this!) if there was not a sort of... well, there is two things; there is those and - I think I've read Lama Govinda saying somewhere the word the word 'dhyana' came from a root which meant something like 'vision' and I wondered if there were some... we think of the dhyanas as subjective states - but one also can describe them as visionary states in some way, as experience...

S: I think one could, because it is also said that when you are in a dhyana state you do or you can see the beings of the world corresponding to that state and 'dhyana' is really supposed to come from 'jhana', 'jhayati' to muse or to reflect; it may be if you traced further back it's connected with the same root as you find in the case of 'dharsana' which is definitely connected with a root meaning to see but I don't recollect that dhyana or jhana has that connection; it just might be if you go far enough back etymologically speaking; I am not just sure of it. But there is no doubt, that certainly in early Buddhism, in the Buddha's own teaching that a 'devaloka' was the objective correlate of 'dhyana'. So when you ascended so to speak to a dhyana you thereby became able to see the beings, the devas who [120] who inhabited the world that was the objective correlate of that particular dhyana. So certainly one could say that in view of that consideration that the dhyanic state was at least potentially a visionary state. (Pause.)

Abhaya: Ratnaguna, a question of meditation and faith in the teaching.

Ratnaguna: Actually I've got another question on meditation so I've sort of put them both in the same one...

Abhaya : Ah, you've got meditation, health and balance.

Ratnaguna: Yes. In the question and answer session after the lecture - we listened to that as well - someone asked you what traditional meditation practices would not be suitable for us in the West because you said that there were some things. You answered: firstly, certain practices which required unquestioning faith in the teacher and secondly, certain practices which were too difficult, time consuming and required a high degree of health and balance. So as regards your first answer - those practices which require unquestioning faith in the teacher, you said that people in the West just don't have that degree of faith in their teacher, and I have also heard, admittedly third hand, that you have said that you were not hard on people in the F W B O because we don't have sufficient faith in you.

S: Well, that's true.

Ratnaguna: So, my first question falls into three parts Firstly: have things changed since that lecture in this respect? Secondly, if not why not? And thirdly: is there anything we could be doing to cultivate more faith in you as our teacher?

S: Take the first question first.

Ratnaguna: Have things changed in this respect in recent years?

S: No, the very beginning.

Ratnaguna: The preamble; you said that we in the West can't really take on certain practices which require unquestioning faith in the teacher.

S: I think I had especially in mind at that time the koan. Because it's very difficult to believe that you really can break through just by busting your mind on a conundrum that you really think is quite ridiculous because you are told in advance there is no answer to it and you can't really solve it on its own terms. Well, you just need tremendous faith in your teacher, that is

the koan for you and that you can actually gain enlightenment by trying to penetrate its meaning even though you know it does not have a meaning. I don't think we can manage that in the West; I really don't. I don't think they find it very easy in Japan and China. Also with regards unsuitable practices, I had in mind the corpse meditations because we hardly ever see a corpse; it might be a bit of a shock to have to meditate on the ten stages of decomposition of a corpse. This is a very, very difficult thing indeed and [121] I think very, very few people in the East even, these days, do it. Anyway to go back to the real questions

Ratnaguna: Have things changed in this respect in the FWBO?

S: Ask exactly what is it if you like.

Ratnaguna: You answer in a question and answer session that there were certain practices which required unquestionable faith in the teacher so have things changes since then?

S: There has been some improvement but I am only too conscious of the fact that there are quite a lot of people, even in the Order, who I could not ask to do certain things, they would not - well, as you put it - have sufficient faith but not only just in me but in the Dharma or in the Order or in the FWBO: it would represent too much of a leap in the dark for them and they would be too distrustful, too suspicious to be able to accept that particular advice or that particular teaching. And there is still quite a lot of this, quite a lot but, as I said, I think the situation is improved. But I think really... I was going to say it's improved only in the case of those who had rather closer personal contact with me but that's not altogether true because they are quite a few people who have quite a strong faith in me who had very little contact in me indeed, especially those in India; in some ways had least contact with me. Sometimes I think some of our Indian order members and mitras have got more faith in me than most order members and mitras have in the West even though they had many more contacts with me. It's as though - I don't want to generalize too much about the Indians - but it's as though faith does come more easily to them. But I think there has been some improvement in the Order and among mitras in this country but only to a limited extent; I mean among a minority of people I would say.

Ratnaguna: Well, the second part was; if not, why not?

S: I think to some extent our ethos is against it - our modern, secular and rationalistic ethos. But it's not even as simple as that; I think a lot of people have blind faith in Christianity. Blind faith is pretty common; obviously we don't encourage blind faith in the FWBO. Perhaps it's that people find it difficult to disentangle faith in the truly Buddhist sense from 'blind faith'. Look at all the people who have faith in Rajneesh for instance; look at the people who've got faith in the Pope but it's a 'blind faith' we would say in almost all cases. So, yes, we discourage blind faith people have tended - perhaps unintentionally or unconsciously - we tended to discourage faith altogether and people have therefore thrown away the proverbial baby with the proverbial bath water.

Ratnaguna : What's the difference between 'unquestioning faith and blind faith'?

S: I think 'blind faith' - this might sound a bit paradoxical - is sort of projected; you see what I mean by that? In blind faith you hand over responsibility to somebody else; you don't want to take responsibility for yourself and you just surrender to the other person; you believe that he



can do it all for you. But faith in the Buddhist sense, even strong faith, is not like that; it's more like the faith of the mountaineer in the man who is further [122] up the mountain to whom he is roped; it's more that sort of faith. There is a lot of experience in it, a lot of trust, a lot of confidence as well, clear-sightedness.

Ratnaguna: I was going to ask actually if unquestioning faith is a good thing.

S: Perhaps we should define our terms. Unquestioning faith... Perhaps, it's not just unquestioning because one is (questioning oneself away?) but undoubting faith. You don't doubt because you know, because you have confidence, with which of course must be based on your experience of that particular person; and to have experience of them, you must have some contact with them; you must be receptive. That brings us on to - I don't know whether it's the next question or the one after that - developing. Let's say undoubting rather unquestioning. What was the question? Was it next?

Ratnaguna: It was next. It was: 'Is there anything we could be doing to cultivate more faith in you as our teacher?'

S: I think it's also a question of ( ? ) of developing more faith or trust generally. I think it's faith in the sense of trust that one is concerned with here. I think there is quite a lot of mistrust among people even within the Order. You ask someone to do something - sometimes they think: 'what is he up to; what's behind it?'. It's that sort of thing, not a feeling that 'well, yes, the person just wants to know' or 'the person wants to do such things because it needs to be done.' I am just trying to think of an example.

Padmavajra: The mitra questionnaires that we have done recently.

S: That's true. Yes, there is a certain amount of suspicion at least among a few people to what they'd be needed for, to what sort of use it's going to be made of, although not as much as one might have expected.

Kulamitra: The impression I've got with that is that a lot of people had initially suspicious feelings but were able to put them aside when they looked at it closer; I think it did spark off at least that initial sort of...

S: I think the suspiciousness in this sort of case comes from the general suspiciousness of bureaucracy - that was a reaction. But on reflection they realized that was not what it was at all and then proceeded to fill in the form with the exception of one or two people who sent off a blast individually (?) to the Order office or to Devamitra. So I think one aspect, just one of the things one needs to do in developing faith and trust, is to get rid of this unnecessary suspiciousness. For instance - yes I can think of a little bit of an example - I was talking to one of the women mitras, I think it was last year. We were just talking quite generally and I happened to mention one of the woman order members. I just said in passing this or this woman order member had referred to her in conversation, to the mitra to whom I was speaking. And that mitra once reacted violently; 'she was talking about me; what did she said about me; why was she talking about me?', almost panic-stricken, really that's no exaggeration, panic-stricken. I was taken aback by this, by that sort of deep suspiciousness. So if, for instance, a mitra has that sort of feeling of [123] suspiciousness about an order member, how can there be trust, how can there be faith? But it is not a problem related to that

particular order member, it's part of that particular person's - in this case that particular mitra - whole attitude towards life: an attitude of mistrust, fear and suspicion. Perhaps that person is not altogether to blame, perhaps they have had a very difficult experience of life which has induced that sort of conditioning, that sort of attitude, but nonetheless it's got to develop faith in the sense of trust in order members or me, or even fellow mitras; they've got to resolve that sort of thing, that's the first thing that needs to be done to get over this dreadful mistrust that we have. A lot is still within the Order; a lot of suspicion about order members and what they might be up to or what they might be trying to do to you. A lot of defensiveness therefore; when there is defensiveness, there is no openness and you can't co-operate, you can't collaborate, you can't do things together. So I think perhaps the first thing to get rid of is this mistrust and suspicion and defensiveness with regard to fellow order members, fellow mitras or me; you lose so much in that way, you're blocking off so much.

Padmavajra: Do you find that people are suspicious of you personally, have you even encountered that in the movement?

S: No... I would say on the whole people tend, order members tend to be more suspicious of one another in some cases, or of certain order members than they are of me. But that might be because very often they don't have very close dealings with me. (Laughter.) It might simply be for that reason. If they did have very close dealings with me, well may be that particular attitude would emerge more, I don't know. I think on the whole those who associate with me more closely do have more trust and more confidence in me; so I think that is the other side of the matter. This is why I have been emphasizing recently that certainly more experienced and senior order members should have more contact with me, partly for this reason, especially those who have a more prominent position in their own centres or communities, because if they don't have a definite trust in me as well as in one another, what is going to be the future of the Movement or the future of the Order? This is why I sometimes wonder why people do keep away when they have an opportunity of more contact, either with me or with one another. In this connection, I am quite pleased that the chairmen eventually did get to know one another better, I think as? now they developed much more trust in one another than was the case before but there is still, even in their case, a lot of room for improvement; I think perhaps about a third of the way there. (Laughter.) That's quite good if you consider what they were like at the beginning. Quite good, yes, you're underestimating the achievement.' It's quite an achievement but about a third of the way there, not more than that.

Mahamati: Do you think that, I remember what you've said on the seminar, that one's attitude to a teacher initially should not be one of faith, it should be one of metta?

S: I think I know the context. No, it was not quite that. What I said was: it does not have to be pre-decided who is the teacher, who is the disciple when you first come together. You just come together as friends, and you have metta for each other. But in the course [124] of your contact, of your friendship, of your communication, it eventually becomes obvious perhaps that one of you is actually more experienced, more developed or more insightful than the other. And in that case therefore in the part of the less experienced person, the metta becomes tinged with something like faith and more and more tinged in that sort of way but nobody can say in advance, Well, look, I am the teacher, I know more than you; you are going to adopt the position of disciple.' No one can take up that attitude, not even the Buddha; I don't think the Buddha did. You start off by communicating as it were on the level and it very soon quite naturally emerges, if both persons are open, who has the greater experience. Sometimes it's

difficult to know; the other person may be more experienced than you in some respect and less experienced in others; it may take years to strike up a proper balance, and you should not be in a hurry to do so, in a way it does not matter.

Padmavajra: I was wondering on that point whether some people are concerned about their lack of faith in you then perhaps what they should be working on is more, in a way trying to generate more metta.

S: Also closer contact. Metta will certainly help because it will certainly disperse any sort of suspiciousness or lack of openness. Ditto with fellow order members and so on.

Is that all of it?

Ratnaguna: The second question. (You probably answered this actually.) You said your second answer to that question was that there are certain practices which are too difficult, time consuming and require a high degree of health and balance; that may not be exactly what you said. What practices did you have in mind? and you said any one in the order ready to take up such practices now.

S: I can't remember which practices I had in mind; I probably had in mind various Vajrayana practices; perhaps I had in mind that ego-destroying practice where you go to a solitary place for months on end; you call up demons and offer them your flesh to eat, etc... That would be rather difficult for people to practise: I don't think there is anything which is out of the question for the movement as a whole in the long run, assuming that it is in fact spiritually possible. I mean some people have quite long solitary retreats, up to six months; some people have gone through very strange experiences, I think I am probably in a better position to know about this than anybody else; some people I know in the course of their meditation practice, it's more than a few people, have had some quite traumatic and quite fearful experiences some of them but nonetheless gone through it. They pushed on and came out the other side; there are quite a few people who had horrific experiences of this kind in one way or another. So that fact also has to be recognized. They've not taken up any sort of particularly difficult practice but they certainly had a difficult time and nonetheless they have pushed on.

Abhaya: That brings us to the end of the questions on meditation; the rest is to do with psychotherapy. Sudhana has got a question about the extent to which order members could learn psychotherapeutic techniques.

[125]

Sudhana: Bhante, to what extent should order members learn psycho-therapeutic techniques, synthesize them in our teaching and from what sources should we learn?

S: I don't think one could generalize but I certainly think it would be a good thing if, within the order, we had all the appropriate skills. It is quite nice now we've got one or two doctors within the movement, within the order; it's good we've got our own yoga teachers within the order; we did not even have that before. Do you remember? We had someone teaching yoga in the Archway days who was a follower of Vedanta; he used to drag in all sorts of vedantic things at yoga classes which was not really quite good. But we don't have that now; we've got order members teaching yoga, we have got order members teaching karate, we've got order members teaching T'ai Chi - one order member teaching T'ai Chi; I am very pleased with that

development. So I am quite pleased that we should have psychotherapists and psychoanalysts of all kinds within the order. We don't need many; I mentioned the other evening about my referring or advising one of the women mitras to go and see Advayacitta; that worked quite well and the outcome of that was very positive and ( ?) I am not quite sure what he is - whether a psycho therapist or a psychoanalyst - but he is qualified anyway and he knows all about such things...

Kulamitra (interrupting): he is a clinical psychologist.

S: A clinical psychologist, yes. How one goes about the training; whether people would want to take up the training - which I think is often long and arduous - after becoming an order member I am not sure. But certainly if anybody came into the movement having those sorts of professional skills, I would certainly encourage them to use them or at least make them available as and when needed within the context of the movement. There are order members doing massage; I think there are order members who even know about co-counselling. I think we should bring all these things within the order so that they can be, to the extent to which they are useful, integrated with that overall approach to the Dharma and the spiritual life.

Sudhana: So when you say in your lecture 'modern teachers in meditation should know and use the modern methods of psychotherapy' you don't mean individual teachers of meditation at centres but the order as a whole should...

S: I think this extra teacher should be available within the order. Supposing someone taking a class feels that someone is mentally disturbed, does not really know how to deal with it or handle it themselves well look it's really useful if they can refer that person to a fellow order member. That's much, much better than referring to a psychoanalyst outside you can't get together with and he's got a different point of view, a different approach and, in any case, it's his bread and butter... You see what I mean? If you can refer such a person to a fellow order member is so much better. But that means we must have order members with the appropriate qualifications within the order and this I am pleased we've got Advayacitta - he is a clinical psychologist.

[126]

Abhaya: I was wondering about these counselling courses which are not very long and arduous courses. Surata is doing one. I was wondering about doing one myself.

S: I think it's quite important that order members should let other order members know what they are doing and write up their experiences so that fellow order members have a clear idea of what it is they learned and in what way it is useful otherwise they won't be in a position to know whether to refer a particularly disturbed person or a person who needs a particular kind of help to a particular order member. I think it's the duty of the order member concerned to keep the rest of the Order informed through Shabda. Just in the same way I know Suvajra let us know what he was up to with the Spiritualists (laughter); in a way we were quite well informed about that; we knew exactly what he was doing and what they were doing. I met all sorts of fascinating characters through him. So, yes, if you are learning counselling, write to Shabda, and why you decided to take it up, in what way it is useful, what sort of people it can help, etc., so that everybody knows. Some people - one or two, I am not sure whether order members are - have taken up or are taking up the Alexander Technique; others are taking up Acupuncture. There seems to be quite a lot of expertise within the Order now. There certainly

was not at the beginning; in fact very little expertise. Most people in those days wanted to forget in a way whatever expertise they originally had had anyway.

Abhaya: I would like to clear a small contradiction that appears to be there when you mentioned Acupuncture. You seemed when it had been mentioned recently, in discussion when you'd be present, it seemed to me you come out rather vehemently against it.

S: Not against acupuncture itself. I certainly believe that it is an art, or a science. I think it's a quite - to use a popular term - a quite powerful thing. It can, as it were, interfere with your system quite drastically. I therefore think you have to be very careful who you go to, and not sort of hand yourself over to them unthinkingly, just to stick needles into you, in the hope of producing some kind of helpful result. Someone was talking to me recently about it and saying that in the West the training has been very much hurried up and that in China the training took very very much longer and therefore from the traditional point of view, just spend three or four years learning acupuncture to practise is ridiculous. I must say that is rather my own impression. So it is not that I don't believe in acupuncture, in a sense it's more that I believe in it very much so that I recognize its potential, both for good and perhaps for evil too. You can produce results, even dramatic results, as I know from my own experience. You must not forget that I have got a quite definite experience of acupuncture myself, and the person dealing with the treatment was one of the best known professional acupuncturist in the West but he did not know what he was doing with me; he was quite surprised at the effect that he produced. He might have killed me; I don't know but some people know; I was sort of dead about 35 minutes but he did not know. he did not know what he was doing. So that, to begin with, alerted me. You see what I mean?

[127]

Abhaya: Yes I do. You also mentioned earlier massage; I would like to clear that too. You seemed to give it a tick just then but from what I heard recently you very..

S: That is also true. Again, I think massage is a good thing but I am a bit mistrustful of the use some people may make of it in the sense that it does represent physical contact; again physical contact is a very powerful thing. I have even sort of say that now I have reservations about communication exercises, while we are on the subject. In the case of massage, I think one has got to be very very careful where you've got mixed massage; where you've got a person of one sex giving massage to a person of another sex. I think that is quite a different sort of situation. I must say I would rather discourage that kind of situation. People can develop a rather indulge-yourself, indulgent attitude over massage and can be overly body-oriented if you know what I mean, in a rather heavy sort of way; it's that I want to discourage. Not that I am not in favour of massage as such; I am quite sure it can be very useful and very helpful, not only physically but even mentally but broadly speaking I am not in favour of mixed massage in the sense of mixed massage courses or classes and people of one sex giving massage to people of the other sex; I think this just goes against what we are trying to do in other areas. As regards communication exercises, much the same there; they are a very powerful thing. I think on a mixed retreat you put young people of the opposite sex to do communication exercise you are almost inviting them to fall in love, and some times they do; is that the purpose of the retreat, you have to ask yourself. I have taken lots and lots of communication exercises myself and I have seen the sort of thing that can happen. If you get men and women doing communication exercises together, you've obviously there a sexual polarization; I don't think very often they can seriously think about communication, it

becomes a sort of sexual game. So again I think one must be very cautious. (Pause.)

So again not that I doubt the value or the validity of the practice or the exercise itself but I am aware that certain practices and certain exercises can be misused, from the point of view we had( ?)

Padmavajra: What about mixed yoga class for that matter?

S: I think it's not quite the same thing. It's noticeable I know that women do tend to gather around when there is a handsome male yoga teacher! But he'd just has to give a shout, look out. But I think it's not quite the same thing with a yoga class, just like with a mixed meditation class; it's not quite the same thing but mixed massage, communication exercises they are in a rather different category. One must be careful one does not convey the impression that one is being puritanical or narrow minded or anything like that but one must be clear in one's own mind what one is trying to do or orient one's different activities in that particular connection.

Padmavajra: Going back to the communication exercises, providing you do not allow members of the opposite sex to sit opposite - like (I am is very careful that we don't in beginners classes)-? are they O.K. within that context providing you keep people...

[128]

S: I think you ought to be just a bit cautious and a bit sensible. I think if you've got beginners, you are going to have men and women; you can't at the beginning segregate them completely; that's a matter of common sense. But I think you've got to try to be aware of the dangers as it were and do perhaps a little bit of shifting but not automatically put only men together and women together; this could be perhaps counter productive; because you might find the same number of men or it would not work out in terms of numbers perhaps.

\_\_\_ Bhante, what do you mean 'counter productive'?

S: Well, you just produce an impression that you were rather puritanical and rigid and people might not come back at all...

\_\_\_ In Glasgow, the separation is done all the time...

S: If you can do it without being counter productive, that's fine. but it may not always be possible in all circumstances.

Abhaya: We still have a few more questions, perhaps we ought to..

A: Ratnaguna has a question about the Buddha saying that all worldlings are mad.

Ratnaguna: You are saying actually that the Buddha said that everyone who is not enlightened was mad.

S: A 'worldling 'is someone who falls short of Stream Entry.

Ratnaguna: Do you know what the word translated as mad is?

S: I don't remember; as far as I recollect it is the ordinary straight forward word for mad.

Ratnaguna : It seemed a bit odd putting it in at the point of the lecture you did because you were talking about neurotic, psychotic psychopathic people and then you put in what the Buddha said...

S: I think there is a degree of neurosis and even psychopathy in all so called 'normal' people; all psychologists or psychopathologists recognize that the psychopathologies are fuller development of seeds that are there in everybody. Think of sadism; in fact everybody is a little bit sadistic at some stage of his or her life, at least when you are a little child. You kicked the cat or you rather enjoyed may be cutting a worm in half or anything of that sort. (Laughter from members of seminar.)

Abhaya: Virananda has a question about the myth of 'mental illness'.

Virananda: Bhante. You said that there is a need for psycho therapy because of the increase in mental illness in modern society. Some thinkers such as Thomas Saxe would say that the concept of mental illness is an artificial one and some might even go so far as saying that there is no room for the terminology of 'illness'; there is no need for speaking alternative ways - inverted commas - of seeing the world. (Laughter.) First, to what extent might inverted [129] commas 'mental illness' be a myth created by followers of Freud a myth which provides many people with a way of finding an identity in the world but unfortunately through providing them with an illness to identify with. Second. how strict is the equivalence between suffering as the Buddha used the term, in His noble truth of suffering, and the suffering of the neurotic-psychotic from his psychotic state?

S: I think that there is something in what (how do you pronounce his name? Saxe; I've got his book upstairs actually.) I think that there is something in what he says but nonetheless I don't think mental illness is entirely a myth. We don't see many examples of mental illness; they usually kept in mental hospitals. To go off on a slight tangent - I'll get back to the point eventually I have been reading a book called 'Jesus the Magician', which is very interesting, and it follows on from a little study I made fairly recently about the earliest of the gospels-better say the gospel according to St. Mark. What I sort of wanted to do is to put out of my mind whatever ideas I had of the Christ and Christian teaching, just read the gospels one by one with, hopefully, a completely clear fresh mind as though I read then for the first time as though I had never heard about Jesus Christ before or Christianity before. I read the gospel according to St. Mark which, according to practically all authorities whether Christian or non-Christian, is the earliest gospel. It's quite interesting to do that in the case of this particular gospel because it's full of what we would call 'mad' people; it's full of people possessed by demons It seems as though the whole population of Palestine at that time was possessed by demons sort of crowding round Jesus and begging him to heal them. And he did heal some of them wherever he went because he had the reputation of being a healer having cast out devils, people went flocking round him & gave him a quite difficult time. So one had the impression of Jesus moving in this demoniacal landscape;that was the impression I got. Reading this book about - this book called 'Jesus the Magician' by Mortimer Smith, he goes into it quite a bit and he makes the point that for all that we know, not only Palestine but other parts of the Mediterranean world, there were apparently lots and lots of mad people who behaved very strangely and bizarrely and there were no mental hospitals; they had to be looked after at home and they were a great nuisance at home, difficult to look after. Well they

behaved in all sorts of very not only weird but disgusting and unpleasant and antisocial ways; people could not get them off their hands. Sometimes families drove them into the streets because they did not want anything to do with them, they were so difficult; and they were wandering about, these mad people half naked, doing all sorts of strange things. And the author says that in the 4015 when he was leaving in Jerusalem, he saw mad people wandering in the streets in the same way as you do in India. So, when you see this, when you see people of this sort wandering around in this dreadful condition, you can't doubt there is such a thing as mental illness you can't treat mental illness as a sort of myth. You can only afford to do that if all the mad people are safely locked away in mental hospitals and you don't see them. But nonetheless, there is something in what he says because there could be sort of fashionable mental diseases as well as fashionable physical diseases [130] which these people think that they've got and spend a lot of time getting rid of; so yes I won't say that this thesis can't be altogether discounted but I think it would be quite a mockery to try to pretend that there were no people in the sort of really dreadful states - there are quite a lot of them; they are usually shut off in mental hospitals where they very often don't get better, in fact they even get worse. (Pause,) What was the second part of the question?

Virananda: The second part reads: "How strict is the equivalence between suffering as the Buddha uses that term in His noble truth of suffering and the suffering of the neurotic or psychotic from his psychic state. I've asked this question because you do make the equivalence in the lecture.

S: In the case of Buddhism, a distinction is made between physical suffering and mental suffering and it's quite clear that many people who are suffering from mental illness are in, or do really suffer from their psychic state as Jaspers put it; you can tell that just by meeting them; they're not happy. I can think just now of an old woman in Ambedkar society I think it was, who was roaming around there when I was there; she was muttering to herself, clad in rags and long grey hair smeared with dirt and she looked in a dreadful sort of state; and while I was sitting there in the office she heaved a brick through the window; someone went out and they thrashed her to drive her away. How can such people not suffer, if not physically but mentally. In the past they were often treated very harshly; in modern times, what about this electric shock therapy? In fact they are confined in mental hospitals; we do hear cases of brutality on the part of mental nurses every now and then; and they do directly suffer from their mental states. They are not like some mongol children who seem to be seem to be in a happy state; they are in a quite different state from that. So, I don't doubt that mental illness is very often quite an extreme form of suffering. (Pause.) We just don't usually encounter it; we usually don't know what it's like.

Abhaya: Dharmapriya has a question about success in psychotherapy and kalyana mitrata.

Dharmapriya: The question concerns the fact that the founders of the great psychotherapeutic and psychoanalytic schools were themselves successful psycho therapists; they did succeed and heal patients but, in all the cases I know of, they were creative and sensitive people, You yourself refer to Freud literary creativity to Jung's love; from what I've heard of Fromm, you could say similar things. However from everything that I've heard in the North American circuit and in England, the vast majority of people who go to psychotherapists come away with the feeling they have not got anything, they have not been healed; one gets the impression it usually does not work in a crude way. This led me to the suspicion that psychotherapy tends to work not so much because of the theory but because of the



psychotherapist; i.e. because of his warmth, creativity, sensitivity.

S: I do believe that some psycho-therapists would accept this. I am sure I've read this statement in some of their writings.

[131]

Dharmapriya: This leads to the further consideration: Is psychotherapy, the psychotherapeutic relationship, when it works, merely a variation or lower form of kalyana mitrata?

S: I would not say so; I would not be prepared for people to over generalize. I am quite sure that in many cases what the people who go to psycho therapists are really looking for is just a friendly sympathetic listener; just someone who talks, allow them to talk about their problems or difficulties which may not actually be very great, and in such cases all that the psychotherapists can actually offer has been a mild form of kalyana mitrata. But, nonetheless, I do believe there are quite a few people who go to psychotherapists of whatever persuasion with some kind of, for want of a better or clearer term, 'mental trouble' which cannot actually be cleared up in at least some cases without some sort of specialized knowledge and professional training. In their case too I am sure the element of kalyana mitrata is very very helpful and contributes to the curative process but I don't think it's always enough. We know from our own experience within the movement that sometimes we offer kalyana mitrata to people; we do as much as we can for them on general lines but they still have sometimes quite intractable psychological problems that we ourselves can't handle because we don't seem to have sufficient technical knowledge about how the mind works and all that sort of thing. So I think that, though kalyana mitrata can cure quite a lot of cases of so called mental disturbance or whatever, it can't cure all of them; that's why we ourselves have to recognize our own limitations and why I suggested it would be a good thing if we had one or two experts of this kind within the order itself to whom we could refer people. I am sure that most of you must have had this experience, especially those concerned with running a centre, sometime or other you feel this person is beyond me; that kind of problem baffles me; I am giving a lot of attention, a lot of care, a lot of sympathy but they don't really seem to be getting over it - there are some knots which need an expert to untie. The person who has studied the subject can probably recognize a typical pattern and he will know what's at the bottom of that pattern and he will know what needs to be done in order to reverse that pattern, to prevent that person going through that pattern again and again, or repeating that pattern again and again, while you with all your warmth and goodwill may not know that. If you are intuitive, as we say, and you've got a lot of experience with people you do develop a certain amount of practical know-how in this area and perhaps your knowledge overlaps that of the psychotherapist; if you are not very experienced in this sort of way, even with quite a lot of metta and general kalyana mitrata, you can't always do as much as you would like but the person's psychological problems may defeat you. (Pause.) I think that's the short answer. It does seem a shame -this is just a rider - that our social structure is such that people can't find someone to listen to them and sympathize with them, talk things over with them unless they go along to a professional who is paid for listening; this seems quite an indictment of our society. (Pause.)

Abhaya: That's it.

[132]

\_\_\_: What is the emphasis of the master and disciple, monk and layman relationship from the

rest of the relationships under traditional Buddhism; and the FWBO emphasis on 'kalyana mitrata', both vertical and horizontal? You have underlined in one or two lectures the friendship between the Buddha and Ananda, and between Sariputra and Maudgalyayana. But is it that friendship in the 'kalyana mitra' sense came to have less and less importance, as traditional Buddhism developed in England and other countries? And more and more emphasis went on teacher, pupil, monk, layman?

S: I think it's difficult to generalize. I think it differs a little as from one tradition to the other. One would say for instance that in the case of the relationship between the teacher and pupil, or guru and disciple, in the 'Vajrayana' tradition as well as in the Zen or Ch'an tradition; that relationship by virtue of the very nature of the Vajrayana, and by very nature of Ch'an or Zen was particularly important. The relationship between the disciple and the guru therefore tended to overshadow the relationship between a pair of disciples, even though that is also at least mentioned. In the case of the Vajrayana those who've taken initiations from the same guru, the same vajracarya, yes, especially at the same time, are considered to be 'vajra' brothers; and that relationship is considered very important, at least in theory but not very much of it seems to be made of it in practise. It isn't referred to very often in comparison with the number of times that the relationship between a guru and disciple is referred to.

The other end of the Buddhist spectrum; for in stance, if you take the 'Theravada' Buddhism of Somal. Monks certainly had quite a strong feeling for their teacher, who's not a guru in the Tantric sense, obviously. But they do have quite a strong feeling for their brother monks; at least the monks living in the same monastery as themselves. I don't think there's much appreciation of the importance of what we have come to call 'kalyana' or 'kalyana mitrata' in the spiritual life, even in those sort of cases. There is 'friendship' - it's often very good friendship; but inasmuch as the life of the monk in Ceylon isn't necessarily spiritually orientated in the real sense. The friendship is not necessarily orientated in the real sense either.

So I was left with the impression that in many parts of the Buddhist world the vertical kalyana mitrata relationship has been stressed rather at the expense of the horizontal one. And that even where the horizontal one does have place, it's probably not nearly an important enough place. Even though - yes - one does get instances of very strong spiritual friendships, but they tend to I think, to be rather the exception; and they don't have much sort of theoretical underpinning. Plus the overall impression of which one is left.

[133]

\_\_\_: My second question relates closely to that. It arises from something that Mahamati said: he said that Dhardo Rimpoche remarked to the effect that, until he had met you, he'd not realized the capacity for kalyana mitrata in our sense, in the vertical relationship between 'master' and pupil. This led me to think that kalyana mitrata was not stressed much in Tibetan Buddhism generally, or even in Zen Buddhism as you've just mentioned; where the master and disciple relationship seems dominant. The saying that these traditions reached a high level of spiritual development without much emphasis on horizontal kalyana mitrata, I just wanted you to comment on it0

\_\_\_ : Can I just clear up the question? Did you say ...what was it that Mahamati said that Dhardo Rimpoche said?

\_\_\_: That until he'd met Bhante, he'd not realized the capacity for kalyana mitrata in the vertical relationship between master and pupil.

\_\_\_: Oh!

S: He certainly used to consult me about certain things, just as I used to consult him. I think he came to feel in the end even though he was the teacher and I was the pupil, he could confide in me to some extent at least and talk things over with me. We did quite a lot of things together in the way of organizing the celebration of 'Buddha ? at Campor. He certainly say that to me at the time, but it's interesting that he said it to Mahamati .

\_\_\_ : He actually said that in the lecture in an interview with Nagabodhi in a transcription.

S: Because in Tibet certainly there was a feeling of comradeship between monks living in the same monastery, and especially monks belonging to the same college within a particular monastery. I've said I've often had very, very strong feelings for their monastery. I'm sure they did have quite strong spiritual friendships, but they weren't emphasized, or the spiritual value of those friendships was not emphasized in the same sort of way that the spiritual value of the vertical kalyana mitrata was. I'm not saying that friendship was entirely absent from Tibetan monasteries by any means, I'm quite sure it wasn't. Nonetheless there wasn't that sort of definite emphasis on it as there was on the vertical type of kalyana mitrata. I therefore cannot but think that a lot of Tibetan monks missed out on something there fore:and as good as their practise might of been for various reasons, as alive as their Buddhist tradition might have been in various ways, it would have been better still had there been that more explicit emphasis on kalyana mitrata, and in horizontal( ? ) of kalyana mitrata.

[134]

\_\_\_ : I don't quite understand what it was that Dhardo Rimpoche was saying? He was saying that he hadn't realized the capacity for kalyana mitrata in the vertical relationship. So what did he conceive of the vertical relationship as being?

\_\_\_ : As he himself gave the teachings to Bhante.

\_\_\_ : As I remember from the transcript what he said was that previously he'd seen the relationship between two Ch'an disciples as rather a formal, more formal relation ship. But with Bhante he discovered that it could be 'kalyana mitrata' - the more intimate

S:...we could laugh and joke quite a lot together. He had and I'm sure still has a great sense of humour. I would think that would not happen in the orthodox type of Tibetan situation. A Tibetan monk often respected the teacher, clearly very much and regarded him highly. But quite often there was an element of fear, especially as they'd been with them since they were very young;or even maybe being brushed by them when they were small, quite a number of times. (Laughter). It sort of tinged the relationship perhaps. Do you see what I mean? Very often they would always stand in the presence of teachers, not usually sit sideways keep their eyes down, unless it was a specific and tantric situation, and never raise their voices in front of their teachers, or certainly never laugh or joke in the presence of their teachers.

\_\_\_: In the 'Dalai Lama's biography there's a quote saying that he felt that Tibetan Buddhism had become obsessed by form, at the expense of content. Do you think that applies to the

guru/disciple relationship, or the spiritual friend and spiritual friend relationship?

S: Well it could be to some extent, but nonetheless I don't want to overlook the fact there was a very strong emotional relationship as there has been with the Tibetan teacher and the Tibetan pupil. There's no doubt about that. But perhaps it had been a bit over formalized and perhaps there was a certain lack of intimacy, and distance. I think the majority of Tibetan monks would not have confided in their teachers to the extent that we would consider it today. They tended to think that they shouldn't bother their teachers but there might of been a bit of a rationalization.

\_\_\_ Bhante, this is Ratnaguna speaking

Ratnaguna: I can't help thinking sometimes that this emphasis on the horizontal kalyana mitrata within the movement is completely new to Buddhism, even because I don't think I know of any texts which, in the Pali Cannon or Tibetan tradition, or whatever, which stress it, or say anything about it in fact, apart from vague references. There's no sort of teachings.

[135]

S: Well actually there are a few, for instance there's a passage or section, I believe it's in the Majjhima Nikaya where there's a description, I think the Buddha gives it. I think it is three monks or it might be four, who are living together. And he said that the relationship between them is such, the metta among them is such, that they've got, as it were, 'one mind'. But that's certainly the fact that the Buddha commends them for living in that way. He doesn't say they ought to be living separately living. He seemingly commends them as a member for living in that sort of way. He seems to regard that as being quite ideal, that they are united in thought and word, and in deed; as if they had one mind between them. Or you could say one heart and one mind because in the 'Bodhichitta', it is the heart active that expresses mind.

Ratnaguna: We were wondering in our group; if there was so little references to horizontal kalyana mitrata in the 'Pali Cannon', it was because the people in those days found it quite easy and it didn't need to be taught!

S: There is that point, there is that possibility.

\_\_\_: Is it the (Buddha?)

S: I don't know.

\_\_\_: Less the discourse of (Kosingha?) ?

S: Ah, yes. But it would perhaps be a good thing if someone were to comb through the Buddhist scriptures and try to make a sort of anthology of 'friendship', It might be a useful thing to do.

\_\_\_: The sutta that comes after that one is quite interesting because it speaks about several different arhant disciples of the Buddha, meeting and all rejoicing each others different qualities ... which seems to imply for example...

S: Right, but also the example of the friendship of Sariputra and Moggallana Perhaps a little

more research needs to be done not only into the horizontal kalyana mitrata in the Buddhist scriptures themselves especially the Pali Canon; but into what the different forms of Buddhism, currently, the different Buddhist traditions actually do have to say on the subject; and what their actual current practise is.

Another thing that occurs to me... I'm thinking a little aloud, I'm offering this as rather tentative. A reference was made to monks and lay people. In many parts of the Buddhist world especially where the monastic Order is rather sharply distinguished from the laity; the monks definitely have a sort of feeling of solidarity among themselves. Do you see what I mean? They definitely say: 'we are monks', they're quite distinct from the laity; they have a feeling of a spiritual core. You could say sometimes that monks tend to take the place of genuine kalyana mitrata. [136] It might be a sort of near enemy, even one might say though it's not incompatible with kalyana mitrata. There is a feeling where the monks ought to stick together, certainly in relation to the laity. But as I say this is just a thought that crosses my mind.

\_\_\_: Suvajra has a question about the monk/layman relationship.

Suvajra: You mentioned the Monk/layman relationship as being one of the distinct Buddhist categories. what is the positive in this sort of a relationship?

S: I'm not quite sure what the word 'positive' means in this context? In let us say traditional Buddhist circles, specially those represented by the Theravada countries the relationship between the monk and the lay person let's say; is usually considered to be a relationship of mutual dependence. That is to say, the monk is dependent on the lay person for the material necessities of life, for food, for shelter, for clothing and for medicine; and the layman or lay person is considered to be dependent on the monk, not only for religious instruction but also for an example of spiritual life, an example of Buddhist life. So this is the way in which the relationship is ideally seen, or in principle is seen. Sometimes it does happen like that, that the lay person is very happily supporting the monk and feeling quite grateful to the monk, that the monk is giving the layman spiritual teachings and inspiring examples. Often the monk is quite genuinely grateful to the layperson for supporting him, and looking after him, and looking after him, and caring for his material needs. So that element of mutual gratitude can be a very positive thing. Though of course very often it doesn't quite happen like that. Sometimes the monks feel that the laity are a bit niggly, or they don't understand their difficulty. The laity feel like the monks are not leading good enough lives. Do you see what I mean? Sometimes the relationship between is rather indirect, especially if a monastery is well endowed and there isn't necessarily lay people coming along to personally offer the things that a monk needs. This is for some extent the case in Tibet. But I would say that in the more genuine monastic situation, or lay and monastic situation of that sort; probably the mutual thing in gratitude is the most positive element. Of course in this relationship the lay person could expect the monk, or even the nun to do it all for him, or for her. Do you see what I mean? That you support somebody to lead the Buddhist life instead of leading the Buddhist life yourself. Not that lay Buddhists don't observe the precepts of Buddhism at all, many of them do. Now there is that tendency to regard the monk as the 'real' Buddhist, the 'full-timer'. That lets you, as the layman off the hook to a very great extent.

So, for instance, if you are to say to a lay Buddhist (in certain Buddhist cultures), 'I don't think that's very [137] ethical. I don't think you ought to do that'. The answer would surely be, 'I'm

not a monk'. As if you classify yourself as a lay person, you cease to think of yourself as making a serious spiritual effort. If you wanted to do that well, presumably you would become a monk. Very often the person who has become a monk is presumed or assumed perhaps too readily to actually be leading a religious life. You get a tendency to think that the person who is living in the vihara, wearing robes and has a shaven head, is leading a spiritual life! Do you see what I mean? The fact he hasn't a job or a wife and family; he's depending upon alms; means that he's leading a spiritual life. It sounds like even the monks themselves think that is a spiritual life: that's all that they really have to do. Plus going for a few services to the laity; chanting and giving a bit of advice occasionally, that sort of thing. So I think there can be a very positive relationship between the monk and the layperson within traditional Buddhist society. But it certainly has its limitations in that particular structure and the structure can be good depending upon how the monk operates.

Suvajra: I was also wondering that with you mentioning the possibility of perhaps more anagarikas within the Order, to balance up a section of the Order (which is involved in the male/female relationship). Although it may not seem desirable at all to be anagarika perhaps; is this not a beginning of our long slippery roads that have already been tread by traditional Buddhism, turning to a formal monastic and lay community?

S: It could be but I think not necessarily, as one gets that generally. There is a danger on the other hand, but you can't avoid taking risks sometimes. How could you guard against that danger thing? Just constant mindfulness. Part of a technique in a way. There's no sort of organization or framework I think that could enable you to set guard yourself or safeguard the Order, or to deal with that sort of development. We can't be sure because it rests upon the awareness, the mindfulness of each individual. Perhaps in the long run, the best thing that one could do is to strongly discourage people from getting into the sort of conventionally lay-type situation' So there'll be no need for a counterbalancing for a few others by a more conventionally monastic-type situation. But I think in the long run if you have development the one side, you'll have to have the development on the other, if you're going to open one's spiritual vitality within the movement, as the Order.

Sanghapala: What do you mean development on the one side, Bhante, and development...

S: Development towards the householder type situation, among the other,so to speak, monastic type situation in the more conventional sense. But if one isn't careful there will be a sort of split anyway. If some people do get so deeply involved the household and family life, and other needs; they will even if they don't want to, almost inevitably drift away from those who are involved in the Dharma, in the spiritual life, in a more wholehearted kind of way. [138] They will not have time even to meet their friends who don't have the sort of responsibilities and the limitations that they have.

The traditional comparison, the layman and the monk, in Buddhist literature is that the layman is like a pea cock; whereas the monk, or just monk in a conventional sense, the free person the anagarika even, is like the wild goose. Because the peacock, although it's beautiful and has a gorgeous plumage, can only take very short flights and he can't get very high above the ground. Whereas the wild goose, even though he's a grey rather dull, unattractive looking bird, goes soaring up into the heavens and disappears in the direction of the Himalayas with the greatest of ease. So it's rather difficult for the peacock to keep up with the wild goose. So the wild geese are not going to wait for the peacock indefinitely. They're just going to go off

together. So I think one should do one's best to encourage the peacock to try to become wild - the wild geese!

I've been thinking recently that I think we ought to be much more clear within the movement, within the Order: that as from the moment of ordination, at least, you should not add to your worldly responsibilities. you should not add to the limitations which you already have. If you come into the Order with responsibilities that you cannot relinquish, well then, fair enough. It is your duty to discharge those responsibilities, but one should not under any circumstances add to the mundane responsibilities that one already has. I mean responsibilities that limit your usefulness as an Order member and come in the way of your spiritual life and your development. So therefore I would say that if for instance you come to the Order unmarried, well stay unmarried. Yes I don't mean that you can't possibly have sexual relations with a member of the opposite sex; even enter into a sort of contractive mutual fidelity. But don't set up a sort of conventional marriage; don't break the traditional nest, if you see what I mean? That would definitely be a retrograde step. I'm very doubtful whether anybody, certainly at the present state of the movement's existence should even think of having children. I'm very doubtful about this because it's extra responsibility.

Dharmapriya: You were referring to both men and women Order members should not have any children, just men Order members...

S: Well in some ways I think it applies in more ways to the women. Women Order members are in the middle because I mean where the woman is concerned, the child is so much more the responsibility. It does seem to some extent that you can take it in your stride, but only if you remain close to your original centre. You can't go away when you would like or anything like that. So there's a very definite limitation.

\_\_\_ It seems quite a strong thing to say.

[139]

S: Well I realize that, that's why I haven't said it till now. The principle is once you become an Order member, having taken that step, having in effect gone forth, why should you then proceed to limit yourself in any way? Or even take any step which is going to work in your spiritual life, in a bad way. Some people might argue that marriage might (prop?) some people, I must say I remain very doubtful; certainly not conventional marriage. Do you see what I mean?

\_\_\_: What about women who haven't fully subconsciously or unconsciously sorted out about whether they want children or not?

S: Well if they haven't sorted that out, can they really go forth? Can they really go forth? Can they really commit themselves? Doesn't commitment involve that?

\_\_\_: So, the way it works: say a woman hadn't sorted it out, then eventually as mitra decided that she did want a child, then the procedure would be to ordain her after the child has been born?

S: I think so, in any case I have said those are two quite big things, it's probably not possible for a woman to deal with at the same time: or best that she shouldn't have to deal with them at

the same time.

\_\_\_ : But she will nevertheless have those responsibilities after ordination because she's got the child, to bring up. So are you saying as an extension of that, should a mitra who's considering ordination be thinking of having a child?

S: I think probably not. There must be some conflict in her mind because she knows presumably what being an Order member involves, and she knows presumably what being a mother involves; and she will realize that the one will at least place some limitations on the other. I don't want to be too hard and fast because there may well be women Order members who bring up children and make, definitely, quite a contribution to the movement, but I think probably less than they otherwise would have made. Though one can't absolutely be sure of this. But I do want to stress the general principle - people should be very careful once they're ordained, that they don't make any step which is in fact a retrograde step. I certainly think that a conventional marriage, and I stress 'conventional', is certain to be a retrograde step. Certainly for men though perhaps in the case of women, the whole thing is somewhat more complex; and perhaps in the case of women A look even more closely than in the case of men, at the actual position of individual woman and what she is capable of. Because some women can do more even though they've got one or two children to bring up, and other women could do without their children and the dog. There's a difference of character and capacity and so on. Anyway how did we get on to that?

[140]

\_\_\_ We've got quite a lot more questions. We move on to how co-op relationships work and the relationship between employer and employee. \_\_\_ Bhante, do you still favour cooperative style business relationship within our movement? Wouldn't employer/employee style relationship along with the responsibilities that go with being either an employer or an employee, be a more straightforward relationship? There seems to be confusion caused by pseudo-democratic ideals. It stops the relationship being straightforward.

S: I think in principle I'm definitely in favour of a cooperative like that but there's certainly a very big difficulty, because in the case of the co-op type structure, everybody has equal say and equal responsibility. But if everybody does not take equal responsibility especially if they insist upon equal say, without equal responsibility, then it can't work, hmmm? If in a co-op you've got some people taking more responsibility and others taking less, or rather some taking less and others having to take more; to that extent you don't have a properly functioning co-operative situation. If the people in the co-op are on the whole lacking in a sense of responsibility, so that there's two or three people in effect who have to shoulder a lot of responsibility, rather extra responsibility; and at the same time put up with a lot of unnecessary criticism from other members of the co-op who're not shouldering their responsibilities. You might just as well have an ordinary business with a boss and with workers. Do you see what I mean?

I think one of the reasons why some capable people attempted to set up businesses of the ordinary type, is that they get fed up with working on supposedly equal terms with people who want to have equal say but are not prepared to take on equal responsibility. A really capable person gets really fed up with that sort of false situation and would rather have an honest boss and worker relationship, than a fake co-operative type relationship. Do you see what I mean? But nonetheless, the co-op type relationship which is in a way an economic



parallel to the spiritual life is preferable, ideally speaking. But you've got to face facts.

I don't think you could have a situation where one Order member was boss and the other Order members were workers. I think that would be a negation of the spiritual community, and it would show that they were not in fact equally Order members. Do you see the point? Because if they're all Order members, they ought to be able to cooperate within a cooperative structure properly. If you have an Order member boss and mitras and friends working under him, well fair enough. In principle he's supposed to be the more responsible person, he is also the most capable person. I think pseudo democracy comes in; people are very democratic when it comes to talking, but not when it comes to working.

Perhaps another fault of the co-op is it's not all Order members and hierarchy because it's a co-operative structure, it can also be quite fake. Everybody can think they've got their equal rights in a way, and in a way it's not completely to date.

[141]

S: I don't think one should think in terms of rights at all. I think one should think entirely in terms of duties and responsibilities and not breathe a word about rights.

\_\_\_: perhaps I didn't actually mean rights, I meant more just the hierarchical structure. The fact that Order members should be in control of the co-op as something quite fake, especially to newcomers coming into it.

S: Well it must be, but on the other hand Order members must live up to their responsibilities. It's very frustrating for instance for a hard-working mitra to have to be dependent on the decisions of whimsical Order members, who aren't taking their responsibilities seriously. That can be very frustrating for the mitra who is hard-working and sincere. The Order members have a very definite responsibility.

\_\_\_: Padmavajra has a question on the Greek model of friendship.

Padmavajra: It's a very simple question: Is there anything we can learn in the Greek model of friendship? You've chosen to study an Islamic model of friendship, I wondered if there was anything in the Greek model which we could particularly

S: I take it we're agreed that there is a Greek model?

Padmavajra: Well, I don't know?

S: So, is there anything we can learn? I think one of the things we can learn from it, is greater centrality in human life. I think I've mentioned this in the lecture that the Greeks put friendship much nearer to the centre of their mandala, than we do in modern times. There's also the emphasis on the Greeks on the part of the educative nature, the educative value of friendship. You might even say that the Greeks were distinguished usually quite so sharply between vertical and horizontal Kalyana mitrata or friendship, as we perhaps have been doing. Because they tend to think of friendship as between an older and a younger man; with the older exercising an educating influence on the younger without being actually his teacher in the strict or formal sense. He was his friend, but he was his older more experienced friend; not that there weren't friendships with their contemporaries. But I think the Greeks especially

when they tended to stress the educational role of the friendship, almost combined something of the horizontal, and something of the vertical type relationship. Maybe that's something that we can also learn. I mean there are some friendships which are definitely vertical and there are some which are definitely horizontal; but there are others perhaps that can be a bit of both. I can't off-hand think of anything modern there, I'm sure that there probably are and that we could learn from the Greek model.

[142]

\_\_\_: Now Ratnaguna has a question on the relationship between brothers and brothers, brothers and sisters, sisters and sisters.

Ratnaguna: You say that the relationship of brother/brother, or brother/sister is much less important now than it used to be. Could you say a bit more about why this may be? You went over that bit very quickly.

S: Well I think I mentioned the main reason that lots of us don't have brothers and sisters.

Ratnaguna: This didn't seem to me very acceptable as most of us do, I think.

S: Well there's quite a few people in the Friends who are 'only' children and I think quite a few have only one brother, or one sister.

Ratnaguna: Yes, but this seems to me that if you've got only one brother or sister..

S: ...it increases the problem.

Ratnaguna: Yes, it increases the possibility of you having a real friendship with them, If you've got thirteen.

S: I'm not so sure you'd get that involved no; I say if there were thirteen, there's usually more likelihood that there's at least one of them who's more congenial. If you've got only one brother and you hate him well then, you've had it haven't you? Or if you're a somewhat different age it seems it isn't usually the case in the West, or certainly in Britain. If your brother is very much older than you, then you don't seem to have a very close relationship with him because you stick with your peer group.

It's not like that in the East sometimes the older brother takes a large interest in the younger, very much younger brother: almost parental.

Ratnaguna: It does seem strange to me, for instance with me and my brother and other people I've spoken to and their brothers, they don't seem to have very strong friendships. Which is a bit odd when you think they've spent a lot of their lives together.

S: I'm trying to think in the case of ( ?) brother, I didn't have a brother so I can't say anything about that one. I remember my father had a quite good, one might even say, strong friendship with his half brother. I remember my father was generous by nature, my uncle was rather mean and grasping and also there was probably a difference between age, but they got on extremely well, they seemed to like each other. So that's sometimes the case. Also perhaps (again I'm thinking aloud a little) I think when you become friends with someone, [143]

especially when you make a very strong friendship, let's say, there's an element of love there. There's even a tiny element, a touch of 'falling in love', and what does that mean? It means projection really doesn't it? A mild element of projection and you don't, it would seem, project so easily on to people you know, especially those you've been born and brought up with. This is one of the reasons why brothers and sisters are never sexually attracted to each other, because they're so familiar with each other. That might happen or has been known to happen if they were separated when they were very, very young and met much later in life; they are then likely to be sexually attracted, in a way that all would not be if they had been familiar with each other for the whole of their lives. So it would be that you don't necessarily always make strong friends with your brothers because that kind of friendship - strong friendship - does not contain that slightly projected element which wouldn't have an opportunity of manifesting a relationship of that sort, with a brother whom you knew really well. This is something which occurs to me in passing.

The mere fact you know him very well, could mean that you were a bit indifferent; you couldn't strike up a friendship in the same way that you could with a stranger.

Ratnaguna: It's interesting that you say then there is an amount of projection in friendship, 'cos...

S: I did, this strong friendship - when you take a definite liking to someone. I'm not saying that you're probably gay or anything like that. I refer to, I shouldn't say 'normal' friendship, 'ordinary' friendship. I think there's quite often that sort of projected element and therefore a mild experience of all one's falling in love, though not nearly so pronounced as in the case of (inaudible)

Ratnaguna: And that's not necessarily a bad thing?

S: No, not at all.

Ratnaguna: Why is that then? Why not?

S: Because it brings an element of intensity and there's a strong emotional component, and at the same in the case of non-gay people it hasn't any sexual connections.

\_\_\_: Do you think ... let's say you decided to take on a mitra who you didn't particularly have any feeling for. Do you think that at some point, that projective element, it would be good if that actually came into the relationship, in order that you have a much more intense emotional contact?

S: I think where that sort of projective element enters in, enters from the very beginning. You take a sudden definite liking to someone therefore you want to become friends with them.

[144]

I think if you've taken on a mitra however good the mitra, even through a sense of duty, they even know you like them quite a lot. I think it's quite unlikely you're going to slightly fall in love with him a couple of years later, that would be rather unlikely. Perhaps it is not impossible. I think the more likely scenario is the bright intelligent mitra or young friend coming along and you just take a shine to him. You feel quite attracted, you'd like to spend

time with him; you enjoy his company; you enjoy explaining things to him. Whereas explaining perhaps to someone else would be a bit of a drag. (Laughter). So take advantage of that in a skilful way.

\_\_\_: So you use that 'taking a shine' to that person, and as it were educate that?

S: Of course you have to be quite careful. I've referred to a bit of projection, partial projection; you have to be quite careful because if there's too heavy a projection, then you won't see that person as he really is. You'll have all sorts of delusions about him: you'll over-estimate him especially. You'll think he's an absolute prodigy, not only beauty but spirituality and ( ? ) and you'll be in for a rude shock later on, or you might be! Better be just a touch [?], no more. A little of it goes a long way. I think this is how the Greeks saw things, they were quite tolerant of that little sort of touch of projection, and I think pre-Freudians were, but since Freud we've become very suspicious unfortunately.

[?] : Kulamitra's got a question about Order members, Centres, Women and Children.

Kulamitra: It's a complex question, in two parts. Should I read the whole question?

S: Certainly.

Kulamitra: One, do a series of micchaditthis underlie the problems of personal relationships, i.e:

a.) Misprision of hierarchy. b.) Pseudo-liberalism. c.) Acceptance of female work.

Two, should male Order members be positive authorities within the new society, for instance: a.) should they openly show their disapproval to women who've had abortions, but not confessed this as a fault; b.) should they suggest to, what I call here 'FWBO Mothers' (I hope you understand what I mean)?

S: The only expression I've heard when someone quoted to me the other day, 'the Vajraloka widows'. I've found that the common expression round the LBC

\_\_\_: Oh dear!

[145]

Kulamitra: ...anyway, b.) should they suggest to FWBO mothers what place (if any), children have around the Centre; c.) should they suggest who does or does not take up massage, acupuncture etc., women included. Perhaps that gives you some idea.

S: Let's go through this bit by bit. A bit of a minefield. (Loud laughter). How many questions are there?

Kulamitra: There are one, two, three, four, five, six! Do a series of micchaditthis underlie the problems of personal relationships i.e.:

a.) Misprision of hierarchy.

b.) Pseudo Liberalism.

c.) Acceptance of female work.

S: They certainly do, but I think they can bear the whole responsibility, because I think human relationships in general are quite difficult, and problems always inevitably arise. I was of course (within the particular context of this lecture) dealing with those problems which arise in the case of people concerned with their personal development of higher evolution, wasn't I?

I wasn't concerned with problems that arise with human relationship perhaps outside that particular context. But certainly both inside and outside that particular context, micchaditthis mentioned played their part. I wouldn't like to hold them wholly responsible, I think that there are problems that are inherent in relationships. I mean for instance you might have a relationship with a particular person, let's say a person of the opposite sex. You both might be in love with each other, but after a few years you fall out of love with the other person, and into love with somebody else; well, there's a problem. There's the triangular relationship; there's sometimes jealousy, possessiveness, fear, guilt, quite independent of any particular micchaditthi or any particular ideology. The micchaditthi or the ideology can certainly exacerbate the problem, there's no doubt about that. So I think that's the short answer to that little question. Certainly by dissolving micchaditthis one will take to the relationship with a less problematic view, but some element of problematic character in one's nature, will persist.

Kulamitra: Right, two, should male Order members be positive authorities within the new society; for instance, and...

S: Let me just take the latter bit ... male Order members. I must say I don't think you can exclude female Order members altogether from positions of authority in the New Society. Let me now quote you of the fact that they are Order members: perhaps what you're thinking is that very often people look more to men, for guidance or for leadership. So, one I must say that yes certainly [146] male Order members should be an 'authority' within society, but at the same time I don't think one can exclude those women Order members who appear as one can see, to have the qualities to exercise that sort of authority in that sort of way. Ideally, we might say all Order member women ought to be able function in that way; but I think it would be quite difficult for some of them even though they were quite serious in their commitment in their spiritual life. For one reason or another they might not carry the same weight or be able to produce the same kind of effect, but on the other hand one must confess that perhaps there are some male Order members who couldn't do it either. So perhaps under the existing circumstances it would be more natural in a way for men Order members to exercise their authority. I think one can't regard it as exclusive prerogative of men Order members ( ? ).

Kulamitra: These were examples that came to mind of ways in which maybe a leader or direction could be given. The first one:- a) should they openly show their disapproval to women who've had abortions but have not confessed it as a fault?

S: Well they certainly shouldn't show approval. I don't think it's a question of male Order members only, I think it's women Order members too; and I think very often women tend to take more notice of other women Order members, than they do of men Order members; in any case mitra-women who usually have more contact with the women Order members and

are often more open to them, for obvious reasons. I think one cannot disguise one's feelings. If you meet socially a woman of whom you have reason to disapprove (for whatever reason, let's leave aside that particular issue), as a matter of fact not only a woman mitra but a man mitra, who has been guilty of unethical behaviour, I think that without being too heavy about it you cannot but show that you are aware that they are behaving unethically, and that you are not happy about it. The person who you know, a man mitra, has been putting his hand in the till. Can you honestly greet him in the same way that you've done before? Can you fail to show your consciousness of the fact that he's not lived up to the ethical standards he's supposed to. It doesn't mean that you turn your back on them, behave in extreme passion or refuse to speak to them - no. There must be some shade of difference in the way that you relate to him, naturally, not that you try to put it on or anything of that sort, no, you're feeling dismay at what they've done, they don't seem to realize what they've done and inevitably you reflect it in your attitudes towards them.

Kulamitra: I'd like to come back actually. I did phrase the question in that way obviously because of opinions in the air, and I did use that example because I actually feel it comes to mind, I agree I could hardly carry on as before conversation but in that particular case, my casual observation is that maybe not the women Order members but certainly a lot of the women in general social contact would like [147] to carry on in that sort of way. Generalizing further I feel that women tend to do that and therefore often, effectively it's left to some male Order members I agree, not even all men, but very exceptional Order member women to actually say 'no' to that.

S: I think whether it's due to cultural or biological conditioning we need not consider. It is no doubt that women are very anxious to please and very compliant and therefore it's quite difficult for a woman to take a strong stand in that sort of way, even a moderately strong. I think they don't like (in some ways this is a positive side) clashes or disapproval, or having to be a bit heavy; most women don't but again there are a few. I think you are right that it may well be left to some of the male Order members to dispense or to uphold the Buddhist principle in the area, I think that may be the case. There's also a possible micchaditthi here, I discussed it with someone the other day. It's related to or expressed by this dreadful word 'judgemental', it is not supposed to be judgemental; so I said supposing you're talking about the Nazis and what they did to the Jews, are you supposed not to be judgemental? Because you are actually being judgemental all the time. If you see a child kicking a dog you say well that's not nice, that's not good, don't do that; you're not being judgemental; but in all sorts of other areas one is at once accused if one gives expression to any sort of ethical assessment, let us say, of being judgemental. I'm sure that some people say these women have had abortions but of course it's not for us to be judgemental and I can almost guarantee that some of us are going to say that sort of thing. It's up to her.

Kulamitra: This is what I would classify under the heading of pseudo-liberal micchaditthis; that's why I feel that they can quite definitely accept in question...

S: Well, who is more judgemental than a pseudo-liberal? They're judgemental right, left and centre; their whole raison d'etre in a way, they're as judgemental as they possibly can; but if you raise your tiny voice and pipe up in the case of some ethical principle in practice, well you're accused of being judgemental.

\_\_\_ : The other one is value judgement.

S: Well then it's obvious the value judgement. it's obvious being judgemental, you should not do this.

Sanghapala: To say that someone shouldn't be judgemental is also judgemental too. Do you think Bhante that this word just appeared in the past two years.

S: Indeed I haven't heard it before, it seems to be a new coining.

[148]

Dharmapriya: I was just going to ask that, Dharmapriya speaking. I was wondering if it was not so much a case of pure pseudo-liberalism as a variant which should be called pseudo-dharma.

S: Your coining? (Laughter).

Dharmapriya: The conversations I've heard in Germany from some people is that well the Buddha never judged anyone...

S: Ooooooooo! (Loud laughter)

Dharmapriya: ...and that you are up-stage, you will not judge but you will help.

S: Well how can you help without judging.

\_\_\_: The Dharma?

S: Oh, they should read their Pali texts. Do you have those things in Germany too? Do they have this word 'judgemental' in Germany?

Dharmapriya: Not as a single word.

S: I should have thought not quite this long. (Laughter). Isn't it dreadful that people can be so remiss and so lax in their thinking, so utterly irresponsible in their thinking that they can give expression to these sorts of ideas ... it seems incredible: so be ready for that one, if anyone uses you in judgemental ... you can wipe that aspect.

Kulamitra: Third, (b), should it suggest to 'FWBO Mothers' what place, if any, children have around the Centre?

S: Well you've got to say; you can't have the little brats running wild all over the place (wild laughter) and it's up to the mothers to control them, so you've got to get at the mothers, you can't blame the children, they've got to be brought up properly.

Kulamitra: I mean this is another area where I felt that unfortunately a lot of women with children are in the position of not having a full-time father on the job as it were. Therefore that tendency not to discriminate very much and not to like to say 'no' too much to their own children...

S: I think one of things one has to understand is that mothers are usually infatuated with their

children. If the little brat makes a mess on the floor, they think it's wonderful and they expect you to think it's wonderful too. They expect you to share their infatuation very often, do you see what I mean, and you can encounter this when the child is behaving in a quite objectionable way, and you can see the smile of infatuated satisfaction on the mother's face; quite regardless of the fact that the child is making a nuisance and shouldn't be in that situation at all. I [149] believe in the States it's really dreadful. I heard a story from people who have been to America before or I think I read it in a magazine that the person was invited to lunch (with an American family or whatever, a couple with children) and the children at table behaved in the most absolutely, objectionable way; they were rude to the guests and rude to their own parents. Eventually they left the table and as they were leaving the father turned to them and said 'thank-you for your company'. whereas they should have had their little bottoms smacked. Do you see what I mean? I think one should not allow mothers to indulge in this sort of attitude at the expense of the Centre. I mean certainly you want to give the children a place; there should be a place where the children can come along and join in, in the festive puja or something of that sort; but there definitely are many occasions where the child's presence is not appropriate at the Centre, and this should be made absolutely clear to the mothers and fathers too, where necessary.

Kulamitra: It seems to me that in both these examples, well, something that is important is a moral reflection for the other person's sake not just because they're a nuisance to you but if you don't express your own genuine and natural disapproval, you're not actually doing them any favour.

S: As regards to the Chairman of the Centre or the Centre council you've got to draw a personal opinion, be it a decision you make regarding the running of the Centre which has to be appeared to abide by people using the Centre.

Kulamitra: c), should they, i.e., male Order members, suggest who does or does not take up acupuncture etc., etc., women included, following on from the other evening about psychotherapy. I thought perhaps, this could be extended to other practices.

S: Again, you can't exclude the women Order members from having their voice too, but I don't think that if a woman Order member decides to do something, or a mitra, that because you're a male Order member you should just refrain from giving an opinion. I certainly don't think you should just leave it to them: after all, they are Order members and we do have 'One' Order, so you are entitled, in fact it is your duty, to give expression to your opinion. If a woman Order member wishes to tell you something then you should be quite prepared to listen to that, in that it sometimes is worth listening to, as women see things with a different point of view, and might have noticed something that you have missed. It may not be the expression of the female will but genuinely the opinion of a fellow Order member.

There's quite a strong micchaditthi in this connection - a modern micchaditthi - which is that men can't pronounce on matters that concern women. For instance, that men aren't able to talk about abortion. [150] You might just as well say well women can't say anything about fatherhood. I'm very opposed to that sort of belief, that point of view because it's the negation of communication. It means that human beings can't communicate with one another. You could just as well argue no communication between black people and white people or between a marxist and a capitalist.



Do you see what I mean? I am very much opposed to any sort of suggestion in that sort that two particular groups of human beings cannot communicate because they happen to belong to those two groups. Although that communication has given solidarity. Was that it?

Kulamitra: Yes.

S: Oh, that was quite quick.

\_\_\_: So, now Ratnaguna has a question about the incidence of men, women, relationship problems.

Ratnaguna: You say in the lecture that the problems arising out of the husband/wife or boyfriend/girlfriend relationship constitute about sixty per cent of problems of personal relationships, arising within the context of the higher evolution. This figure seems to me to be rather conservative to me and I wonder if you will revise it now. Personally I would say it constituted more like ninety percent.

S: I presume it's quite clear which particular context we're considering the problem within. If we take the present day FWBO movement as our context, I'm inclined to think that that type of problem is somewhat less common now, than it was then, rather than more common. It may be that I'm just out of touch with things, but I must say that's my impression. I'm quite sure that the world outside the FWBO within that larger context; probably more than sixty percent of the problems of personal relationships fall within that particular category; but within the present FWBO I must say that with what I come to know of (from my personal knowledge or from what I hear), I'd be inclined to think that it was less than fifty percent.

Ratnaguna: It may be that there are less problems of that sort in the FWBO per ratio of person, but of problems solved for personal relationships within the FWBO I would say that's a far greater percentage. Well, for instance, you don't get people having conflict about whether to stay with their mother or to look after their brother. I've never come across anything like that.

S: On the first hand, I've recently been surprised by the number of problems that have arisen between men Order members due to competitiveness and some very serious personal problems, I think they have to be taken into consideration too. In some cases, several quite serious problems, certainly comparable in seriousness to some of the [151] worst problems that you get arising in connection with male/female sexual relationships. That is one of the reasons that makes me sort of hesitate to agree with you on that point, at least to be not very sure about it. Can anybody else contribute anything to discussion? What about problems within co-ops, with the problems of personal relationships that have got nothing to do with sexual relationships? I mean problems to the working maybe of personal relationships, miscommunication, do arise within co-ops; there are quite a lot of those sorts of problems, I think.

\_\_\_: One thing you'd have to take into consideration is that the population that you're speaking to then in the FWBO is different now. You perhaps have more people who are less committed and involved, whereas now there's a greater range.

S: This is what I'm saying, I'm quite sure that outside the FWBO more than sixty percent of

problems will be of that kind, but I rather feel that (without having done a statistical survey) within the present-day FWBO, which is obviously a more developed one than we had fifteen years ago, the percentage of such problems, among problems with relationships in general, is very likely to be below that sixty percent. I wouldn't be surprised if it was below sixty percent, certainly I'm not prepared to... (inaudible) I think we could give due weight (to the London Centre) because it's certainly there and comes to my notice from time to time. No doubt problems of personal relationships with the more familiar type continue to be traumatic as they were.

\_\_\_: I think 'kalyana mitra' relationship does go wrong and it's not very good, it can be quite traumatic.

S: True. I agree there are quite a few people (more mitras than Order members at present) who have very difficult relationships with their parents, almost traumatic. So those two perhaps have to be taken into consideration: not always revoked, but very often important.

\_\_\_: We had a chap up recently; he promptly got up every day for his meditation; he saw a retreat coming up, and said he'd like to go on it; he announced to his mum and dad but he was told if he left on that retreat, would he leave the house! So he didn't come on retreat.

S: How old is he?

-----: He's about nineteen, I think.

S: Well we've got a Darling boy here, a mitra?

\_\_\_: Not yet.

[152]

S: He's a 'Friend', he's seventeen now.

\_\_\_: Sixteen!

S: Sixteen. He's been wanting to move into a community, into one of the Regular communities for a long time; but mother won't let him.

\_\_\_: He's got to wait till he's eighteen?

S: He's got to wait till he's eighteen... the leaving of age. He's not the 'only' child.

\_\_\_: He hasn't got a daddy though.

St I would certainly say that, I know that there are still a few problematic relationships as between husband and wife, or workers or girlfriends within the movement, but I do get the impression that they're much more under control in the present than they were in the past. People have got much more of a standard against which to assess them as much more 'kalyana mitrata' around and sensible advice and emotional support in times of difficulty and crisis than there ever was before. So I think many problems are weathered and surmounted now which could not have been surmounted or weathered some years ago. Certainly the effect

of them has minimized to a great extent, perhaps you could get less far into them or so, or that you can get at them in the nick of time, or something like that, or there's good advice available to them. I must say I'm not particularly concerned at the moment about that particular type of problem, I don't feel that it's growing by any means. I must say I've been more concerned with recently the discovery of negative feelings that are strong, between male Order members growing out of a competitiveness in a particular situation that they're involved in, I've been more concerned about that recently.

\_\_\_ How would these problems be tackled? The competitive one...

S: Well that's very difficult, in some cases it as difficult as male/female problems. I think mutual friends should talk to both parties and gradually try to talk them round and get them to see the good qualities the other person's got, and their common spiritual commitment, and gradually get back the communication with them. There are truthfully people I believe who've not been able to speak to each other for two or three years, it does become a serious thing, and there have been problems between the Order member/mitras, perhaps more between women Order members and women mitras, though I'll be truthful, I think, though likely that isn't the case. Sometimes that particular relationship is not unreasonable.

\_\_\_: I'm sorry ... between Order members who are women and women mitras?

[153]

S: Mmm... talking about the particular measure is not a fairly easy one. There are misunderstandings that occur. It happens with male Order members and mitras too, but it doesn't seem to happen so often in this case. I think the more demanding nature of the whole movement now, the greater the relative, the greater intensity of the movement now has highlighted perhaps a wider range of problems in connection with relationships. We didn't have co-ops before so how could we have the problems of personal relationships that arise within the co-op. Sometimes problems arise between people within communities, (we haven't mentioned those but sometimes there are problems). There is incompatibility, different lifestyles, different time scales almost, or early birds or early risers, or late-birds or late risers.

-----: There's been a lot of attention given to attacking things like man/woman relationships .. the negative things. Do you think the attention should shift particularly to attacking these problems that arise out of competitiveness... really make a sort of assault...

S: I feel that is at least as serious, because if the one problem is based upon (love?), well this is based upon (hatred?) which is no less serious, it is no less skilful. I don't think that we should just concentrate upon the problems that arise in the context of sexual relationships and so on; the other problems that arise in other contexts of relationships, especially between Order members and mitras, are no less serious and should be dealt with no less seriously.

\_\_\_: Virananda has questions on the decline of personal relationships and the influence of the media.

Virananda: Firstly, you have already quoted in one of these question and answer sessions the motto: "the medium is the message". (Laughter). With both media and personal relationship, communication in some form or other seems to be a conductor. Have you any thoughts what part, if any, the media, T.V., etc., play in those areas of personal relations particularly

ruler/subject and master/pupil, which are in eclipse in our society?

S: I'm not quite sure what you're getting at? (Laughter).

Virananda: Well I did think of the question in a slightly different way, which might make it clearer. You remark in the lecture upon the lack of personal relations in the areas of teacher/pupil, ruler/subject; what part if any does the media have in maintaining this decline.

S: I really don't know, I'm not very in touch with the media but rather I'm concerned it isn't a medium in a way. [154] I mean supposing you watch T.V., I imagine you watch all sorts of programmes, all sorts of films; you watch soap operas and so on, I suppose that's what most people watch so that they must portray human relationships of one kind or another... is that not so? They do portray existing human relationships and isn't the way in which they portray them a reflection to some extent of the way they actually are in society at present: they don't get too far away from that do they? So could we not therefore say that the media on the whole tends to reflect the kinds of relationships with which we are familiar, and therefore to reinforce them. Lots of films, those you see on the T.V., those you see on the cinema. with the boy meets girl theme, where one way or the other it gets a bit distorted at times.

I remember when I was younger a film called 'Goodbye Mr Chips', I believe, portrayed the teacher/pupil relationship in a quite pleasant positive sort of way, a humorous sort of way. I don't know whether you could make a film like that nowadays because it wouldn't reflect the realities of the class. [155] Probably on the whole, the media, in respect of relationships, reflect contracted life; but on the other hand the media men and the media women to some extent take the lead; and the lead that they seem to be giving and setting is the impression that I seem to receive, is not a particularly positive one. They seem to fasten on and be more interested in the more negative aspects. For instance, when I went the other evening to see a film called 'Passage to India', I had to sit through a whole load of trailers of films that were coming: they were very violent. The trailers themselves were all 'U' but I thought the trailers should have been classified as 'X', because they were so violent. There were trailers for four films; each trailer had one whole scene of violence, and that's to say 'violent violence', after another. I'd never seen anything like it, it was quite extraordinary.

So it's as though whoever made those films, whoever selected those trailers, (presumably selecting what would seem to appeal to people and encourage them to see the film) thought of human relationships in terms of violence. Human relationships meant one person hitting another or kicking another, shooting another, or knocking another over, or hating another; that's their picture of human relationships. That is how they see human relationships at the present. So we see that the media does not have a particularly healthy effect. I must say I was quite appalled by the trailers, especially since they were labelled 'U'; the sort of thing that little kiddies would watch and apparently enjoy.

\_\_\_: Do you know, Bhante, that in Germany and in North America, (I don't know about this country) they have the problem of the violent pornography videos which children have been getting hold of and watching, and people have been quite concerned about that.

S: It's been quite that problem in India. Oh yes, there's been quite a little wave of video-nasty students; they play them in the coffee shops and ( ? ) stores and everywhere, just for a few dozen people at the time and passing that then ( ? ) In villages, it's come to that in India. I read

about it in the papers the last time I was there. Yes, what do you need? You need the money for the equipment; you make money on the spot; you can let poor people in. It's become a social problem in India, it seems. It really does seem quite dreadful. I mean what concerns me is (clearly the people who produce and market are out to make money) how is there a market? Is everybody suffering from sexual starvation or what is it? Do you see what I mean? What is it that causes married people (including lots of young married men), who are likely to go and watch these sorts of things? You have apparently in factories in Britain during the lunch hour, after work, blue movies for the benefit of the boys; and these are all respectable, married men, fathers of families, and all the rest of it who go and [156] and watch these things; not necessarily the young men. The chances are that the young men wouldn't be so interested, they'd be more interested in going out chasing the girls. It's really strange isn't it, that there's a tremendous market for violence and sex, and a combination of the two. There seems to be something deeply wrong with our society for that sort of a thing to be possible, without taking a moralistic attitude. I think the combination of sex and violence is especially nasty; but anyway we can't resolve ways and go into that.

Dharmapriya: Bhante, do you think that the unhealthy state of most parent/child relationships in the West, arises because our society only seems to be patriarchal, but is in reality far more matriarchal in its structure?

S: I find it quite difficult to say. Also what does one mean by parent/child relationship being 'unhealthy'? In what does the unhealthiness consist? What makes it unhealthy by definition?

Dharmapriya: I have had in mind the several tendencies: (1) the fact that many young men find it very difficult to leave mother, mother doesn't want to let go, the fathers tend to be awfully very weak, that children often when they leave home have a lot of resentment towards wonderful parents, with even acts of dislike; and that in later life it's often a very hollow relationship, a pretended friendship.

S: I'm trying to make a mental comparison with say the Indian families I've known, where very often relationships between parents and children, are much more positive than they are in the West. I think last year, an Indian family I got to know, (I got to know the father in London, he came up here to see me). He was the father of the family, he was a Punjabi with his wife and three children. It was really noticeable how well-behaved the children were but without being suppressed in any way, they were lively and spontaneous and exuberant and friendly; but at the same time they didn't show the slightest tendency to get out-of-hand. There seemed to be a positive connection not relationship, between the children and the mother, and the father. So I can't help wondering how the Indians manage it? They do, more often than not, certainly more often than we manage to do in the West. What's the secret of it?

One of the secrets seems to be, I think, that when children are very young they're maybe indulgent; they're treated in a very sort of positive way; they're not disciplined or restricted. The mother in particular or womenfolk generally ( ? ) are very patient, very gentle, very long-suffering even one might say, but they don't seem to suffer, to mind all the things they've to do on account of the children. The child isn't given a strict [157] toilet-training at an early age, or anything like that. So therefore when discipline is introduced, as it has to be introduced, it's introduced on a basis of great emotional positivity. I think it's introduced gently; you don't often find Indians slapping their children; they don't need to, I think. The women, especially in the early days, seem to spend a lot of time with them and to be very

patient with them; and that seems to lay a very positive foundation.

If for the sake of keeping your own home clean you had to toilet-train the child very, very early and therefore be very strict with it, and be very strict about mealtimes and timetables, because you've got to get off to work (especially if you're a working mum here... something like that; or you've got to take them along to school; perhaps they have got to be in the car by a certain hour in your day; plus you're hustled and therefore you're pressed and you get irritable with the children - you want to get them off your hands quite early in life, as soon as you can, send them to a kindergarten, at the age of three if possible). Do you see what I mean? The fact that you, yourself have some odd tastes due to modern social and economic and ambitions, it all rubs off on the children that cannot but pick it up; but these are due to these sorts of reasons.

\_\_\_: Do you think that the fact that an Indian family has so many more sources of affection as well...

S: I think that plays a big part. I think I mentioned that but I think that is important. There's a lot of warmth even quite literally in the family. There is always someone to catch hold of, always someone to hug, always someone to hug you or pick you up, or carry you around, play with you, anything of that sort, or just hold you; obviously that isn't very easy when you haven't got any brothers or sisters; when there's only mum and dad; dad, of course, is out working or mum is working half the time too! I think maybe children are rather neglected.

I think this is one of the reasons why I'm not in favour (in taking a different angle) of Order members having children. I think being a parent is a full-time job in many ways, especially for the mother perhaps: and being an Order member is a full-time job and so it's very difficult to confine the two. I think if you're an Order member and seriously involved in the spiritual life, and want to be available for Retreats and classes and things, it's almost not fair on the children that you have, to have them. You're not going to spend with them as much time as you ideally should. Someone might say well Order members take up parenthood as though a particular spiritual path. I can't rule that out altogether in theory but I feel a need to examine a case claiming to be a case of that sort, because it could so easily be a rationalization. I don't know whether we can put it down (158) to matriarchy, though no doubt matriarchy ties in with it all somewhere. This problem is due to everything almost in our society, the negative feature in our society maybe there's only ( ? ) features too indirectly. It must be very difficult to be a child nowadays, much more difficult than when I was a child... that's a good many years ago now. I don't feel at all happy about the mothers who have children and who go out to work; the children are left on their own in the house quite a lot, they're little latchkey kids aren't they? The women say that they go out to work to earn extra money for the family, I'm not sure how true that really is, whether it's real or whether it would be a better investment if they spent more time with their children. Perhaps we think in terms too much of a better standard of living, but not a better quality of life. In India it's sometimes quite extraordinary how happy and positive Indian children are under what we would call very miserable conditions, conditions of almost total depravation. One thing they're not deprived of is parental affection or family affection, and that seems to make up for a lot of other things. I don't want to idealize or be sentimental over it, but I think there is quite a lot we could learn from them.

\_\_\_: William Blake in the passage concerning the female will [?] in Jerusalem, I think, refers

to Jesus and writes derogatively about three women around the cross. Would you like to say something more about what you think is the significance of the deaths of these religious leaders?

S: In the case of Jesus some modern scholars (I've recently been reading one of them) believes that there weren't any women actually around at the time of the Crucifixion. A group of disciples watched from a distance; no women were particularly near the corpse at that time. The traditional picture of course was constructed in Christian art, is of St. John; the vendors on one side of the cross and the Virgin Mary on the other. So one certainly has that sort of association.

— And Mary Magdalene at the foot of the cross.

S: Yes, Mary Magdalene at the foot of the cross, but again that as far as I can make out doesn't seem to be historical fact. In the case of the life of Jesus it's very difficult to say what's historically justified and what isn't. I've been reading a book called *Jesus the Magician*, it's very convincing as I remarked to Subhuti hearing I'd read accounts on the life of Jesus which offers a completely different interpretation, well, I've found anyway, quite convincing too! It's very difficult to know what to think. If one thinks in terms of images well, yes, certainly, a figure of the dying Jesus or the dying Christ is associated with women. I'm not [159] sure what that means? Some feminists, in a way, have made something of that, saying that it was only the women who had the guts to stick by him to the last. (Laughter). There might be something in that. What about the Buddha, the Buddha was a guru surrounded by his disciples; this again stresses or illustrates the importance of the relationships between master and disciples. Again almost the same in the case of Socrates which I referred to... his last moments, with his friends, and not with his family. In our society, we think that's dreadful; your family have absolute rights over you; your family can get you committed to a mental hospital, your friends can't; or one might say your family can put you in, - but your friends cannot get you out, they've no say in it at all, they've no *locus standi* at all in such matters, to the best of my knowledge. So you could be committed to a mental hospital by the request of parents you haven't seen, perhaps for years and years and your best and most intimate friends, who knew you really really well, couldn't do anything about it.

Apparently there were some states in the United States, where parents can get their children committed to mental hospitals for treatment, if they think they've joined various cults. It seems extraordinary, doesn't it? So that really is a possibility of the family. And the death of Muhammad, I refer to that too, I don't think probably Muslims would like that particular reference, but we do find in the biographies of Muhammad that he died in the arms of his favourite wife, who was ( ? ). I don't know what that tells us about Islam or about well, it does tell us something about ( ? ) I don't know whether it tells us anything about Islam. Perhaps it is interesting that whatever the historical facts may of been, women are not associated with the Parinirvana, whereas they are associated with the crucifixion and also with the death of Muhammad. They're not also associated very closely with the death of Socrates. Again I believe the reason is clearly stated, being women they would make a hullabaloo; and that was not appropriate at that time, and perhaps if the wife had been sensible and restrained in her behaviour, then it would have not been inappropriate for them to be present. Similarly in the case of the Buddha, there would seem to be no reason why a female arhant shouldn't have been present, but as a matter of historic backing, there wasn't. I was going to say that there was a woman present at the birth of the Buddha and also there was Sujatta and the goddess

Vessutra at the time of Enlightenment, one could say, or around the time of Enlightenment. Women seem to have been absent until the ( ? ) of Parinirvana. I don't know whether it can be taken to mean anything, perhaps it just did so happen that they weren't there. Very shortly before the Parinirvana both male and female (? members) came to pay their last respects.

Suvajra: We know you've been thinking of archetypal symbols contemplating the last two or three years. Have you given any thought to what part they play in personal relationships? And what especially may be a spiritual [160] type of personal relationship?

S: Can you give an example?

Suvajra: Yes, I was thinking in terms of say a teacher/pupil relationship, where you've got the teacher perhaps not just being the personal friend, but also an archetypal symbol. How does that fit in?

S: I think that it is quite difficult to combine the two. I think there's almost a sort of conflict between the two, in terms of actual experience as it were.

Suvajra: What about such practices as the guru-yoga; it would almost seem if you visualized your teacher above your head, to some extent are you not transforming him into an archetype?

S: In Tibet that is the tradition that maybe is one of the reasons for the, let's say, impersonality, of the teacher/ disciple, guru/disciple relationship that may have advantages for certain practices, but perhaps not for others. You can almost get a sort of schizophrenic situation in which you believe that someone is an incarnate lama and regard him for his mind, but you may be a party say in an extreme case, to his murder; there were cases of that sort in Tibet ( inaudible ) just murdered. ( inaudible) when the Dalai Lama assumed power.

I think whether a person becomes the bearer of an archetype, I think there is inevitably a sort of projected element there, even though of a positive nature, and that is incompatible with a 'real', in the sense of intimate and realistic personal relationship. That's different from regarding someone embodying an ideal, because that ideal will find expression in his actual life and the way in which he relates to you. Do you see what I mean? That is rather a different thing; there's no element of projection there, you just see quite clearly that the ideal to which you're committed, it is embodied more clearly in the other person... it may linger, there is a bit of a gap between you, inasmuch as he is very much more experienced or even advanced than you are, but nonetheless there's not that same projected element; as there is if he is so to speak, bearer of an archetype. Therefore, one has to distinguish, though I'm not quite sure how developed one would be to do this; a person who is the bearer of an archetype and a person who is the exemplar of an ideal.

Suvajra: Would the Buddha be an exemplar of an ideal, rather than the bearer of an archetype?

S: I think you can say in the Theravada Buddhist texts, the Buddha is much more of the nature of the embodiment of an ideal. In for instance the Vajrayana and in the Mahayana, the Buddha, especially in the form of Sambhogakaya, is more the bearer of an archetype... let us say though we're using the language very loosely, traditional language. But do you see what I mean? It's as though [161] (cont.): in the case of the person who exemplifies the ideal, you



actually see the ideal to some extent, percolated through that person, and finding expression in his life. In the case of the person who is the bearer of the archetype it's as though you take it almost on faith, on trust, that he is the bearer of that archetype; even though it might not be actually manifested in his life. I think if you regard a living person (especially if he's an imperfect person) as the bearer of a particular archetype, you can get into difficulties, he can get into difficulties. On the whole it's safer to regard figures of the Path or mythological figures as bearers of archetypes, rather than living persons.

\_\_\_: Do you think that rules out... or would you say in practice it's better then to exclude visualization practice human, living people you are in personal relation with?

S: That isn't of course the Vajrayana tradition, well, far from it. I think I have talked about this subject, I think I talked about this once with Dhardo Rimpoche. As far as I remember what he said was when you're actually going to do the guru-yoga, you have the appropriate feelings an attitudes towards the guru, that is to say the living guru, whom you visualize in the (?) practice; but when you actually meet him in the flesh you just drop that, and you just relate to him in a more straightforward fashion; you keep the two separate. It is as though when you do the meditation practice, yes, you can, at least if you're a Tibetan, regard the human teacher as the bearer of the archetype, but when you actually meet him you regard him more as the exact power of the ideal. Do you see what I mean? The Tibetans seem to manage things in this sort of way.

\_\_\_: It sounds very difficult to hold together in practice.

S: Yes, well they've got all sorts of manners and customs and traditions, and social observances which helps them to do that. For instance, if you've got a magnificent shrine, there's a great throne there, and there's your guru sitting there all in his robes, well then you can regard them as the bearer of the archetype; but if perhaps you were discussing logical grammar with him while you study, it's open for you to disagree or dispute with him, in fact that might even be encouraged. It's a different situation and they set up these different situations much more definitely and strongly than we do, and those differences for instance call forth the appropriate behaviour.

\_\_\_: Would the various 'hat' ceremonies be quite ... strong stuff?

S: This is also part of the same thing, a different hat for a different purpose; a 'ceremonial' hat, an 'initiativ' hat, a 'scholarly' hat and so on. Whereas we either have to wear all the hats at the same time or none at all. Chairmen know this because sometimes it's difficult to relate to people on the level, because they know that you are the chairman; and you're talking to them about something that's [162] nothing to do with the fact that you're chairman, that can be put aside; but they continue to see you as chairman, don't they sometimes? That can stand in the way!

Suvajra: Do you think some people in the Tibetan traditions; western people following Tibetan traditions and have got themselves into this trap, where they perhaps consider the lama in the wrong mode?

S: I think that is so. I think it can happen in India too. I mean they sometimes get very confused there. I think in India, especially in Hinduism, they don't any longer see the guru as

the exemplar of the ideal, they just see him as the bearer of the archetype; so he can do almost anything; you find this among Tibetan lamas in the west, where their followers aren't bothered by what they actually do, they just believe they are backed, they are the bearers of the archetype. So there don't have to be exemplars, I think that is a quite dangerous sort of situation for both parties. So don't think you can regard a living guru only as the bearer of the archetype, you also have to be able to regard him as the exemplar of the ideal. If you can't combine the two then it's better to abandon the first with regard to a living teacher and think of figures of past as bearers of the appropriate archetype.

Virananda: Bhante, some years ago I heard second-hand that you made some kind of connection between the lessening significance of angels in Christian culture, and the uprise of the significance of the relationship between the sexes. Would you like to say whether this is a connection that you have made and if so, would you say more about it?

S: I don't remember making that connection. I've certainly commented on the decline of the significance of the angel figure. I can't at the moment think of any particular connection ... the decline of the angel figure and the increasing prominence the male/female sexual relationship. I might possibly have commented on it and made a connection at some point... I can't remember anything about it now. I'm sure that there must be some at least indirect connection, but I'm unable to see anything specific.

Virananda: Possibly somebody interpreting their own response of what you'd said.

S: It could be that somebody (in the light of what I've said) made a perfectly legitimate connection, that is not impossible but I cannot think of a recollection myself.

Virananda: What about the rise within Christianity of the significance of Mary - the mariolatric aspect of Christianity?

S: I don't think that necessarily goes against the part of the angel. One of the titles of Mary is 'Queen of the Angels'. I think I could have been wrong ... yes. I think I was talking once about ;- Henry Adams book on: 'Mont Michel and Chartres'. [163] He makes the point that in the early middle ages, the figure of Michael was very dominant and that was the age not only of monasticism, but militaries and the more masculine qualities and virtues; and Henry Adams makes the figure of the archangel Michael symbolical of that period of those particular qualities. Then he makes the point that in the later middle ages (or it might of been the middle-middle ages) that the figure of the Virgin Mary comes more into prominence. More and more churches are dedicated to her rather than to Michael the archangel; she is more associated with the more feminine spiritual qualities and virtues, and they come more into prominence. So the one as it were succeeds the other. I was speaking there just of a specific instance that Henry Adams used of the figure of the archangel Michael, to a great extent superseded by the figure of the Virgin Mary. I certainly didn't mean by that, the figure of the Virgin Mary had superseded the cult of the angel altogether because of the rise of the Virgin Mary figure, the angel became less important; it's only that particular kind of proposal between those particular figures. So the comment that you might have heard might replace it all back to that. One really has to keep track of things. In fact one might even say if one considers Catholic Christianity in this country compared with Protestant Christianity that the Virgin Mary and the angels disappeared together. You do not find the Virgin Mary in Protestant Christianity to the extent that (inaudible) neither do you find the angels really, very

effectively.

\_\_\_: I don't understand that ... no ... that the Virgin Mary and the angels disappeared together.

S: Well, with the rising Protestantism. Protestantism cast out the Virgin Mary, or the cult of the Virgin Mary or mariolatry as they are called; and they also in effect cast out the angels too. What I am saying is far from being incompatible but it seems rather as though the Virgin Mary as an archetype, not just a figure of a person at the beginning of the gospel, and the angels seem to belong to the same sort of world view. It's not really that the Virgin Mary supersedes the angels but that their quite different attitudes the archetype and the actual living embodiment of certain qualities. Do you see what I mean? I think what probably would be true in modern Catholicism I should say the Catholicism especially the last hundred years perhaps with the figure of the Virgin Mary (?) has actually absorbed a lot of the devotion that formerly went to some of the angels. There was a cult of the three or the four Queen archangels wasn't it? I'm not even sure that their festival is any longer observed.

A few churches are still dedicated to St. Michael, St. Michael and all angels, I don't think any new ones are. It was interesting that on the new Coventry Cathedral there was the archangel Michael, and the Devil, by Epstein wasn't it? I have seen it, it's not a particularly good piece of work.

\_\_\_: Where does that lead the connection between the Mary cult and the older Mediterranean mother-goddess cult, which comes through very, very clearly in some of the symbolism in the paintings; for example, the Virgin and child riding on the crescent moon, a symbol of Isis I believe.

S: That comes out of the book of Revelation, the woman standing on the moon and with the four stars round her, round her face; but wondering where the book of Revelations got it from is of course quite another matter.

\_\_\_: And also the rituals and marrying festivals, for example, in southern Italy an Egyptologist relative of mine observed a marrying festival in the 1920's and she said it was almost like directly out of the Egyptian manuscripts.

S: Well, that's quite likely, but I think that it is not necessarily by natural historical connections but are common Jungian archetypes: but nonetheless I have read somewhere in Spain they have found that certain stone, basalt, black basalt images of the Virgin and child have actually found to be, upon examination images of statues of Isis with the infant Horus, actually conveyed at an early period, apparently from Egypt to Spain, and subsequently between the Christian period now I gather to the present, they worship the Virgin Mary and the infant Christ.

\_\_\_: The black Madonnas!

[165]

S: I never said all the black Madonnas of this time, well at least some. I think there's no doubt, it's obvious, for instance I'm in Italy and I visit Catholic churches, I feel almost as if I'm in India, going to Hindu temples; it doesn't seem really in a sense like Christianity at all. It's not gospel Christianity, you feel that a bit more as you move north into the Protestant

areas; but around the Mediterranean as far as my admittedly limited experience goes, you do find as though you've got in contact with Catholic Paganism. It's not the best sort of Paganism, it's not what we usually think of in the way we speak of Paganism in a more positive sense... mostly in the Mediterranean cult of the mother-goddess and the local heroes, but now the Virgin Mary is a Saint and you really feel that when you see the Priests and the Vicars, they don't really have anything to do with Christianity. Look at the Pope, he doesn't really have anything to do with Christianity at all. It's not necessarily bad (inaudible) have to come into contact with the dogma and the rather harsh moral teaching; it's a sort of colourful and folksy in a way, do you see what I mean? I've come to the conclusion recently with what I've started feeling, especially after going to Italy that one should approach Christianity (?) remain (?) in Catholicism; pretty much as well approaches Hinduism, it's the same sort of thing in many ways. It's colourful and untidy... the only difference is of course the Catholic Church is much more highly organized: there's a sort of hierarchy, almost a political hierarchy superimposed upon the whole thing, that's what you don't find in India. India of course have the caste system instead, maybe that fulfils much the same thing.

I remember reading years ago Burrough's ... I think it was 'The Worldly Ride'. I forget how it comes into it, it certainly wasn't the (?) it must be 'The Worldly Ride' or (?) There's some chapters there where he describes his wanderings in Africa or someone wandering in Africa, and how they met the great mumbo-jumbo, who is the local witch doctor; coming long, all made up with his mask, head-dress and all that sort of thing, and then Burroughs, who is a virulent Protestant, describes how he was involved in the (inaudible) to see the Pope; and at once he was reminded of mumbo-jumbo. It struck him that it was the same thing, this old man dressed up in the same sort of way, to use the same kind of effect on the ignorant worshippers: even the Pope was a gigantic medicine man that did mumbo-jumbo. It fitted in very much with borrowed, narrow Protestant prejudices because one of the arguments of the Protestants is that Catholicism is a betrayal of Christianity, just all the old Roman, Greek Paganism dressed up in Christians garments and Protestantism is the pure Christianity; but I felt when I read those chapters that - yes - in a way, they're on the edge. Though one could be more sympathetic about it than Burroughs himself was. Do you see what I mean? There is a connection The (inaudible) of High Priest is a sort of mumbo-jumbo; he's not a spiritual teacher or a Sage, in the way one could say the Dalai Lama was; the difference of the Dalai Lama and the Pope... that's the second biggest mumbo jumbo around the Dalai Lama, perhaps, especially when [166] he comes to the West.

\_\_\_: You get him writing encyclicals?

S: (inaudible)

\_\_\_: What would an encyclical being ... you know ... what would be the equivalent of that in witch-doctoring?

S: A spell! (wild Laughter). It's obvious, huh?

[167]

Abhaya: I would like to begin with a small question...

S: Ah! Just a moment, I've just remembered something. I wanted to add something I said in the previous session (?) It's on the question of trust and I did happened to speak of trust

between order members and mitras and I suggested that mitras should trust order members but I hope I did not leave anyone with the impression that I expected mitras to trust all order members unreservedly, in a sense of immediately accepting any advice or suggestion that was made to them by an order member; that was not what I meant. A trust should develop between an order member and a mitra as they get to know each other better and, as the mitra gradually comes to realize that the order member is in fact trustworthy. What I was getting at rather was that there should not be in the mitra any resistance to trusting that particular order member, or any order member where in fact that order member is worthy of trust and the mitra has sufficient contact with that order member really to know that. I am certainly not expecting mitras unreservedly to accept any advice or suggestion that an order member happens to give; I hope I did not give that impression. So then we can go on.

Abhaya: The first question, my question is: I was wondering how early were the three refuges commonly referred to as the three jewels how early that teaching, that reference comes...

S: I really don't know. We've got of course the Tiratana Vandana and the phrases that are used in the Tiratana Vandana: 'Iti'pi so' and so on come from what seems to be the oldest portions of the Canon. But at what stage the expression 'the Tiratana' - the Three Jewels - emerged or came into being commonly used, I could not really say. I would have to do a little research, if in fact it was possible to find out. Certainly the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha were there; the Buddha from the beginning, the Dharma as soon as He started to teach and the Sangha as soon as He collected enlightened disciples. But when exactly the collective term 'The Three Jewels' - came into use for those three, the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, I don't recollect having ever seen or reading, but it should be possible to find out. (Pause.) I seem to recollect for instance a text in which it says at a certain time the Buddha jewel came into existence and the Dharma jewel came into existence... you see what I mean? So that suggests that at a quite early stage He, the Buddha, was referred to a jewel at least.

Susiddhi: Well, I will be quite blunt, is the Tiratana Vandana 2000 years old? Is that what you are saying?

S: Yes, it well over 2000 years old because, let me distinguish there is the prose portion and there is the verses. The prose portion is undoubtedly well over 2000 years old because, as I said the 'Iti'pi so bhagava araham', and so, and the 'Svakkhato bhagavata Dhammo', and the 'Supatipanno bhagavato savakasangho', those three proses passages enumerating the qualities of the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, respectively, they are taken out of what we now have as the Pali Canon and seem to belong to a very old stratum indeed. But the verses are rather later, it's quite possible that the verses are not canonical at all but those prose [168] descriptions of the Three Jewels are something very old and appear in many portions of the Canon. In fact you read say the Majjhima-Nikaya carefully, you'll come across them every now and then, and certain persons happened to get a rumour that the Buddha was around and then followed a description that the Buddha was of such and such qualities and that He was teaching the Dharma with such and such qualities, and that He had a following - a Sangha - with such and such qualities; that passage occurs again and again in what seems to be quite early portions of the Canon. But would certainly apply to Asoka, so that takes you to about 250 BC., but the same cannot be said of those verses: 'Ye ca Buddha atita ca, ye ca Buddha anagata'. Those verses are not so old and probably not canonical.

Abhaya: The next question is from Mahamati about the translation 'fellowship with the

lovely', translation of 'kalyana mitrata'

Mahamati: In 'Some Sayings of the Buddha', Woodward translates 'kalyana mitrata' as 'fellowship with the lovely'.

S: Yes.

Mahamati: Yes. So my question is, taking that you of course translate kalyana mitrata as spiritual friendship...

S: interrupting... or you could say 'lovely fellowship, lovely friendship'...

Mahamati: Right. Would you regard Woodward's translation as simply correct, or is there an ambiguity as to the exact meaning of the word?

S: There is an ambiguity. Grammatically it can be understood in both ways, some people prefer to understand it in one way, some in the other, one could even say that it should be taken in both senses. Some modern scholars insist that it actually does mean 'fellowship with the lovely', not 'lovely fellowship' or 'spiritual friendship'. I am rather doubtful about that; I don't say that the translation, or even the meaning of 'fellowship with the lovely' can be excluded, but I don't think that the other meaning can be excluded either. In fact one might even say that the two really hang together because if you are to have even 'fellowship with the lovely', to begin with you don't have it directly, you have it indirectly, through those people who themselves in their own experience have fellowship with the lovely. Do you see what I mean? So one does not necessarily exclude the latter. Also some scholars point out that immediately after this particular passage, there is something that Woodward does not give in his translation that is there in the original, the Buddha makes a reference to the noble eightfold path. In a sense that would seem to be superfluous; if one goes through the Pali Canon, one does from time to time find the Buddha giving quite inspiring teachings but in brief and the explanation of them seems inadequate to the teaching itself even though that is attributed to the Buddha. It's as though someone had added a sort of scholarly or even scholastic footnote which purports to explain what the Buddha had said, those [169] put in the mouth of the Buddha himself, but at the same time it sorts of undermines or detracts from it or minimizes it, I think this might be a case in point. Do you see what I mean? That the Buddha said 'well, kalyana mitrata is the whole of the spiritual life' but then somebody else, as well, in his name, goes on to write: 'and what does that mean? It means following the noble eightfold path' which is in a way a bit trite. Do you see what I mean? which is a bit of an anti-climax.

Mahamati: As far as you know, has kalyana mitrata ever previously been taken in this specific sense of spiritual fellowship?

S: Oh yes.

Mahamati: I was particularly thinking whether in a tradition going back many centuries has it been understood that the Buddha said that the spiritual friendship is the whole of the spiritual life, especially in the context of the discussions last night that perhaps it has been over emphasized in the Buddha tradition generally.

S: I rather think from what I recollect that it's almost as though - well this occurs in the Pali Tripitaka - so one would expect the discussion to be in the Theravada tradition; I don't recollect any actual discussion at all that recommends the one or the other. Some scholars would assume that it meant one, some would assume that it meant the other. I don't remember any traditional discussion on this matter...

Mahamati: (interrupting) of the interpretation, of the exact meaning?

S: Yes. It could be that they were well aware of the grammatical ambiguity and were aware that grammatically speaking the term could mean either and therefore just accepted that; it could be one, or the other, it could be both. Do you see what I mean? But did not attach enough importance to the whole subject to actually get down to discussing it; that question arose when these things were translated into English, that it had to be one or the other. Some Western scholars would like to think that it was the one or the other, they would not be so happy or comfortable with the ambiguity as perhaps sometimes people are in the East.

Padmavajra: Does not Buddhaghosa at the beginning somewhere in 'The Path of Purification' mention the importance of a good friend?

S: That's true.

Padmavajra: It would be interesting to know whether he had cited that exert...

S: I seem to remember that he does but the term is 'Kalyana Mitta', 'good friend' You could argue that in as much as 'Kalyana Mitta' is always understood as 'good friend' in a sense of a concrete person therefore the expression 'kalyana mitrata' would be understood usually as 'spiritual friendship' and not friendship with a beautiful or lovely spiritual state. Yes you could argue from that sense; do you see what I mean? Because, as you point out, Buddhaghosa does use the expression 'kalyana mitra' in definitely the sense of spiritual friend. So, that being the case, 'kalyana mitrata' - the [170] abstract form of that - could well be spiritual friendship. You could, as I said early, stand up and say: well the kalyana mitra himself with whom you have the kalyana mitrata, himself has kalyana mitrata with, as mitrata with that which is kalyana, and it is on that account that he is able to be a kalyana mitra to you. In other words, one can't separate the one from the other. So, I think you'd probably better accept that the term is ambiguous grammatically so one should think not that it means this or that but that it means both; in a sense you really can't separate the two, because the person who is a kalyana mitra to you, a spiritual friend, should be someone who has developed skilful states and who has, or is a friend 'of those skilful states'. That is enough. Perhaps someone should sometime go through all the Pali literature and find out exactly what is said on the subject of 'kalyana mitra' and 'kalyana mitrata' as a nice little project for someone.

Abhaya: Kulamitra has a related question.

Kulamitra: In the lecture, Bhante, you establish the importance of the spiritual community by using the Buddha's comment that 'kalyana mitrata is the whole of the spiritual life' but if the...

S: (Interrupting) I said also that it is one of the three jewels.

Kulamitra: Yes. It is with this statement that the question is actually concerned. If the statement is literal truth, it seems to go even deeper. So in what sense is 'kalyana mitrata' the whole of spiritual life? Does it pervade every element, from beginning to end, if so in what way?

S: (Pause.) One can look at this I think in several ways, understanding even the term 'kalyana mitrata' in both senses. One speaks of the spiritual life; that means very broadly speaking a life which is directed towards the development of, or is the expression of skilful mental states. So, it is a question of developing an intimate relationship - one might say - with skilful mental states. In other words it's a question of developing a friendship for, or a friendship with skilful mental states and, not just within oneself but so to speak objectively in as much as those skilful mental states are embodied in other people. So, in this way, one can say that both the more objective side of the spiritual life, the more subjective side of the spiritual life reduces itself to a question of spiritual friendship either with, by way of cultivating proximity to spiritual states, skilful states yourself or cultivating proximity to those people - other than yourself - in whom such states are embodied; that would seem to be the essence of the matter. If you are engaged in any activity which has not enabled you to develop skilful mental states - which is therefore not kalyana mitrata and if you are engaged or in contact with people who themselves do not embody skilful mental states so that your association with them is not kalyana mitrata, then that obviously is against the interest of your spiritual life. So in this way, one can see that the spiritual life can be explained entirely in terms of kalyana mitrata in one sense or the other. In as much as it's far easier to develop skilful mental states in association with other people in whom those states are embodied perhaps to a greater degree than yourself, spiritual friendship is of greater practical [171] importance than friendship with the spiritual in the sense of simply trying to cultivate skilful mental states by yourself without coming into contact with people who embody those states. I hope I am not labouring the point too much, but do you see what I mean? Even if you understand the term 'kalyana mitrata' to be 'friendship with the lovely' or 'spiritual', even then it is interesting that the term 'friendship' is used. It's as though the relationship of friendship is taken as the norm, taken as the ideal and you are advised to cultivate a friendship with skilful mental states so, if you are advised to cultivate friendship with skilful mental states, you might say well how much should you cultivate a friendship with people who embody those skilful mental states, especially when you yourself, by yourself, are actually finding it difficult to develop those skilful mental states or to be friend to them.

Subhuti: And to a certain extent, you have accepted the equivocation in the term; that rather blunts the impact of the Buddha's saying, it seems to me. It seems almost to take the emphasis off friendship in the way in which you used it and it's very often used.

S: I think not really because, as I said, in what way is the spiritual friend so important because he, he is a spiritual friend; spiritual to begin with - and he can't be a spiritual friend unless he is spiritual - because he has his own personal friendship with the spiritual state. You can look at it in that way, it's a question of which one you grasp hold of first, so perhaps for the sake of dramatic emphasis, it's better to grasp hold of spiritual friendship first - and emphasize that - and then go on to point out that there is this other aspect too. The ideal in the long run is to develop intimacy and intimate association with what is skilful both in the form so to speak of mental states, i.e., your own mental states or what are potentially your own mental states and persons in whom such mental states are actually embodied.



Padmavajra: There is another sort of clinching sutta which really backs up the meaning of kalyana mitrata as spiritual friendship is the Meghiya sutta where its place first in that path of spiritual development is obvious in the content of the sutta that the meaning is spiritual friendship.

S: Yes, yes.

Padmavajra: That clinches it really.

S: Because the monk Meghiya leaves the Buddha, and leaves or loses contact with the Buddha, he goes off on his [own] and therefore suffers all those difficulties and when he comes back to the Buddha, the Buddha admonishes him and He mentions 'kalyana mitrata' as the top of the list... yes, that gives it support. It's in the Udana, isn't it? So, someone ought to collect all these passages and sort of marshal all the evidence as it were. It occurs to me that perhaps we ought to get this Tripitaka concordance for the order library because that's what the concordance does, it gives you, I don't know whether it's complete yet but even so, don't forget that the Pali like the Sanskrit alphabet begins with 'k', so [172] it must be there because they've produced a few volumes, so perhaps we should at least get that first volume so we can, with its help look up hopefully all the references to 'kalyana' and 'kalyana mitrata'. Maybe we should get Padmavajra up here for a week get him to collate or produce a little essay or article! Maybe we should persuade them at Aryatara to give a proper doctrinal scriptural under-pining to their friendship events! It is not just a little whim of the FWBO, but solidly founded on Buddhist doctrine and tradition but you should be able to show that in detail... (Laughter.) Anyway, let's pass on.

Abhaya: Tejananda has a question about the popularity of Sokkagakkai in this country. In the lecture you mention developments in modern Japan with regards with people who meet for a group to identify with, in particular you mention sects based on teachings of Nichiren and the Saddharma Pundarika Sutra. Now the impression that I have gained of such movements as the ( ?) Nichiren Shoshu many respect they share some of the worse characteristics of extreme evangelical Christianity, with mass demonstrations of the kind redolent in a sense of communist China, Russia and Nazi Germany, and yet these movements seem to be increasingly active in the West and to refer to themselves, without qualifications, as Buddhism and to be attracting a surprising large following. So I would like to ask you three questions with regards this phenomenon.

Firstly: Could you give any background to Nichiren, and in particular, can they really be called Buddhism.

Secondly: What possible attraction do these Nichiren sects have for Westerners; why is it they seem to be attracting people.

Thirdly: Should, if the occasion arises, we take an active stance with regard to the claim of these movements to be Buddhist per se. For instance, to take an example I have come across, a quite prominent article appeared in the local paper in Bristol declaring local Sokkagakkai neighbours to be Bristol's ordinary Buddhists. Now, would it be appropriate in this case to write to the paper pointing out what Buddhism is and how it differs from Sokkagakkai, or is it better to ignore them or pass the information on to the Order Office or what?

S: First of all, what Nichiren is itself. Dr Conze I believe it's in his 'Buddhism, Its History and Development', speaks of Nichiren rather unfavourably and says - in effect I forget his exact words - by his intolerance and so on, he disqualified himself as being regarded as a Buddhist teacher. Having read his life story and some of his utterances and writings, I am afraid I have to agree with that, at least to some extent and he seemed to have combined a form of Buddhism or his understanding of Buddhism with extreme Japanese nationalism. So one can certainly have reservations about even the original Nichiren Shu and about Nichiren himself. He seemed to have been the type of person who [173] is usually produced within Christianity rather than within Buddhism; I think, so far as Buddhism is concerned, it's quite an anomaly. So perhaps it's not surprising that some of the more modern off-shoots of the Nichirenshu are of this kind; I think that some of them, perhaps Sokkagakkai is one are much more extreme, even in traditional Nichiren-type Buddhism. I think we need to be quite sure of our grounds and may read up a little bit about Nichiren and Nichiren-shu; they have quite a broad philosophical teaching based on the Saddharma Pundarika sutra. If one reads simply about that teaching, well one might remain unaware of these other aspects of the teaching of the school as a whole. But Nichiren had a very very intolerant attitude towards all other forms of Buddhism; I think he said something like 'Zen people will all go to hell and all the Shin-shu were all devils' and so on, and so on,... the sort of language that Luther uses about the Pope in the Catholic church. He uses it about all the other Buddhist schools and he does not seem simply to be criticizing degeneration or corruption but the schools themselves as such. So his whole teaching has this rather unpleasant flavour. So, that perhaps deals with your first question. What was the second?

Why such groups in the West appeal to people? I think it's really quite simple; in a way I touched on it in the lecture. People want to belong to a group, they want to identify with a group and, in some ways, the more authoritarian the group the more they like it. Because they want almost to surrender their responsibility for themselves, they want to hand their responsibility for themselves over to the group or to the leader of the group. It's not in the least surprising that nowadays it's these sort of groups, these very extreme intolerant fundamentalist sort of groups which attract a lot of followers, far more than we attract. And then, with regards to the sort of incident that you mentioned, well I think it's unfortunate that the followers of Sokkagakkai are referred to as just ordinary Buddhists. I think it would be advisable to write to the Press for the sake of the readers who might think that these are ordinary Buddhists especially if they get to know some of their activities, and simply point out first of all that there are other Buddhists, in Bristol, not belonging to the Sokkagakkai and then go on to point out that really many Buddhists do not regard the followers of Sokkagakkai as genuine Buddhists. You could also just mention that it is an off-shoot of a rather intolerant form of Japanese Buddhism, that Dr Conze had characterized as sort of (?), bring in some recognized authority. But then you must be prepared for a bit of an attack from some Sokkagakkai, they are a bit militant; some of them may come and see you. While I was in New Zealand once, three of them turned up at the retreat I was leading and tried, not exactly to break things up but to be awkward but they did not succeed very well but they do do things like that. They might even write an abusive letter so if you tangle with them, be quite careful how you do it, not be too extreme. Not sort of lay yourself open to any sort of obvious rejoinder and also realize that they come after you. (Laughter.) They are usually quite unamenable to discussion or reason, just like a Jehovah's witness or Muslim or someone like that.

[174]

Tejananda: I do get the impression that they are comparable in relation to Buddhism to what Mormons and Jehovah's witnesses are to Christianity.

S: (interrupting) Except that of course main stream Christianity is pretty intolerant to begin with whereas Buddhism is not. So, the contrast in the case of Buddhism is all the greater.

Vairocana: What is your opinion, Bhante, about the pagodas that they build?

S: It's a good idea to have pagodas but I don't regard them as a top priority. I am quite happy to see a pagoda in Milton Keynes or in Battersea Park, that's fine but there are a lot of other things I can think of. I am not sure that is the best way of utilising whatever resources are available but still it's what people want to do, so I certainly would not go out of my way to criticize them by any means.

Dharmapriya: Recently we have been sent some information by a Japanese movement with branches by Japanese Americans in the States founded by a man called Niwano (?)

\_\_\_: (interrupting) Sokkagakkai.

Dharmapriya: Are they Nichiren-shu as well?

S: Yes, but they are not as extreme as the Sokkagakkai by any means but they are very lay-oriented; but they are a large movement but I think again a group. This is what I think Malcolm Pierce whose wife in Sydney belongs to. (Pause.)

Subhuti: I think those Nichiren sects in Britain constitute in total more than all the other Buddhist groups put together, they are very big.

S: One does not hear very much about them.

Subhuti: It picks up every now and again.

S: Some of them took interest in us in the very early days in the FWBO when we were still in Balmore Street and several came along and tried to sort of convert us and to draw us into their movement; they only recently started up I think but I don't think they had much success.

Kulamitra: I am not quite sure which one is which but the people who built the stupas or pagodas, they attract quite a lot of publicity because they are very involved in the Peace Movement, so they have been in the Press a lot recently...

S: They are an off-shoot ultimately of the Nichiren-Shu but they seem to have taken a completely different sort of direction in a way because they are definitely pacifist, they don't believe in violence and all that but sometimes their method of propagating their nonviolent ideas are quite aggressive, even provocative (Laughter,). It means they can't altogether shake off their conditioning even though their ideas are quite good, and that particular [175] that is Japan's Buddha Sangha founded by Fujiguruji who died just a few months ago, he did not quite reach his century unfortunately, but that's another off-shoot - in many ways a more reasonable, a more amenable one.

Kulamitra: Interestingly enough, Khemavira rang them up - something to do with publicity - he said 'is that the Nichirens?' they said 'no, we are not Nichirens'; they were quite adamant they were not Nichirens. He was very surprised.

S: One should out of politeness call them what they call themselves. He should have said 'is that the Japan Buddha Sangha?'

Padmavajra: There is actually a ( ?) which started on BBC, set in the East End, and it actually (I have not seen it but I saw a big colour spread, it had Buddhists praying in it, and it looked like the sort of thing I have heard about the Nichiren, it looked that kind of style.

S: If anything is shown that gives the wrong impression of Buddhism, representing such people as Buddhists, perhaps showing them as aggressive or violent, then one must write to the papers or media concerned, in doubt refer to the Order Office for guidance or if you write or send the letter off, send me a carbon copy to check it's right, it's easy to put a foot wrong. O.K. We just pass on.

Abhaya: I have a question. When listening to your account of the higher and lower ordinations, emphasizing the elements of going forth to being accepted into the spiritual community respectively, I am implying that traditionally there is often but not necessarily a period of time between them. But probably it might be good ideally to have a gap of at least just a few days between private ordination and public in which the ordinand stands in strictly solitary retreat to give emphasis to the Going Forth, being, well an ordeal I suppose, just like a new ordeal.

S: I must say I thought about this myself except that I thought that maybe the person concerned should go away for a while. People do of course have solitary retreats anyway, sometime before the ordination. I think yes in some ways it is good because one wants to make a real break so that there can be a real going forth; I don't think the Going Forth should be just symbolical. Of course in the case of the ordinations that take place in Tuscany, of course most men's ordinations do now take place in Tuscany, they've gone forth in a sense by virtue of the fact that they have gone to Tuscany Even though they are together there but they set forth separately from their respective homes or communities or centre and they foregather in Tuscany. I must say I have from time thought that it would be a good idea that people could actually on that occasion spend sometime on their own to underline that fact as it were to give them the opportunity to fully realize their loneliness, their solitariness and therefore the fact that they are individuals or potential individuals, as individuals 'join', in inverted commas, the spiritual community. I don't know how we sort of manage it as we are organized at present but I have been thinking about that sort of possibility myself.

[176]

Suvajra: In the Buddhist tradition there are usually two years between the two ordinations, the lower and the higher.

S: No, it varies very much. In my case, it was about a year and a half but very often they are both given at the same time if the person concerned is over twenty; you can't receive higher ordination in the case of a monk before you are twenty. If you are ordained as a sramanera when you are only ten, or twelve or sixteen or seventeen, well you can't be ordained in any case as a monk until you are twenty at least. But usually if someone leaves the lay life, at least

in some Buddhist countries, and becomes a monk as an adult people are very often given the higher ordination immediately after the lower ordination. I think in some way or other we must sort of have more of a token Going Forth. It is not easy because when you go forth, you know that you are coming back. So in some ways, it is a token but some tokens are more like tokens than others if you see what I mean. It should not be an entirely symbolical Going Forth as eventually developed in Nepalese Buddhist monks; I think I've spoken about this in the sort of Vajrayana Buddhism of Nepal - modern Nepal.

In certain communities - not to say castes - Nerwa Buddhist castes as they have become - when a young man reaches a certain age, he is given ordination as a monk - I am not sure whether it is as a sramanera(?) or as a bhikkhu. But he is given it by a married vajracarya which is completely against the Vinaya, and for three days he begs his food; well, that's the theory. Actually he goes to this aunty (laughter) who is stuffing him with sweets and things and then after three days of this... ordeal, he goes back to the Vajracarya and says that he finds the life of a bhikkhu far too arduous and he relinquishes his ordination and thereupon is initiated into the Vajrayana. We don't want that sort of token Going Forth where you go away to a little cottage in the country for a few days; you know that you are coming straight back into the same situation. You don't want it to be as token as that; you somehow have to make it, yes, a bit more of an ordeal. So this is why I thought in terms of a month solitary retreat. I thought perhaps it was not necessarily associated with the, or to be associated with, the actual private ordination as we call it but that everybody who is ordained would previously have had at least one month completely solitary retreat. If it could coincide with the private ordination, even better but I think at present that would be rather difficult to arrange. But perhaps one should, among other things, ensure that everybody who is ordained has had, as I said, one month of completely solitary retreat beforehand, as solitary as possible.

\_\_\_: It's quite good in Australia there is a sort of precedent that Aborigines chuck their adolescents out and ( ??) in the desert and it's a crime to assist them when they are grubbing about for survival. They come back and get re-admitted to the tribe as men.

S: But just as a matter of interest, what is, to question those of you who come from public centres and communities, what percentage of mitras do have solitary retreats, say by the time they get ordained, in the case of those who do?

[177]

Sudhana: My experience with that is that they rarely have had a month solitary. I would think not a month this year; they have not got time because they need it to finance themselves...

Kulamitra: I think a lot of mitras would have had some solitary probably not a whole month, it would have been two weeks - occasionally a month - but probably not all of them would have done as long as that.

Suvajra: A very, very small proportion.

S: It does seem we must encourage people more to take solitary retreats; it's a part of one's training and preparation, one should be able to exist without the familiar props at least for that length of time.

Subhuti: Do you think there is anything to be said for people not going back to their original

centres... as a matter of course?

S: Well, I think I would underline the fact that a centre or a community or whatever is not be regarded as a substitute for home and also to emphasize the unity of the Order and the whole Movement. I have strongly encouraged one or two people to leave their original centre or community, not immediately, say after a year; especially when they have been there for quite a number of years already have virtually no experience of the rest of the Movement. What is going to happen that almost inevitably the movement is going to be divided to some extent and I am very concerned about that, especially if the movement gets bigger. I think it's very, very important that people move around, especially after ordination.

\_\_\_: In this connection Bhante what you were saying I think yesterday, about order members realizing before ordination that as order members they would not have time to bring up children. May be it could do with much more emphasizing because it does seem that it has not been completely clear to people that their Going Forth should be that concrete and that strong.

S: Well, at the beginning one could not make these points, one would scare people away. So people are of their own accord very often realizing more and more the implications for themselves of their commitment, the implications of Going Forth and so on. So, at the very least, after ordination one should not increase one's worldly responsibilities and commitments, not voluntarily; if, for instance an aged parent suddenly becomes incapable, you have to accept the responsibility for looking after them but that's not the kind of responsibility you brought upon yourself.

Abhaya: Susiddhi has a question about situations which inhibit Stream Entry.

Susiddhi: It seems to me that there are countless ways in which individual people can settle down in situations which do not help to work towards Stream Entry and Enlightenment; are there any interesting examples of such situations which you have identified in the last year or two and to which you would like to draw our attention?

[178]

S: Identified in the past year or two... Before you completed your sentence, I was thinking of a story I used to tell about the Sadhu - the holy man in India who had a pet kitten. You have heard that recently on tape?

Voices: Yes (Laughter.) No

S: Can we have a version? Have a go at least.

Subhuti: It started with a mouse eating his loin cloth.

S: Yes, that's right, now I remember. Because in India sadhus wear what we call a culpon, which is a dreadful piece, strip, of cloth that they wear between the loins - not even a proper loin cloth - and they usually have two of these and they wear them and wash them in turn like that. So the sadhu apparently had washed his culpon and just hung it up on the line but it was nibbled by a rat or a mouse; he was rather annoyed because it was half his wardrobe. (Laughter.) So what he did, he got a cat - yes it was not a kitten, it was a cat; he got a cat from

somewhere to keep the mice away. So, he was quite pleased because the cat would keep away the mice; the mice would not be able to nibble his culpon and he could get on with his meditation without bothering about worldly things. But then he found that the cat needed milk; so he arranged with some of his devotees who lived in the village nearby to supply him with milk everyday for the cat. So that was all right for a while, that worked quite well. But I think after a few weeks, the devotees said well we are bringing milk for the cat every day, we're quite happy to do that - but it is rather far; we thought of a solution. If we were to give you a cow, then you could milk it yourself and give the milk to the cat. So the sadhu did not feel too happy about this but he did not want to trouble the people so he agreed. So they bought him a fine cow and he used to milk it every day and give the milk to the cat... because India there is not that much grass; you have to cut grass for the cow. You cover quite a wide area of cutting grass, and you bring it to the cow who is kept tied up in a stall nearby.

So the sadhu then found that he spent half his days cutting grass for the cow. So he was not at all pleased because he had less and less time for his meditation. So the next time the villagers came, he pointed this out to them. So they say O.K. we sort that problem for you, we will get a man for you to come and cut grass. So the man came and stayed - near the sadhu and he was cutting grass for the cow and so on; but sometimes he did not do his job properly so the cow did not get its grass, therefore the cow did not get its milk and the cat did not do its duty; all that, So again he had to talk to the villagers. So they said: we'll solve the whole problem once for all, it's simple. There is a nice girl in the village, ready for marriage; just marry her, she'll manage everything. She will look after the man cutting grass and she will look after the cow; she will look after you and she will look after the cat. You will have no trouble, you can just get on with your meditation. So of course he agreed.

So five years later, his guru came that way to see how he was getting on meditating under his tree; he found a large farmstead with lots of cows and goats, all sorts of things; the wife of [179] course and a number of children; and the poor old ex-sadhu looking very harassed, tending to all the householder's business. So the guru said 'how come you are in that sort of situation? I left you just sitting under a tree, meditating with just a couple of culpons. He said 'Yes, that's what it is all about! All this, just for the sake of the culpon.' (Laughter.)

So, there was the story, wasn't it? So, that's how it can come about; one thing leads to another, it's very easy. But that does not really solve the question when you at (inaudible...?) I think that one of the things comes from that ( ?) is to keep on the move and NOT literally settle down. ( ?) I have said, in the case of a chairman of a larger centre you can't move too frequently but... for obvious reasons; it can take two or three years to get into the job so you can't have your chair ... leaving and this could apply to key workers in that particular centre. In the case of most younger order members, they could well spend say two or three or perhaps four years in a particular centre and then move on to another, in another part of the country even another part of the world and enlarge their experience of the movement. After all, wherever you go, there are fellow order members and therefore potential friends. It does not mean that you drop off connections completely with the people you knew before; you see them at order weekends, you see them on retreats; you see them on all sorts of occasions. So, I really don't want to see centres and communities developing, where year after year, decade after decade with the same people or identifying more and more strongly with that particular situation, that particular centre or community and have comparatively little contact with order members and mitras outside; I think that's a recipe for eventual disintegration.

Sudhana: Could you suggest a time limit for key people?

S: It's very difficult to generalize because sometimes they are very difficult to replace. It's certainly something that should be borne in mind.

Kulamitra: It does seem that the more we establish the movement the more we realize how many things take a long period of attention and building up of skills but perhaps one way round that would be an amount of swapping. For instance if you gain a skill in one situation, it is relatively easy to apply the same skill in a different situation; swap treasurer, swap secretary.

S: Mostly people are relatively under-skilled, so in their case there should not be any real problem of moving around.

\_\_\_: Does not this sort of thing go against the idea of developing roots, positive roots that you were that you were talking in terms of ...

S: I think that one should develop roots but in the first place the roots will need to be in the movement as a whole, especially in the Order and I have been speaking about relatively young order members. Perhaps when you are quite old and you get over fifty, fifty-five, it is not so easy to adjust physically to a constant change of place, you may settle down. Not settle down in the real sense but, you just stay in the same place; by [180] that time you should be able, you should be in a position to guard against any tendency to look upon that as your home and to become attached to that.

\_\_\_: Would you still not see the danger of people just hopping about and not really developing.

S: Well there is, that's the opposite thing. One must be on one's guard against that too. I am certainly not thinking in terms of people moving every three or four months; that's restlessness. But in terms of every three or four years, yes; that would not be restlessness. In fact for a young person, three or four years is quite a long time. (Pause.) Do you see what I am getting at? I am quite concerned with this whole question of what I used to call the unity of the Order. I am quite happy to see centres and communities getting bigger and stronger but I am quite concerned that order members and mitras connected with those centres and communities, or belong to them, don't begin to identify with them exclusively. Otherwise, one would have a number of little movements and almost a number of orders and not one order. Again this is why I stress the importance of the Order weekends and so on, and the regional order weekends. We all know how important they are; it's easy to forget, to remain as if we were content within your own smaller situation. Maybe that's enough about that.

Abhaya: Virananda has a couple of questions related to settling down, the dangers of localization.

Virananda: In fact what you have been saying Bhante has answered the second question to a certain extent so I don't want really to say anything.

Bhante, you speak about the dangers of localization, giving as example the case of people settling down inside their community. First, are these dangers best met by order members



holding more central some Western thought of an ideal of the wanderer? Second, as the movement has greatly increased in size and spread since you gave this lecture, aren't the dangers of localization within a big movement likely to be organizational; that is dangers of either too much centralization or too much autonomy?

S: I must say the question is not altogether clear for me but, as regards this question of centralization versus autonomy, in the early days of the movement I was very concerned that each centre should be autonomous. I think in recent years autonomy has developed at the expense of, to use that term, centralization. I think that the autonomy of individual centres is now so firmly established in every way, it's no longer any danger. The danger is that those autonomous centres become so autonomous that they find it difficult to co-operate for common purposes and also tend to over-identify. That is to say that the order members and mitras connected with that particular autonomous centre and that has a ( ? ) effect upon the Order and the movement as a whole. So I am quite happy that the centres are autonomous; that is as it should be. But nevertheless just as individuals must learn to co-operate, autonomous centres too must learn to co-operate and people running them learn to co-operate and this is one of the reasons [181] of course we have the chairmen's meetings, sometimes even treasurers' meetings; there are occasions of many kinds in which Order members and mitras from different centres all come together. I hope people do take this sort of warning very seriously because it's quite vital to the development or even the survival of the Movement and the Order as such.

Padmavajra: Sometimes you can be in a situation where your centre is rapidly expanding and there is definitely, you definitely need in a way all the Order members you can get your hands on and do you think, with the movement in its present state of development, that you should in a sense sacrifice your centre's needs completely to the unity of the Order?

S: I would not say completely but then I do think things have got out of balance to quite an extent actually; that the autonomy of the individual centres is well provided for but there is no corresponding provision really to ensure that the unity of the Movement and the unity of the Order in particular, not in the same way, by virtue of the nature of the situation, that is almost impossible because people live in a community or work in the centre together and by nature of the situation see one another constantly, but while this situation persists - in a way it must persist - there can be no corresponding organization to ensure that everybody is seeing one another all the time; so you've got to take the more serious advantage of those occasional opportunities' of coming together in large numbers such as National Order weekends and Regional Order weekends, co-op meetings, the larger retreats and the celebration of Wesak and big festivals where a number of centres celebrate jointly. Otherwise, you are bound to have a situation after a few years in which you live and work in a particular centre; it's the first one you ever encountered. You've never seen any other centre, that is the FWBO as far as you are concerned; you are virtually cut off from the rest of the movement. So at present I think we need to give a little more - well, quite a bit more - weight to those factors which contribute to the unity of the Order, the unity of the Movement, even if we do have to sacrifice in a sense - it's only in a sense - the interests of your autonomous centre for the time being; in the long run, it is not a sacrifice. Because, you mentioned expanding situations; in that sort of situation presumably one could often arrange for a swap so that you did not just lose some body but one of your people going to another centre and one of their people came and joined you so there was no actual loss.

\_\_\_: Because I know in my own centre in my own situation people going to Tuscany; fair enough they don't come back afterwards but it would be great to feel there were other people encouraged to from Tuscany, move to...

S: (interrupting) everybody is moving around, that happens automatically because if some people don't go back to your centre, other people who don't go back to theirs, chances are some of them will come to your centre; this is how it should work out hopefully. [182]

Padmavajra: It is as though there has to be a kind of give somewhere along the line; something somewhere has to give I think.

S: Or else you have to concentrate in bringing more people into the movement. I still feel we are not expanding, with regard to Order members, as rapidly as we might, existing Order members are not producing the number of new Order members that one might have expected. We have talked about this recently in connection with the recent Tuscany selection retreat; I won't go into that now.

Susiddhi : People are moving more and more, Bhante; especially I think if people from Tuscany were expected not to go back to their centre. Don't you think that could result in a rather unseemly competition for new ordinands or for good mitras:

S: Well, no I think not; if they all did not go back to their original centre because they all going to have to find somewhere. So, I think you will find - except where perhaps few of them decide to start a completely new centre - you'll find you had just as many people as before.

\_\_\_ Perhaps that's a part of Going Forth; each had to go into a new centre...

S: I don't think that one can make it an absolute rule but I think one can certainly see it as something desirable, to be encouraged; and as what normally happens perhaps. Especially for those who have been in their original centre for three or four years; if they, say, have only been there for six months or a year, well it would not be so necessary that they did not go back to their original centre. (Pause.) Some might have got ordained quite quickly or he might even before his Ordination have experienced two or three centres; he need not necessarily move yet again after his ordination; he could go back to the centre he was last at in that case.

Abhaya: It would also have the very beneficial effect of the circularization of talent; really talented people moving around a bit.

S: And also I think quite of a few of the centres develop a sort of expertise and experience that is not always available to other centres because these centres' experience is different; so that would mean that whatever expertise or experience there was was put much more into circulation. Because for instance you might go to a new centre some problem might arise or a new activity might be started up and you remember 'oh yes that used to be done in my old centre; this is how It's done, this is how we should go about it'

Dharmapriya: You already indicated that you obviously regard people, to some extent individuals some of them, who've been to say four or three centres before being ordained, it would not be so necessary for them to move on. Presumably could one extend that to saying

well there are some of us that show great instability and it's a major achievement for him to stick six months, he should really stick on and the other case - well some people have been at centres for five, six, seven years; he should be urged with the greatest strength to move on. [183]

S: I have done that in one particular case; he has not moved on but I think he will. I think someone who is unstable as that probably would not get ordained now until he became a bit more stable. As a test, say well look you've got to stay in a centre for a year before you go to Tuscany. I think that might even have been said already in one or two cases; they've got to develop more stability.

Virananda: Would you like to consider the first part of my question. (Laughter.)

S: Yes.

Virananda: Are the dangers of localization - well could they be met by Order members holding more centrally some western sort of ideal, the wanderer. It could mean, to explain that question in terms of, well an ideal for an Order member could be to be chairman or a treasurer or something like that; so it might be linked with even some kind of officially recognized position within the Order: this is a 'wanderer'?

S: (interrupting) A roving ambassador.

Virananda: Something like that, yes.

S: Yes, that was quite a traditional pattern; some people like doing that but again, it should not be a rationalization of the wanderer's like instability (?). I have known Bhikkhus like that who could not stay in any one place and it was, well a problem almost it was almost neurotic. Yes, I think there is room for a person who is almost recognized as a wanderer and who moves from centre to centre, community to community as where he goes he always carries news with him, and in that way acts as a sort of link. I don't think that is enough by any means; I think it would help but I think in fact there is no substitute for the sort of interchange of mitras or for the regular coming together of Order members in large numbers; it would just be an additional helpful factor, I'll be quite happy to see. You need of course really to have quite a good number of centres; perhaps now we do have enough. Perhaps you could spend a few weeks a year at every centre; in Great Britain we've got - how many centres? Eight or nine centres? Well, there is public centres, communities sometimes attached to a single centre; someone could move around quite a bit. I don't know what effect it would have on the life of, say, the smaller centres, or say smaller communities. In the case of smaller centres, it could be quite helpful; you just have a new, perhaps quite experienced Order member just there for a few weeks; taking a few classes, giving a few lectures. It could be quite a stimulant for a small centre, not so much perhaps in the case of a large centre unless the wanderer was quite a distinguished one.

Virananda: Presumably such a wanderer could only be an experienced Order member?

S: Well yes, it would be because it's not easy to lead a wandering life. (Pause.) Well, yes I would be happy to see a few wanderers moving even from country to country. In India, some of the Order [184] members of course, especially those who don't have families, do a lot of

travelling around; Lokamitra does even though he has got a family now, Jyotipala does, Asvajit does quite a bit and several of the Indian Order members move around quite a bit; perhaps more than people generally do here, Mahadhammavira moves around a lot. (Pause.)

Abhaya Just two more questions from Suvajra about your own experience of kalyana mitrata.

Suvajra: The first one is to ask you when it was that you first realized the full importance of kalyana mitrata and also the spiritual community; and the second question regards what was the nature of your kalyana mitrata with Jagdish Kasyap, Dhardo Rimpoche and Jamyang Khyentse, each of those being from Tibetan tradition.

S: Give me the first question again.

Suvajra: When was it that you first started realizing the full significance of kalyana mitrata and spiritual community?

S: I think it was only after I had been back to this country because I think so long as I was in the East the nature of kalyana mitrata and spiritual community was rather obscured by the fact that they did have there a sort of rather 'degenerate' version of those things. I thought that something was missing; I used to feel this very strongly when I used to go down to Calcutta and stay at the Maha Bodhi Society; technically it was a monastery but really it was not a monastery at all. There were lots of other monks staying there; some of them quite friendly people, some of them I got on with quite well and develop a sort of friendship with. But one could not describe the situation there as one of kalyana mitrata or spiritual community, so I felt that there was something wrong, there was something missing, I was quite aware of that; I felt the lack of real spiritual contact and what we now I suppose call spiritual friendship and spiritual community but I don't think I quite thought of it in that sort of way. I mean now we are so familiar with that sort of language and that way of thinking that it seems obvious to us but I must admit that it did not seem very obvious to me at that time; I just had a vague though quite strong sort of feeling that there was something missing and that I ought to have been getting more -out of my visits to Calcutta and the Maha Bodhi Society in that sort of way; I rather tended to think that it was just there in the Maha Bodhi Society but elsewhere in the Buddhist world things were better but I think I eventually realized that things weren't better in this respect elsewhere in the Buddhist world. But I think that it was only when I had to start beginning things from scratch in the West that I really had a clear idea of what was actually needed; what spiritual friendship really meant and spiritual community really meant.

Suvajra: Was that at Hampstead or with the FWBO?

[185]

S: No, I think with the FWBO. At Hampstead, at times there were seven or eight Bhikkhus staying there but there was no spiritual community, there was no spiritual friendship; maybe two or three of the Bhikkhus, they got on quite well; they were quite friendly but there were no spiritual friendships. And even though, there were several Thai Bhikkhus there; one disrobed, and became a meditation teacher but his behaviour was very strange. He made a great point of the fact that he did not belong to the English sangha; he belonged to a Thai sangha; he put a notice on his door 'Office of the Thai Sangha'. So, how can one think in terms of spiritual community or spiritual fellowship? I remember his devotees brought him, his Thai supporters, a great big desk, it was the biggest desk I had ever seen, it just about got

inside his room, (laughter), and he would just sit behind it so when the door of the office of the Thai sangha was open, you would see this enormous desk and he sitting behind it with a pair of dark glasses on; I think he had the idea that he ought to be some sort of super executive type Bhikkhu, and he was a teacher of vipassana... so, again, I thought there was something missing! I did get them chanting and meditating in the morning (laughter), they did not like it. I was after all so to speak in charge. I used to get them all in the shrine room in the morning before breakfast, insist on having some chanting; they did not want to do anything together. Some were Sinhalese, some were Thai. We did not have that number, seven or eight, of them for very long; there was one German and I think one other Englishman, two Sramaneras, they were rather difficult, well they were nutcases to be quite frank. (Laughter.

Abhaya: Did the head of the Thai sangha join in the meditation and chanting?

S: He did; I sort of insisted but he was not very happy about it. No, he was not the head he was the representative, that was the office of the Thai sangha. He had this plate put on the door.

Mahamati : You were the senior monk presumably?

S: Yes, I was senior as well as being officially in charge. (Pause.) It was only when I sort of started creating the FWBO and the WBO that I eventually got these principles worked out and they very quickly found expression in my lectures as you've seen. But I think the whole picture for me was rather obscured by these sort of survivals in the form of traditional, conventional Buddhism that had gone slightly wrong. There was, you can say even in Calcutta, there was a sort of sangha in a way because there were lots of Bhikkhus there, so it was difficult to think well it is not really a sangha because no one would agree with you that there was no sangha, well because there were so many Bhikkhus and if we wanted we could all gather and join together and ordain somebody, who says there is no sangha, this is the sangha. Do you see what I mean? It's very difficult to recognize; in some ways I did not want to recognize that there was in fact no sangha and eventually I was sort of forced to recognize it because I was very reluctant to criticize or to accept the fact that the Buddhist tradition had degenerated to a great extent So, that's the answer to the first question; what's the other one?

[186]

Suvajra: It was to ask you a bit more about the nature of your relationship with Jagdish Kashyap, Dhardo Rimpoche and Jamyang Khyentse in terms of kalyana mitrata.

S: I must say that at the time, of course, I never thought of it as a relationship; I did not think of it in terms of kalyana mitrata, it's as though one is sort of looking back on those days and those experiences and so forth in the light of much, much later experience, not only my own but other people. I think, as I made clear in 'The Thousand - Petalled Lotus', I had quite a positive relationship as we would say now with Jagdish Kashyap; I certainly found him very kind and considerate, and a very good teacher; and quite a lot of confidence did develop between us, there is no doubt about that; I had a lot of confidence in him and he certainly had quite a lot of confidence in me. And, in the case of Dhardo Rimpoche, it was much the same except that the connection started much more slowly, got off to a very slow start for one reason or another which I am going to be writing about in the current volume of memoirs, but once we did establish personal contact, even before he actually became my teacher by giving me the bodhisattva ordination and the Vajrayana initiation, we already had a very positive

contact indeed. I naturally looked up to him, not only because he was an incarnate lama but because he was older than me and also quite a bit more experienced than I was, so we had quite a lengthy contact for quite a number of years; the contact between us really got going in 1956 when we both were guests on a government tour of holy places; the governor of India invited 56 eminent Buddhists from border areas on this tour and we went on it both of us were invited - and we tended to be gravitating together and we stuck together even though - it was very strange sometimes because there were Theravada bhikkhus from Assam and ( ? ) and places like that; they could not understand who was this yellow-robed bhikkhu Sangharakshita always sitting with this heretical red-robed Tibetan monk and the bhikkhus, when we were transported from place to place by bus, always used to get on to the bus first and make sure they sat up in front because they consider it right and proper that Bhikkhus should occupy the front seats so they sometimes even pushed past in front of Dhardo and me; there were the Tibetan monks - and there were some Tibetan or Tibetan-style monks - politely saying 'after you, after you' where the Theravada bhikkhus were pushing in front considering their rights as they were bhikkhus. I used to sit behind with Dhardo Rimpoche; the Tibetan sort of sitting there laughing, the Theravadins used to sit up in front they regarded it as typical arrogant arhant-type behaviour! (Laughter.) Straight out of the scriptures. So they didn't mind.

There was of one of the Assamese monks - I think the elder one - he used to turn round and see me sitting by them and say: "Come on, come on, you are a bhikkhu too; you should go and sit up in the front"; I said "No, I am all right here, thank you". He could not understand it, but even though I was a bhikkhu, I was content to sit down and letting down the side by sitting with this Tibetan lama but it was Dhardo Rimpoche. So, in this way, quite a little bond developed between us and we made a point of always occupying the same railway carriage and we always sat side by side on the bus; we found we had quite a lot in common. I found that I had more in common with him than with any of the other monks, I think [187] he found he had a lot in common with me; and we could converse in Hindi quite freely, this was 1956. We had very regular contact right through until 1964; that's a period of eight years. I often used to meet him several times a week; I usually would go to his place, sometimes he'd come to see me; that was usually when he performed a puja or came to a celebration or a tea party but, slowly, our relationship - if you could call it that - definitely built up and we learned to rely on each other. He'd tell me things that he thought I should know about developments in Kalimpong in the Buddhist movement among the Tibetan refugees, political developments. If I heard anything I thought that would concern him, I made sure that he knew it. Sometimes the situation in Kalimpong was very delicate and I did not go and tell him myself; I used to send some trusted messenger to him to convey the information. At one point a lot of the Tibetan officials were working against Dhardo Rimpoche trying to get him expelled from Kalimpong because they said he was a Chinese agent; they tried very very hard to get him out of Kalimpong so I used to keep my ears to the ground and if I heard any sort of plot or I at once sent someone to him to let him know about it and we collaborated in organizing Wesak celebrations and counter acting the influence of the Christian missionaries. In the case of Jamyang Khyentse I did not have nearly so much contact with him because he only lived for two years after I got to know him; I must have met him not more than three or four times. So, in his case the contact was of quite a different kind; it was more one might say exclusively spiritual contact and more of a teacher/pupil contact and relationship. Again I must qualify that because he had a chief disciple - Kachu Rimpoche - who was very well disposed to wards me and Jamyang Khyentse in a way had contact with me through him because he used to come and see me quite frequently; he just turned up, he'd put certain teachings or say, he wanted to give me a certain initiation. He used to take a lot of initiative in this way, he was

very full of good will and genuine friendliness and I got the impression that Jamyang Khyentse had asked him to have contact with me; he was very keen that I should really understand what the Nyingmapa tradition was all about, he was an ardent Nyingmapa Buddhist though not narrow in any sense; he was one of the very few people in my life I can say who took a definite initiative in approaching me. If I look back over my life, I see that very few people took the initiative in approaching me, especially in that sort of way but he did in a very marked manner; I think partly at least at the instigation of Jamyang Khyentse but at the same time it was very much out of his own goodness of heart and so on, he was a very sort of warm person - much more so than Tibetans very often are; he did not seem very characteristic in some ways, not a typical Tibetan; he was very straightforward, very warm-hearted person and deeply committed to the Nyingmapa tradition, spiritual life and meditation especially and I had very good contact with him. I think I mentioned before quite a few telepathic experiences with him; he was definitely a thought-reader and I had a number of experiences like that with him, so did other people. For instance, there were some Americans who wanted to meet him so I invited him to my place to have lunch and I invited them also and I was sort of interpreting, he knew Nepalese, so I used to be interpreting but it was very often not necessary; he knew what they were saying without my translating although he did not know any English at all and [188] he'd give the answer.

Sudhana: This is Kashu (?)

S: No, this is Kachu and there was one famous occasion - this is how I came to hear about him - when my friend the very difficult French nun told me how she had encountered him. I won't tell her part of the story but she happened to be wandering in some part of Sikkim and she came across him; she had known that he was there and had never heard about him before; he just entered Sikkim and he was staying in a sort of solitary retreat until such time as there was an auspicious day for him to enter a monastery a few miles away to take over as abbot-it was the Penyangse (?) monastery, the main monastery in Sikkim. And she came across this Tibetan lama quite unexpectedly sort of camping in a clearing in the forest, sitting there cross-legged and she'd been having trouble with her previous teachers including Dhardo Rimpoche. (Pause.) Dhardo was having more than a bit of trouble with her. But anyway, she met this lama and of course as the sort of custom is in Tibetan Buddhist circles he asked her not who she was but who was her teacher and what practice she was doing. So, she said her teacher was Dhardo Rimpoche and that she was doing such and such practice he had given her. Then, he said 'You are doing that practice every day'? She said 'Yes'; he said 'No, you're not; you have not done it for six months.' It was true! So, it really sort of stunned her so at once of course she wanted him to be her teacher! To cut a long story short, he did his best for a while but she quarrelled with him too; she used to come and tell me all her troubles; that's how I came to hear about it. She came to me full of enthusiasm for this new lama - she discovered him - and she told me this story and afterwards I met him - she was very keen for me to meet him - we did become very good friends but subsequently Jamyang Khyentse came to Kalimpong and he at once took advantage of the opportunity of receiving teachings and initiations from Jamyang Khyentse and he became his sort of disciple one might say and he was constantly with him. Well, he used to divide his time between Penyangse, his own monastery in Sikkim of which he was in charge, and Jamyang Khyentse. Sometimes Jamyang K. was in Penyangse and he used to come to my place and stay with me. So I felt I was not only in contact with Jamyang K. personally but I'd quite a lot of contact with him indirectly through Kachu Rimpoche; he used to tell me quite a lot about him - he used to talk about him quite a lot but, as I said, Kachu Rimpoche was one of the few people in my life who was the

one (?) taking the initiative with me in approaching me; I find when I am looking back that for some reason or another that very rarely happened. He seemed to have a lot of positive feeling towards me, a lot of good will and a lot of concern for me in a way that hardly anybody else had had up to that time. So, Kachu Rimpoche must also included along with Khyentse Rimpoche. There is a photograph of him in Peace is a Fire; I don't know what sort of impression you get from the photograph.

\_\_\_: Is he still alive, Bhante?

S: He is not I am afraid. His nephew stayed with me for some time; his nephew became my pupil, he stayed with me for quite a while.

[189]

My overall impression of Khyentse Rimpoche was that he was a very masculine sort of person but not in a one-sided sort of way, there nothing sort of macho about him but he was vigorous and rugged in a way that even Tibetans aren't always. It's very difficult to describe in a way; he had a sort of very manly quality but to say that there was nothing exaggerated and he was very direct, very straight forward and with a lot of goodwill, a lot of sympathy, a lot of concern; a lot of devotion, he was very much into meditation and he used to have lot of visionary experiences. When he was staying with me he would usually tell me at breakfast the visionary experiences that he had that morning or in the night. And he was very spontaneous, he would not think what to do; if he saw a certain vision and he felt that meant that he should do something, he'd at once act upon that without any hesitation and that seemed to give his whole character a certain quality; he did not think things out although he was quite a learned man, quite a good scholar but that did not predominate, he'd always be guided by his visions and inspirations. In some ways I was sorry I could not spend more time with him but I did in fact spend quite a lot of time with him. He used to come and see me quite often and it was very easy having him; he was very sort of informal, very friendly so it was quite easy having him stay. He just turned up with an attendant or his nephew and he was happy staying in any corner he did not mind-whereas with certain other lamas you could not really do that, they just would not turn up in that way, they were much more formal but he was very informal in the best sense.

Padmavajra: How important was it to you that he did take an interest in you in that way; did that make a lot of difference to you?

S: It's very difficult to say because it is, after all, going on thirty years ago now, it's some twenty-five to thirty years. It's very difficult to say what difference it made because I think that probably looking back I can understand the significance of it all better than I did then. I think that perhaps in some ways I did not appreciate his interest in me or the fact that he took so much interest in me as much as I might have done; I think I almost got used to people not taking much interest in me or be often feeling 'well, Sangharakshita is able to look to look after himself' sort of thing; that seemed usually to be the attitude that Sangharakshita was always the one that gave the help and the advice, not got any doubts, very very rarely did anybody think of doing anything for me or showing any concern for me but he did... but I think though I noticed it, I was aware of it; perhaps I did not see it quite so clearly as I can now. But, as I look back, I see that he behaved towards me in a very different way from practically everybody else. He did have a definite gift for friendship in a way that the majority of Tibetans I met did not have. (Pause.) So, it was from him of course that I got the



Padmasambhava initiation with the Amitayus initiation, that was the principal initiations I had from him. I know it was him who explained the foundation yogas to me and he went through them.

Suvajra : Was he much older than you?

[190]

S: Not that much, I can't be sure how old I was then ; he was about ten years older than me, he was about the same age as Dhardo Rimpoche , he is seven or eight years older than me, he was about the same age as Dhardo Rimpoche. so, he was not sort of the next generation, he was half way between, more like an elder brother one could say.

Sudhana: You would have been thirty-five Bhante...

S: He could not have been more than forty five, he might have been a bit younger; so he was roughly the same age as Dhardo Rimpoche. Unfortunately, despite his sturdy appearance and dynamic character, his health was not at all good; I think he had all sorts of stomach complaints and liver trouble I think partly due to moving from Tibet down to Sikkim which has a totally different climate.

Padmavajra: You mentioned that when Jamyang Khyentse came to town he spent all his time with you... would that just be the reputation of Jamyang Khyentse that brought you?

S: Jamyang Khyentse had a tremendous reputation, especially western, that's sort of Eastern Tibet and Khu Rimpoche just spent as much time with him as he could; he never missed an opportunity, he never missed an initiation or a teaching and it seemed that Jamyang Khyentse favoured him quite a lot; he really recognized his sincerity and he seemed to be his chief disciple in the area, in the locality; he had a very, very devotional attitude towards Jamyang Khyentse. He was fond of talking to me about him so it was mainly through him that I did gather whatever knowledge I did about Jamyang Khyentse. He was also - while I am on the subject of Kachu Rimpoche - quite a good artist; he was especially good at casting metal images - quite an expert; and while I knew him he was engaged in casting a more than life size silver image of Padmva ?? Jamyang Khyentse had advised the Maharaja of Sikkim to have such an image cast. So when I paid my visit to Penyangse monastery which is in western Sikkim - it's the largest Nyingmapa monastery in Sikkim and it's traditionally said to be the royal monastery - it's connected with the palace; and there supposed to be one hundred and eight monks there but there certainly were not when I visited the place. Of course in a sense they are no longer monks because they sort of married lamas; he, of course by the way, was strictly a Gelong, he was definitely a bhikkhu; he always wore robes, had his head shaven... there was no question about that. He was, yes; although he was a Nyingmapa I should also add he was a very convinced monk; he believed in the monastic life at the same time in a way that many Nyingmapas did not; although he was strict, you could not say that it seemed natural to him, that he was the sort of person who was naturally a monk. But, anyway, when I went to visit him - I forget the year; I really don't remember, I might be able to find out - I went from Gangtok of course; the chief secretary of the governor of Sikkim was a good friend and lent me a pony; I had done very little pony riding before but anyway I had to ride up to the top of the hill, not to say mountain, on this pony! With ravines on the side of a little path - and for some reason or other - I don't think they bother much about such things in Sikkim but it had only an improvised bridle and no real saddle and no stirrups; so it was not very easy for

me to [191] ride but anyway I managed; it was very sure-footed so I just trusted the pony and hoped for the best; yes it was all right, it got me there quite safely and brought me back again. But, anyway, when I visited Penyangse he was there as I knew and he showed me the Gompa and I spent a few days there. But he was then engaged in making this Padmasambhava image and at one point he was sitting on his bed and we were talking and we were saying 'yes I am getting on quite well' and he just fished under the bed he pulled out the head; it was so big, it was like this and made out of silver; - he'd cast it - and he was casting it section by section and then it would all be riveted or welded together; and it was completed and installed in a special temple; I never actually saw it but I heard about it. As one approaches Gangtok I saw the temple from a distance but never actually visited but that was what he was doing and he used to paint; he was not a remarkably good artist but quite good, but he was especially skilled in casting images; he was interested in that sort of thing, very interested in the Buddhist arts and crafts, he was quite good at them. So he was quite a character you might say; I think he was not really cut out to be an abbot, he was not really that type if you know what I mean, Though he was very faithful to the spiritual life and ethical principles and so on, he never gave the impression of being a disciplinarian or especially strict or anything of that sort; in some ways, he was quite a remarkable person. Do you get a sort of overall picture of him?

Murmurs by every one: yes...

S: I hope that some day, I can maybe write something about him if I get far enough on my memoirs. He comes in I think in the years 55, 56, 57, 58- 9, that period he comes into about 60... After a while, I think I am not quite sure, I think probably towards the end of my stay in Kalimpong we did not see quite so much of each other; I think partly because he was busy in Penyangse with the monastery and I think partly because his health was giving him trouble, it was difficult for him to travel very much. (Pause.) A lot of Tibetan suffer from stomach complaints due to change of diet, water - all that sort of thing.

Kulamitra: Bhante, something I wonder sometime. Do you ever feel like visiting Dhardo when you visit India? Do you ever feel like seeing him?

S: I certainly like to see him but I must say I don't fancy the journey to Kalimpong; I don't particularly want to see Kalimpong; I think I'd rather remember it as it was; I think I would probably feel a bit depressed if I was to see what it looked like now; I certainly would like to see Dhardo Rimpoche. But in some ways I feel quite reluctant to go through the formalities that one now has to go through getting this border permit - or that sort of thing; it's almost like going to see someone in prison. But, yes I certainly would like to see him and I know he would very much like to see me; in some ways he is more isolated than I am. But Satyapala established a good contact and Satyapala - as you probably know - is gathering material for a sort of biography; he's got the collaboration of Dhardo Rimpoche's secretary, I think he gathered some material on the spot, which I was very pleased to hear about. Also I think, yes, he is getting Kesang (?), the [192] secretary, to translate some of Rimpoche's teachings - which would be very good. He is hoping to have a little book; Satyapala is helping to bring a little book containing some information about Dhardo Rimpoche's life as well as translations of some of his teachings, so that would be very good. (Pause.) There has been a suggestion some time ago that Dhardo Rimpoche might come down to Buddha Gaya if I was too busy and we might meet there but I gather though that he probably would do that. But I gather his health is not at all good and he suffers quite a lot if he moved down from Kalimpong - mainly

I think with digestive troubles; this is what I heard from someone who talked with his secretary. So, although I very much would like to see him, I don't want to give him any trouble so I don't know what will happen... But in the meanwhile he remembers me and I certainly remember him. (Pause.)

So that's it! We've done quite well then.

[193]

\_\_\_: "Is a Guru necessary?"

S: I think I wanted to add something or clarify something that we dealt with I think yesterday, or it might have been the day before, relating to the unity of the Order and the need to avoid over identification with one's own centre or community. In that connection I emphasized the need for centres to collaborate. I hope I did not give the impression that I thought of the unity of the Order so to speak as being maintained primarily through the co-operation or collaboration of centres, that was not my intention. What my intention rather was, was that Order members should in a sense forget about the particular FWBO or particular community or co-op they happen to be working through and remember they are primarily Order members, and remain in contact with other Order members as such - it does not have to go so to speak via the centre or via the co-op or whatever because if all those things cease to exist or are disbanded for any reason, you still have the Order left in its full integrity. So what I was trying to emphasize or what I was more concerned with was the fact that Order members should realize to a much greater degree than they do, that they are Order members first and foremost and only secondarily, members of a particular FWBO, community or co-op or whatever, if in fact they happen to be members at all. Some Order members may not be but they are nonetheless Order members. So that was the emphasis I wanted to give. As I feel the tendency has been very much for Order members to identify, certainly for all practical purposes, very much with their own centre and so on. I feel the emphasis needs now to swing the other way. And I think everybody knows it's one of the reasons why we recently started emphasizing the chapters and why we have now 'chapter conveners'. That's what I wanted to say just in case there is any unclarity.

Abhaya: So today we have been discussing lecture eight, Bhante, the last lecture in the series: 'Is a Guru necessary?'. The first question is from Buddhadasa on the origin of the list of the four kinds of disciples: patients, friends, sons and lovers.

Buddhadasa: In 'Peace is a Fire', you said there are four kinds of disciples. Disciples who are patients, disciples who are friends, disciples who are sons and disciples who are lovers. Could you say more about each one, and has this classification been drawn from The White Lotus Sutra and if so, could The White Lotus Sutra also be seen as a handbook or a manual for budding gurus?

S: Go through that again bit by bit, clause by clause.

Buddhadasa: In 'Peace is a Fire' you are saying there are four kinds of disciples: disciples who are patients, disciples who are friends, disciples who are sons, disciples who are lovers. Could say a little bit more about it?

S: Perhaps I'd better answer the latter part of the question, or it might be the first part, on

where it came from. To the best of my recollection it's original: I might possibly have come across it somewhere I've forgotten, but I think it's original. I think it arose out of my own observations and experience. I must say I had forgotten that classification for quite a few years since I don't usually read 'Peace is a Fire'. First of all, patients who are, or disciples or pupils, who are like patients. By this one means pupils or disciples who are not disciples at all in the full sense or in the strict sense, [194] because they've got a problem - perhaps just a psychological problem and they want that problem to be cured; they come to you for that purpose. They don't want particularly to know you, you're just useful to them in your sort of curative, your sort of psychotherapeutic capacity. But nonetheless they have a certain amount of contact with you, you have a certain amount of contact with them. Hopefully you do them some good and possibly the relationship can grow and develop. It's not as though once a pupil or a disciple who is like a patient remains so for ever; you can certainly progress from one grade to another. But in the early days of the FWBO, pupils or disciples who were like patients were very very common indeed I think most of them tended to be of that type, at least to begin with. I think that's quite clear, quite easy to understand. So, what comes next?

Buddhadasa: Friends.

S: Disciples who are like friends. That's a bit of an improvement one might say. Disciples who are like friends are those who like you, who like you so to speak for your own sake; they get on well with you and you get on well with them. There is not a sort of formal guru/disciple relationship; nonetheless quite a bit rubs off from you to them or on to them. But there is a sort of limitation one might say to the relationship inasmuch perhaps as they don't in a sense take it seriously enough; they like the relationship to remain a little bit light. They don't therefore learn from you so to speak or receive from you or absorb from you as much as they might but they are certainly an advance on the pupil or the disciple who is more like a patient. They are people who don't have problems - or at least they don't come to you to solve their problems - they like your company so they naturally invite something from you but perhaps in a very systematic way, not to a very profound extent. I don't mean that there are merely friends in the ordinary sense; there is definitely a spiritual element in the relationship, but its form is more that of ordinary friendship, even though the content goes somewhat beyond the content of an ordinary friendship.

Then there are those who are like sons. Perhaps this is the pupil, or the disciple, in the usual sense or the ideal sense, even, up to a point, because what does one mean by a son. Obviously a son is somebody who is born of you; he has the same blood, he's inherited things from you, so the disciple who is like a son is the disciple who is like a spiritual son. He has been born from you; he has been if you like inspired by you; he is drawn in your spirit as it were. So, clearly, he is much closer than the pupil or the disciple who is like a friend even though the pupil or disciple who is like a friend can be quite close but the pupil or disciple who is like a son is closer still. He is sort of 'of your substance' as it were. You can see the difference. And of course he looks up to you as much as the son looks to the father. There is no question of being a father figure or anything like that in that connection.

Then fourthly and lastly, there is the pupil or disciple who is like a lover. I must make it clear: Like a lover, not a lover. I don't mean that the relationship becomes so close that there is a natural sexual relationship. I don't mean that at all. The Pupil or disciple who is like a lover is one in connection with whom there is a relationship of intensity and intimacy and freedom analogous to that which exists ideally or supposedly between lovers. In the case of the

disciple who is like a son, there may be still [195] a little element of constraint or respect even though it's quite positive but after a while or in comparison with the highest ideal it may present a certain limitation or constraint. So that is absent in the fourth kind of relationship between pupil or disciple and guru. First of all a very intense, a very intimate relationship and in a sense, even though the disciple is still disciple and the guru is still the guru, it's more equal and reciprocal relationship. So, this is more or less what I had in mind in making that sort of classification. (Pause.)

\_\_\_: The other part of that question...

S: As I mentioned, to the best of my knowledge that is an original classification so I don't think I've got it from The White Lotus Sutra. So I don't know that The White Lotus Sutra can be especially invoked in this connection.

Abhaya= The second question is from Ratnaguna about belief in God and people being immortal.

Ratnaguna: I must apologise, this question is a bit garbled. Maybe I don't know what I am actually asking. So it goes like this. You say that a belief in God is often an infantile need for a father figure. So in a society which holds the concept of a God, for example a Christian society like ours does this tend to encourage or at least reinforce an infantile dependence or, to put it more crudely, do people in a Christian or a Muslim society never grow up and - there is a second part to this question.

S: One might be tempted to say one rather suspects as much, but anyway, let's carry on.

Ratnaguna: You have also said I believe that in Order to be obedient to one's guru, one needs to have a very strong character. Could this be true of one's relationship with God? You get the idea!

S: Yes I think so. In fact I'd like to tackle the second part first. I have spoken about this somewhere, that is to say there are some forms of Theism rather unusual where the belief in God or the worship of God does take, or is represented as taking, rather a strong stance in relation to God, even telling God off. I believe this is a strain especially developed in Assidic traditional literature. The Assidaean were sort of mystics that arose within Judaism, or perhaps on the fringe of Judaism to some extent in Eastern Europe in think in the - I can't remember - towards the end of the eighteenth. or the beginning of nineteenth century, and some of their alleged dialogues, one of the dialogues between the Assidean and God do to a remarkable freedom. But this suggests that the projection as it were of something really belonging to oneself on to that particular figure and the relationship of infantile dependence is beginning to be dissolved. You get something of the same sort in some of the - not exactly - Sufi poets but certainly some Islamic poets. I am thinking of (Ikval ?) who certainly was not a Sufi in the traditional sense, who certainly sometimes reproaches God and takes God to task in his poetry. The same thing is not altogether unknown in the case of some of the Christian saints who on occasion outraged God rather severely I am tempted to say that some of the women saints have a tendency to this too, it may not be strictly accurate but some of them did do it.

[196]

So one can see here that the usual theistic attitudes are tending to be dissolved. I think that does sometimes happen when someone is born into a Christian environment but is - or born into a Jewish environment, born into a Muslim environment, born into a theistic environment - but nonetheless is quite positive and quite healthy and does have a rather intense religious and mystical life and uses the concept, or even to some extent the experience of God, to the extent it can be called an experience of God, in a rather free sort of way, they begin to get beyond that. Perhaps they don't transcend it altogether but they utilize that conception or that image with a certain amount of freedom that one does not usually find in that particular form of religious life, one does not usually find in a theistic tradition. (Pause.) So, may be we come back to the first part of the question now.

Ratnaguna: Well that was not exactly what I was thinking of actually. I was thinking more in terms of people from our past, our own heritage who have been Christians, have they all been infantile? You know all the heroes, all the poets etc.

S: But to what extent they really did believe in God... Quite a lot of people admit - even Atheists have admitted that in moments of difficulty - they tend to say 'Oh God, please help me'. So that is that. Perhaps in calling it 'infantile' one is using the word rather broadly. It's perhaps, sometimes at least analogous to infantilism rather than infantile in the strict sense. Because you can be aware of your own sort of helplessness in the face of the forces of the universe without necessarily been infantile. Sometimes you have at tempted to appeal for help - may be in a sense in an infantile fashion - even though you are in many other respects a confident adult human being. But yes I think that a lot of people if not the majority of people are infantile to some extent inasmuch as they don't rely on themselves as fully as they might do. There is always a sort of lurking belief or hope that someone would come along and do it for them, it may not any longer be God; it may be chance, it may be the State, it may be the welfare state, it may be other people, it may be them: they ought to do something about it. But in one way or an other, they don't rely on their own courage and their own resources. They look outside themselves even though they are capable of relying on their own resources, relying on themselves at least to a greater extent than they do. So, this is what I call being infantile in a broad sense. Nowadays such infantilism is not necessarily associated with a very clear conception of an all providing God, perhaps it's more associated with an all providing state. (Pause.) One of the curious things about Mrs Thatcher, she refuses to be mother on a grand scale; perhaps she goes a bit too far, and tries to wean the infant a bit too quickly. No wonder even when she was education minister she was Mrs Thatcher that milk snatcher. I think that's highly symbolical! She has been trying to take away the bottle ever since: But anyway does that answer the question?

Ratnaguna: The second part, yes.

S: But not the first?

Ratnaguna: Well, let me ask you again the question, you may have done, "In a society which holds the concept of a God - for example a Christian society - does this tends to encourage or at least reinforce an infantile dependence or - to put it more crudely - do people in [197] a Christian or Muslim society never grow up?

S: It all depends to what extent the concept of God is effective. What I think is that one has got to distinguish between an individual's belief in God and the alleged or so-called belief in

God by the State. I think then you are using a rather metaphorical language because the state as such does not believe in God at all because it purports to be self sufficient, it purports to be sovereign and absolute in relation to its own subjects, its own citizens. (Pause.) This is not to say that the people believing in God and theistic states cannot act very effectively but they do so in a slightly or quite neurotic way inasmuch as they are not acting because they believe themselves that what they are doing is good but they believe that they are obeying the commands of God. We have seen some quite striking examples of that in recent years with the Islamic revolution in Iran and so on. (Pause.) So an infantile person can do quite a lot of damage, not that infantilism necessarily goes along with weakness in the material or practical sense. Sometimes you have the conviction that you've got that tremendous power behind you, it's supporting you and can give you a sort of precarious strength but nonetheless you are not a mature human being. (Pause.) Is that a bit clearer?

Ratnaguna: Yes.

S: About this, one should by the way in this general discussion with people; be very careful not to sort of airily refer to belief in Christianity as infantile. I think that we may believe that ourselves to some extent but I think one should be very cautious about introducing such characterization into general conversation even with people on the fringes of the 'Friends' because it would seem to them to be quite dismissive, to be too much of a generalization - and in a sense by itself it is - so one should be quite cautious about how one speaks about Christianity even to people who apparently don't have any belief in it, they still seem capable of reacting on its behalf very often. You should not speak as though every sensible person agrees that Christianity is infantile; you may find a lot of apparently sensible people who don't believe or agree with you. So you don't want to get into unnecessary argument because you're concerned mainly to talk with them about Buddhism, what Buddhism has to teach rather than get side-tracked into discussions of that sort. If you are in the company of people who believe that a belief in God is infantile, then you can refer to the fact freely as when you are among Atheists or Secularist or Humanists and so on, and of course Buddhists; but not if you think there may be other people around.

Abhaya: There is a question from Padmavajra about the Buddha's development after the Enlightenment.

Padmavajra: You said that a guru develops through his communication with good disciples; the only guru who does not being the Buddha. Given that Buddhahood is not a static state, is this in fact so? If we look at the Pall canon is it possible to discern the development in the Buddha's life after his Enlightenment, especially through his communication with his disciples? And I don't mean this in a sense of just developing and improving his teaching style.

[198]

S: Well, one thinks in terms of that incident when the Buddha taught some disciples a meditation on death and left them to get on with it and when He came back, He found that they committed suicide. So presumably the Buddha learned from that but did he thereby become more enlightened in the strictly spiritual or transcendental sense, that seems rather difficult to imagine. But at the same time one does not like to think of Enlightenment as a static state. In some ways we can't help thinking of it in that way but it's not strictly true by virtue of the fact that it is so to speak the culmination of the creative process of the mind -

irreversibly creative process of the mind. One can only imagine it is going on and on, beyond any point which is conceivable by us. But I rather doubt whether that ongoing process has got any connection with, or any dependence on, anything that a Buddha - after His Enlightenment - learns so to speak through His contact with His disciples. I have not considered the question before; I think this would be a provisional answer to it. (Pause.)

Abhaya: Ratnaguna has another question about Nanda's ordination.

Ratnaguna: As regards Nanda's ordination, isn't it a bit strange that he was taken by the Buddha against his will and ordained; surely one must choose to follow the path of the higher evolution, and was not the Buddha acting in a power mode?

S: I wonder whether he really was forced because he could have turned round. You know the story: the Buddha gave him his begging bowl to hold or to carry and he followed the Buddha back into the forest and there the Buddha said - I think it was to Sariputra or Moggallana - 'ordain him' and he was ordained. But, so far as the story goes, as far as the story tells us - there is no act of physical force used. Nanda could have dropped that bowl at any moment and when the Buddha said to Sariputra 'ordain him', he could have turned round and run away, quite easily. So, that suggests that he was not actually literally coerced. He certainly did experience some degree of conflict; that is very clear, but it's as though - to my mind - the fact that he continued carrying the Buddha's bowl, he did not make any resistance to being ordained - that was probably what he really wanted. The Buddha knew that. I mean sometimes your good friends know you better than you know yourself. So I prefer to look at it like that; I don't see any evidence of the Buddha using any actual force, actually coercing Nanda...

Ratnaguna: Coercion is not always physical, is it?

S; That's true but I could say that there was no case even of emotional coercion because Nanda did have a very strong faith in the Buddha; it was not that he felt guilty of not becoming a monk or anything like that, those are suggestions. So one can only assume that there was a very great faith in the Buddha which the Buddha knew and, in a sense, took advantage of, and in the end that faith did feel stronger than his attachment to his wife. (Pause.)

Abhaya: Sudhana has a question about your reference in the lecture to the Lankavatara Sutta.

Sudhana: Bhante, what is meant when the Buddha says in the Lankavatara Sutra: 'Do not be under the impression that I ever taught anything'.

[199]

S: I think it's pretty obvious. The Buddha is underlining the fact that his real message is not to be found in words; it's not enough just to take the words that he has uttered, one has to take the meaning of, one has to appreciate the meaning which the words seek to convey. I certainly don't take this literally because literally it's not true as we know from other sources. So what the Buddha is really trying to say is 'don't think that because I taught a lot, or used a lot of words, I have really communicated the ultimate truth; I've only been trying to point to it, you've got to just use the words as a pointer, as a finger pointing to the moon' - as he also says in the Lankavatara Sutra - 'you've got to go beyond the words. Really I haven't said anything



at all in the strict sense, in the ultimate sense.' I think it's really as simple as that.

Sudhana: Really he has not said anything in the ultimate sense, that's what I don't understand.

S: Well, ultimate truth is incommunicable. So he has not really said anything about ultimate truth, He has not taught anything. He certainly said a lot, has spoken a lot; he has delivered a lot of discourses, but those are not to be taken as representing a communication of the ultimate truth but only as pointers. So, in the ultimate sense, He has not said anything at all. If one thinks that He has communicated the ultimate truth in the words of the scriptures, you will just take those words literally and will become over attached to them; this is what He is getting at. This is how I take it because one has to reconcile the statement with the fact that, according to general Buddhist tradition, the Buddha did speak quite a lot, did deliver quite a number of discourses.

\_\_\_ : Isn't there a quote from the Awakening of Faith that sounds something like that?

S: Yes. "We use words to get free from words until we reach the pure word less essence." That's one translation, some of the other translations are written very differently. So perhaps that illustrates what I have been saying! I rather like that translation, I think it's Suzuki's.

Abhaya: Sudhana has another question about 'samaya' vows. It relates to the guru/disciple relationship.

Sudhana: What is the 'samaya' vow between guru and disciple. Is there a samaya vow exists between yourself and members of the FWBO that is perhaps not stressed enough?

S: As you know the Indian Buddhist tradition is divided so to speak into three yanās; Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. So, each has its appropriate sila, its appropriate so to speak code of ethics. In the case of the Hinayana, traditionally that is the Ten Precepts and the Pratimokṣas - the 227 rules for the Bhikkhu in accordance with the Theravada. Then, in the Mahayana, the sila is the bodhisattva sila - of which there is usually 56 according to most traditions.

And then when you come on to the Vajrayana there are what they called 'samayas' corresponding to the silas of the Hinayana and the Mahayana. There are all sorts of samayas, they're more like undertakings or vows. They are usually connected with particular practices or teachings connected with the initiations that one received, especially in the Anuttara Yoga-Tantra and they are quite specific, often relating to how you should carry out [200] the practice, with whom and so on and so forth. So in that sense there is no question of a samaya within the Western Buddhist Order. But again one does not have necessarily to take the letter but the spirit and what is suggested is a sort of spirit of fidelity to whatever practices you take up; a seriousness in your approach to them and a fidelity to the person from whom you received them and the brother and sister disciples who also received them - and with whom you are practising them. It's as though the Vajrayana introduces a note, in this and other respects, of what we may call 'existential seriousness'.

I have sometimes contrasted the three yanās in the following way. The Hinayana is as it were historical, it's of this world, it's got its feet planted firmly on the ground. It's Buddha is a historical Buddha; it has very specific teachings, very specific practices, definite rules, etc. In

the case of the Mahayana it has very lofty ideals. It lets its imagination go, it's vast in scope, it's cosmic, it's universal; it's not just historical, it's not just confined to the earth. Then, what about the Vajrayana? In a way, the Vajrayana combines the two. It's is very much down to earth. But it is rather as though the Vajrayana brings into - or the Vajrayana takes the universality, the sort of cosmic scope of the Mahayana and sort of condenses that and brings that right into the individual relationships between guru and disciple, and one disciple and another. This is what I refer to as the existential seriousness of the Vajrayana. It's as though in the Vajrayana the relationship between guru and disciple - or between the disciples of a particular guru is sort of imbued with a sort of cosmic significance whilst not ceasing to be individual. In the case of the Hinayana, there is some sacrifice of the cosmic or universal at the expense of the historical, In the Mahayana, there is some sacrifice of the historical at the expense of the universal, the cosmic. It's as though the Vajrayana brings the two together. It does stress the individual relationship between the guru and the disciple for instance but at the same time, that relationship is imbued with everything that the Mahayana also had ever suggested; it is not relatively, comparatively narrow or limited or restricted as in the case of the Hinayana, while remaining individual. So the samayas of the Vajrayana have a sort of cosmic import; they definitely have their significance in connection with relation between actual individuals, whether horizontal or vertical. (Pause.) Does that give you some idea? It could be better expressed if it were written about care fully and at some length.

Abhaya: Dharmapriya has a question about the difference between a guru and disciple relationship and kalyana-mitra.

Dharmapriya: Is a guru/disciple relationship the same as a kalyana-mitra relationship - i.e. are these merely two different expressions for the same phenomenon?

S: In some Buddhist texts the terms kalyana-mitra and guru are interchange able. So clearly this is a case of what we call 'vertical kalyana-mitrata'. Obviously there is such a thing as horizontal kalyana-mitrata. I did suggest, I think the other day, that very often in the case of the FWBO, it might be a little difficult to tell whether the relationship of kalyana-mitrata is in fact horizontal or vertical; it seems to be a little of each. Perhaps we should not be too concerned to establish whether it is definitely vertical or horizontal; let it develop and concentrate on being as good a friend as you possibly can, the rest will look after itself.

[201]

You don't have to be too clear to begin with whether it's horizontal or vertical, or if sometimes it's one, or sometimes the other or a bit of both, just concentrate on being a good friend to the utmost of your ability. It may be, for instance, that you are very concerned about your friend and you might not have seen him for sometime and we may wonder what he is up to, or whether he is in difficulties. But let's suppose that you have in fact a divine eye, that you can see things through this. So you open your divine eye and try and see what he is up to. But you don't therefore think that because you are able to use the divine eye, it's necessarily a case of vertical relationship between you - a relationship of vertical KM between you. You just happen to have that particular skill, and you happen to be that person's friend and you just use whatever skill you've got to relieve your anxiety about him. Perhaps it's rather oddly illustrated but it makes the point.

Abhaya: But it's true, isn't it Bhante, that the vertical communication does not necessarily involve insight?

S: No, not necessarily, because someone can just be more mature, more experienced, short of insight. That sort of relative superiority is not necessarily permanent or fixed, because not only can the other person grow and develop and overtake you, but you, if you have not developed insight, can actually fall right back possibly to a position lower than that of the person whose kalyana-mitra you are. So one should bear it in mind in this connection. In any case, short of stream entry the relations between any two people are not fixed. (Pause.) May be as well to bear that in mind.

[202]

Kulamitra: So now we've got Virananda, a question of the formality of the guru relationship.

Virananda: This question, Bhante, arises out of the possibility of seeing the guru as a positive father figure. What place has formality in the guru/disciple relationship? Have the responsibilities of the disciple to the guru been formalized? If so in what ways?

S: Perhaps one can approach this by my four-fold classification. For instance, suppose you approach the guru as a patient; that would be the appropriate formalities. Well, first of all there would be the ordinary human politeness, then the sort of respect which is due to a professional person; the sort of respect you have for your doctor, or your lawyer or bank manager. Then, if you look at the guru as a patient, is the type of formality which is appropriate. And what about the pupil or disciple who is more like a friend? In this case, there would be very little formality; there would be, I think usually, the ordinary politeness and courtesy but there certainly won't be any undue formality, just as there is not between friends. I think I must make the point here that one must be careful, even in the case of so to speak ordinary friendship, that there is still respect, even though there is great friendship and affection, that there should always be an element of respect: you should never offend the other person's self-respect if, or on the pretence or the guise of just friendship; you should not indulge in the wrong kind of familiarity even with a friend; it's not really appropriate to the relationship of friendship. So, that's second category.

The third is the disciple who is like a son, here formality in the best sense comes into play. It's just as the son has a genuine respect for the father and shows it; in the same way, the disciple who is like a son has a genuine respect for his guru and shows it. At present, in connection with my memoirs, I am writing about my visit to Nepal, to Katmandu with the sacred relics in 1952, and I stayed in a place ( called ?) to the West of Katmandu; and the place I stayed at was the hermitage of a Vajrayana guru; I've mentioned him in 'Glimpses of Buddhist Nepal'. He had four sons and the sons were also the pupils of the father; they studied Sanskrit and Buddhist Scriptures and Vajrayana with their father and they treated him in a very, very respectful way, very natural way. (I think I've touched on this in the Thousand-petalled Lotus too.) You find this in India; elders, parents or fathers and uncles and so on, are greatly respected, are shown a lot of respect - there is quite a bit of formality but it is compatible with emotional positivity; with being at ease with them at least to some extent; and with genuine warmth that they are feeling towards them. For instance in the ( ?) at least sons did not usually sit in the presence of their father. I described how in South India, the son and the nephew of one of my friends never sat in the presence of their father even though he told them to - their father or their uncle; they were staying standing however long the conversation or discussion went on, they just stand; they sort of lean back against the wall or something like that; but they were quite at ease, they was no awkwardness about it; and they would not dream of smoking in front of their father; I believe they did normally smoke, it was

unthinkable, they just would not do that. Not that they felt any constraint - they would have to be very Westernized to feel that - it was just [203] natural that one would not do that sort of thing in front of one's father or uncle; one never talked about women in front of them; with one's close friends but not in front of one's father or one's uncle; that would be quite inappropriate behaviour. So, this is what I call 'formality in the best sense'; so 'formality in the best sense' is appropriate to this particular level of guru/disciple relationship. But, of course, when you come on to the guru or the disciple or the pupil who is like a lover, well again, there is no place in a sense for formality; formality is transcended. It's not that its place is taken by informality in the ordinary sense, much less by rudeness or lack of consideration; it reaches a level which is very difficult for us to understand because we very, very rarely encounter that sort of thing. So, to come back to your actual question?

Virananda: I think you've answered what place formality has in the guru/disciple relationship...

S: I've distinguished those; I've done it by distinguishing different kinds of formality appropriate to different levels of relationship; of different degrees of the relationship.

Virananda: My question then goes on: 'Have the responsibilities of the disciple to the guru been formalized?' What I mean by that, have they been set down in any particular way ?

S: They have been set down in Sanskrit texts which have been translated by Tibetan people; I can't think of any of them particularly at the moment though they are works and I think some at least or summaries of them are available in English, I think put out I think by the Dalai Lama's office or the library archives in ( ? ) I am sure I've seen them advertised.

Padmavajra: There is a translation of Asvaghosa's sixty verses ( ? )

S: That's true; that's the kind of thing I was thinking of. These are available now fortunately.

Different kinds of behaviour are appropriate to different levels. For instance, I remember being told, I think it was by Dhardo Rimpoche or it may be another Tibetan lama or teacher of mine, that according to the Hinayana in the presence of the teacher - the guru - you should keep your eyes lowered, you should not look at him in the face, you should look down whereas in the case of the tantric guru - the Vajracariya - you should look at him in the face, especially at the time of initiation because the expression on his face will as it were tell you certain things or will even be in a sense part of the initiation, especially as he in the course of the initiation identifies in his own meditation with this or that particular divinity; it's as though a sort of reflection of that passes across his face. So you must, as it were, watch for that but that sort of behaviour is not appropriate in the context of the Hinayana. So, what is appropriate in the context of the Vajrayana would be rudeness in the context of the Hinayana. So one must appreciate where one stands, what the level is or from which one is operating, what is the exact nature of one's relation. It may not always be easy to determine and it may even vary from time to time, as well as over a period, perhaps progressing from level to level.

[204]

Does that answer the question on this?

Virananda: There is a little more to this question. Obviously I can't expect you to go through

all the different kinds of formalities there are - between the disciple and the guru, but the last part of my question was to try and find out more in detail but perhaps with reference to forms of formality which are overlooked in the order or could be taken up.

S: There is nothing I've especially noticed but I think it's a question of seeing the whole thing in a slightly broader context; to think of elders generally. For instance, if you are with someone who is senior to you or more experienced, then you... even in the more secular context, perhaps even with your own parents, you don't start eating before they do; just simple things like that. Don't let them wait on you. If it's a question of someone making cups of tea, don't let our parents go and do it. Mothers will very often want to that; well sometimes in the case of mothers it's all right if they are young and active still but perhaps you should not allow your father to do that, not unless there is an exceptional situation; you perhaps arrived home after a long time so naturally father likes to welcome you with a cup of tea; or may be you are unwell or something like that but normally you should not expect your father to look after you or to wait on you. You should think rather in terms of looking after or waiting on your father or if there are little jobs to be done, if you can do it, don't let your father do it. I think it is simple things of this sort that need to be cultivated to provide a suitable framework and basis for the more specifically spiritual development of the same thing. (pause.)

Be polite to your father in front of other people. Sometimes sons - daughters too - can be unintentionally rude; they interrupt their father when - he is talking. May be you've have heard that little story before, may be the other person who is present has not heard it but don't interrupt at all, don't anticipate the conclusion; let him tell his story. These are just little things one needs to observe but very often nowadays, they are not observed. But I don't think one can simply completely out of context observe certain formalities in relation to a guru or senior or elder brother in the Dharma when you never observed the corresponding formalities in your life outside the movement, outside the order; there must not be too big a gap as it were. Of course you must not make it so pronounced that your father is wondering what's up; you must not push it too far but be a little bit more thoughtful, very often no more than that. (Pause.) Ordinary politeness seems to be rather lacking in modern life; it's because very often there is no time for it, people are too busy, or in too much of a hurry,. Very often in any case, old people are pushed to one side, pushed to the wall. So much so the expression 'old age pensioners' is being regarded as derogatory so now they speak of 'senior citizens'. It's really a mockery because you don't really give them any more respect. The important thing is to treat them with more respect, not to give them a new title, otherwise it's a bit like Mahatma Gandhi calling the ex-untouchables, or untouchables, 'Harijana'. Well, they remained untouchables; they are treated as untouchables even though people referred to them as 'Harijans'. So, what did it help to be called an 'Harijan' and still to be regarded as being beyond the pale...

[205]

Virananda : Yes, it just reminds me of the notice that one sees on tube trains nowadays reminding passengers that if this seat is required for an old person..

S: [interrupting]: older person that is I think it says...

Virananda : Yes. Perhaps that's a little practice that could be taken up.

S : Yes. It's interesting that there has to be a notice that there is a seat reserved; sometimes I am sitting in that seat and I wonder whether I fall into that category. (Laughter.) Oh yes, it's a

step in the right direction; at least it's a move towards reversing the present trend that they even have that sort of notice on at all. Not to speak of abolishing smoking in the underground, well that's really good. (Pause.) I think it's a question of consideration more than thinking in terms of what rules one ought to observe in relation to certain people; it's more a question of thoughtfulness, mindfulness, consideration, sensitivity; it seems rather a question of developing those sorts of qualities. (pause.)

Abhaya: The next question is from Ratnaguna about the three tantric gurus; I don't know if it's tantric.

Ratnaguna: It's a tantric question anyway. Who are the three and which is the greatest?

S: I think the three kinds of tantric gurus as far as I recollect are those that used words, those who used signs and those who just use thoughts.

Ratnaguna : No, I was not thinking about that. (Laughter.) In the lecture you mentioned three people. you knew who were gurus to certain people and these people asked one of the gurus which was the greatest.

S: These are three particular characters, yes., I remember this.

Ratnaguna : Who are they?

S: Jamyang Khyentse Rimpoche, Dudjom Rimpoche and Chetul Sangye Dorje. I thought this was known actually.

Ratnaguna : Jamyang Khyentse?

S: Jamyang Khyentse. That is the old one who died in 1959 and Dudjom Rimpoche who is still alive I believe, and Chetul Sangye Dorje (who is still with me?)

Padmavajra: He's got two wives now.

S: So they say... I think that's to fool people! (Laughter.) Two is rather obvious, isn't it ... If they had been one, one might have been suspicious but two, no!

Padmavajra: Just to get it for the record. I've heard it rumoured [206] that there was one of your teachers who gave you an initiation wearing a sort of Hawaiian shirt with money coming out?

S: Yes, I refer to that in a lecture, that is quite correct; that was Dudjom Rimpoche, and a sort of cowboy hat. Tibetan used to very often dress in this sort of way when they were (?) in Tibet; they liked these sorts of stetson-type hats, they really love these, they really popular with all sorts of people ( ?) all sorts of Tibetans. And to them a Hawaiian shirt just does not have the same connotation that it has for us, it's just a colourful shirt and I did refer to this wad of notes being dumped in his breast pocket as though he had no sort of qualms about handling money so I took it as symbolical that it was the attitude of the Vajrayana - you handle as it were worldly forces and energies but you had them - not so much under control - but you transmuted them, integrated them and therefore they could nor or would not do you

any harm; I took it as representing that. (Pause.)

Susiddhi : May I ask what the initiation was?

S: I can't remember to be quite honest because I had a number of initiations from him, I can't remember which one it was.

Mahamati: Did you have much contact with Dudjom Rimpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rimpoche?

S: I had a fair amount of contact with each of them; they were people of very different characters and very different types. Dudjom Rimpoche seemed to function through the 'royal' mode; he had a lot of disciples and he lived and behaved a bit like a king - if you see what I mean; there was almost a feudal element in his entourage. Dilgo Khyentse on the other hand was extremely fatherly, with nothing as it were royal or monarchical about him at all; he lived very, very simply with his old wife and his grown-up daughter, one servant. He was available, always accessible, you could always walk in, there was no formality of that kind with him at all, at least not at the time that I knew him. Whereas with Dudjom Rimpoche there was usually quite a bit of formality, possibly necessarily because so many people used to go to him; his health was not all that good and he also had a difficult wife. (Pause.) I did have a fair amount of contact with each of them. With Dudjom Rimpoche one would normally have to make arrangements to see him. With Dilgo Khyentse you could just call, there was no problem at all, he was always glad to see you. You could always find him sitting up on his Tibetan-style desk surrounded by his books and he was always so deeply in something or rather but, if you call, he was always quite happy to put it aside, to meet you and talk, but this was not possible with Dudjom Rimpoche.

\_\_\_: How do these people support themselves?

S: The disciples made offerings and Dudjom Rimpoche had a lot of disciples; he was in a sense quite wealthy; he used to spend lavishly on ceremonies and so on. He often had several hundred people camping in his garden, asking for initiations and so on; sherpas in particular had great faith in him. Anyway, let's press on.

[207]

Ratnaguna : Which of the three was the greatest?

S: I gather they were in a sense avoiding saying, perhaps it was a way of saying that one could not really think in those sorts of terms, possibly; no doubt we shall never know.

Abhaya: Buddhadasa has a question about the gurus in general.

Buddhadasa: In a seminar about ( ? ) you report that Dhardo Rimpoche said that he thought there were five or seven incarnate Bodhisattvas in the world...

S: In Tibet, I think. I think it was the context of the discussion.

Buddhadasa: That would seem to be very, very few. My question is quite simply so to speak universal, where are all the gurus?

S: A guru is not necessarily a bodhisattva. In Tibet, they had the system of 'tulkus' or reincarnations as they're sometimes called or incarnate lamas. Dharo Rimpoche's son used to rather amuse me because talking in Hindi or even in Tibetan, he would often use the expression 'incarnate lama'; this would keep popping up in the middle of the Hindi or the Tibetan, especially when he was talking to me but...

Padmavajra: What, in English? In the words?

S: He used the phrase in English even when talking in, say, Hindi. (pause.) But the lines, so to speak, of the different incarnate lamas usually go back not to a bodhisattva but to a great abbot. Usually what happens is that a monastery has a great abbot, a famous abbot and he dies and the monks of the monastery search for his reincarnation; ( ? ) then that the reincarnation is found, is identified, that small body is brought back to the monastery and brought up as a monk and is regarded as the reincarnation of the former abbot. So he is an incarnate lama but is not necessarily by any means an incarnate bodhisattva. In other words he is not a direct descent, from a higher spiritual plane or a transcendental plane of a Bodhisattva into human form; that is rather different. The two things can combine because a bodhisattva can as it were take birth as someone who becomes an abbot and then, he can continue not reincarnating but making a succession of descents one might say so as to maintain that particular line; this is what happens - what is believed to happen in the case of the Dalai Lama. So one is not - so when Dharo Rimpoche said that he thought there were not more than six or seven incarnate Bodhisattvas he was not denying the existence of incarnate lamas, many of them of great spiritual attainments, many of them would be tantric gurus - but he clearly felt that an incarnate bodhisattva was some thing far, far beyond even that and they were very very few, even though incarnate lamas were often popularly regarded, all of them, as incarnate bodhisattvas or even living Buddhas, but that is not really correct. The whole position in a way is quite confused because lots of incarnate lamas are spoken of as sorts of manifestations of Manjusri or Avalokitesvara but from what I have been able to gather, it was as though through their spiritual practice perhaps over several lives, they were regarded as overshadowed by the influence of that bodhisattva; not that they were actually, literally incarnations of that bodhisattva. Do you see what I mean, do you see the difference?

[208]

Mahamati: ... after 2,500 years one would expect there would be more enlightened teachers than there obviously are...

S: I think first of all one does not really know who the enlightened teachers are and whether they are around; they are lots of teachers around who are advertised as enlightened sometimes in magazines but they are not necessarily such. I don't think one could draw any real conclusion because one does not know what the actual situation is. One does not know who is working where. And also perhaps one should not forget the great difficulty of gaining enlightenment so that one can't really expect to be many enlightened people around even after 2,500 years of Buddhism. One can say the inimical forces have developed greatly especially in the last three hundred years with the secularization of society, the general erosion of traditional values of the spiritual tradition. I am sometimes surprised that anyone is moderately enlightened at all. (Pause.) I know I considered myself quite lucky sort of sitting in Kalimpong and at least meeting some quite advanced Tibetan lamas; it's difficult to label them as enlightened or not enlightened; it probably would be quite inappropriate to try to do so but certainly they were quite advanced and one was very fortunate to meet them, especially



at that time. (Pause.)

Mahamati: It's not a complaint but there seems to be a deficiency.

S: If there is a deficiency it can only be because human beings have not made sufficient effort. So the sooner we make up that deficiency, and the method is obvious, the better. (Pause.)

I think one does not know. For instance someone gave me a few weeks ago a book about a Thai Meditation master; the book is printed in Thailand and is translated from Thai. It's quite an extraordinary story. It's difficult to tell whether that particular forest roving monk was enlightened or not but certainly he is an extraordinary person and quite advanced spiritually in many ways but he is not generally known; I have not heard of him before but someone gave me his book - it's quite a big book actually - and it tells one quite a lot about him. I am sure there are people like this here and there who exert an influence over a certain area but you don't get into the news, you don't become famous gurus with lots of well known disciples, they don't come to the West but probably there are more such people than one realizes, living in the backwaters perhaps of the Buddhist world, just getting on with it, just having an influence but quite an intense one within a restricted area.

Mahamati: Should one be on the look out for such people?

S: I think perhaps one should not think too much in terms of being on the look out for them but think much more in terms of reaching that level oneself, as one is well able to do. (Pause.) As they, although enlightened, might not be able to function in the West whereas if someone who was used to function here happens to gain enlightenment or perhaps I should say, did become - let's say - moderately enlightened, at least a stream entrant, he or she could do quite a lot in the West.

[209]

Abhaya: Buddhadasa also has a question about you yourself meeting someone, an enlightened person who was drunk.

Buddhadasa: It's something I want to clear up. Some years ago, an order member - it was one of those 'Bhante said' remarks which may be without any substance whatsoever - said that one of the most enlightened people you had met was heavily into drink. Is this true and would it be possible to have a guru/disciple relationship with such a person?

S: Ah, I am not quite sure who I was referring to then. Dudjom Rimpoche used to drink quite a lot; I don't think he ever became drunk; it's very doubtful whether he was really under the influence of drink. He was quite fond of whisky and his disciples often bought him bottles of whisky as a present; that did not seem to affect his style and he was still going strong at 83 or 84. But there was another lama - I can't remember his name, if I ever knew it. He used to live in a little sort of shed next to a stupa on the outskirts of Gangtok. The ruling family had build a stupa; may be about the diameter of this room on the outskirts of ...?... there was a little sort of shed next to it and this lama used to live there with his old wife. He was quite an elderly man and he had this elderly wife, not in the least attractive, who 'd just look after him and he was a great drinker and he was supposed to be drunk most of the time. But the Maharaja of Kurniara (?), the Crown Prince of Sikkim, had very great faith in him and regarded him as his guru and he used to spend a lot of time with him. He often used to go and just spend time

talking with him in this little shed and he was drinking with him and I heard that the crown prince said -in fact I think he said it to me - 'I don't care what they say, I know he drinks a lot' and he used to see crates of whisky rather embarrassed ? I know he is drunk but he is definitely the most enlightened lama I've met; he, had very great faith in him and, because Tibetans often believe that gurus of that sort deliberately behave a bit oddly or provocatively or unconventionally, just to discourage the unserious, so one could look at it like that. I did meet him once. I certainly did not get the impression, I did not think he was drunk by any means. I certainly did not get the impression of a drunkard in the ordinary sense. I certainly felt there was some thing there though I did not talk with him for any length of time so not much came across I can't say I was especially drawn to him. So it's a bit like Chetul Sangye D., except for the whisky, the drink, but I don't think I can offer any explanation for that because drunkenness in the ordinary sense is quite incompatible with any progress in the direction of enlightenment. So perhaps we have to accept that there are a few things perhaps we are not able to explain for the time being. But I think I must have been referring either to Dudjom Rimpoche or to him (pause.) He dressed very simply too. He led a very - I mean apart from the drink - he led a life of absolute privation; he just would not have any possessions apart from the old wife - and she was not much to look at (?). But anyway, they were both advanced in years, they must have been, he must have been and she must have been anything between sixty and seventy and he'd lived there for some years, the crown prince supported him and sent him crates of whisky and spent quite a lot of time with him. (Pause.) The crown prince also was a man who knew quite a lot about Buddhism so he knew - quite a lot about Vajrayana, he would have been able to detect very easily whether [210] he really knew anything or not but he was very impressed by him and said possibly that he had more faith in this lama than in any other that he knew. One must not forget that he knew Jamyang Khyentse Rimpoche, Dudjom Rimpoche and all the rest of them. (Pause.) Of course one must also acknowledge that after a while, he also became pretty fond of his whisky. (Laughter.) It might have been a skilful means on the part of that lama, who knows. I just don't know; I would not like to have to do have to do that for the sake of a disciple; a few drops of wine was as much as I could manage so you have to be very advanced to do that sort of thing for a disciple. Any more?

Abhaya: Padmavajra has a question how the good disciple helps the guru to develop.

Padmavajra: That's it really. Could you say more about how a good disciple helps a guru to develop and there is a sort of little rider to that: and how especially in Tantric circles.

S: Let's (go on with the obvious). First of all you know the good disciple or I don't know the good disciple, the bad disciple certainly helps the guru to develop; well think of all the patience he has to exercise and so on and so forth. But the good disciple?

Padmavajra: Good being someone who really communicates...

S: (interrupting) But not 'good' (in inverted commas) because 'good' disciples can be very trying as we know... (laughter.) I suppose... I've not thought about this very much but, off the cuff, a good disciple obviously is one who is receptive, who gives the guru an opportunity of expressing himself, expressing his thoughts. Because sometimes when you have to express your thoughts particularly when you are asked a question, your thoughts become clearer to you than you were before. You might in a sense have realized that particular point but perhaps it has not become fully clarified and sometimes the good disciple can be useful in

helping one to that by pressing you a little to round out your thoughts more fully because sometimes that is not something that is easy for you to do for yourself, even if it is, it happens in a more natural way perhaps in a more enjoyable way - if it comes about as a result of conflict by someone who is in a very sincere and genuine way putting questions to you or trying to get you to explain yourself more fully because you may have overlooked particular applications or implications of what you have said and a good disciple in some cases or sometime even a bad one and sometime even a hostile critic can draw your attention to those things. (Pause.) Also one may be drawn to (?) say that guru and disciple are relative terms: no disciple no guru. (Pause.) A guru is a function; it's more something you do; it's not that you are a guru, it's more that you function as a guru because basically one is not so to speak a guru any more than you can be a father without a son. But in yourself you are just a human being, not intrinsically a father; you are intrinsically a human being. So a disciple enables you to be a guru; whether you should thank him for that or not is quite another matter! But as I said: no disciple no guru. Some pseudo gurus realize this very well; they go on collecting as many, enrolling as many disciples as they can because they, or the world tend to think the more [211] disciples you have the better you must be as a guru, but it is not necessarily the case. I can't think of anything more to say at the moment but I am sure - there is in fact more to it than that. You asked about the specifically Tantric context; I don't know whether I have anything to say at the moment; perhaps some other time something will emerge.

\_\_\_: Suvajra has a follow up question to that which may...

Suvajra: It may not but again you may not feel like answering it. That is, as disciples good or bad as we are, in what ways have we helped you or hindered you from developing?

S: It's very difficult to say because at present in my memoirs I am sort of studying myself as I was in 1952 and I can see that I was not then quite as I thought I was; but then I can see myself as I was then more clearly than I saw myself at the time. So, that's how many years ago? 33 years ago. So I am sort of beginning to get myself as I was, say 33 years ago, into perspective and see more objectively, I don't know whether I could picture myself now, there is quite a bit of catching up to be done. So, I don't really know. I think probably, and probably also with the help of people in the movement and especially in the order, I have formulated my ideas more fully than I might otherwise have done; and there is no doubt I had to exercise things like patience and so on and so forth. What I would have been like had I not started something like the FWBO, I don't know or in some ways I do know. If something like the FWBO had not been started at all, I would probably have felt quite isolated in the Buddhist world; I probably would have buried myself somewhere and devoted myself to writing books which I hoped would convey my ideas to future generations even if the present generation was unable to appreciate them. But instead of sort of embodying my ideas in so to speak abstract form in a book, I have been able to embody them in concrete form to some extent and in an actual living movement which I think, though I would have liked to have written the books as well, I think actually is better. I think if I had completely had a choice - in a sense I have had a choice - between writing books embodying the ideas and creating [blank tape] ...?... book being the continuation of my thoughts as they began in the Survey and The Three Jewels. It is not enough to look at the things I've written since then, one has to look at the FWBO if one wants to see what I really think or feel about things in any way. It's as though the FWBO itself takes up the story not so much anything I have written; some lectures do to some extent but even there I've given in the context of the movement and for the movement. (pause.) Especially also of course to come down to brass tacks as it were, I mean within the

movement I must stress that the Order looks after me and supports me, provides me with my necessities and one or two other odds & ends, especially in the form of books! So that is also quite a big contribution; I don't have to worry about those things. It's only these last few years that I have been in a way free from financial worries; I certainly was not free from it in India. I did not really worry but I had to think about it but now I don't have to think about it and for the first time in my life, the last few years, I've been able to buy whatever books I wanted which is quite an important thing in a way. In fact the situation has now been reached in this last year or two, for the first time ever, I've got more money to buy books than I've time to read [212] the books. So that's quite good in a way but in other ways not so good! (Laughter.) So no doubt the order, people generally do a very great deal in all sorts of practical ways and that also must not be overlooked because in some ways that's the basis of everything else. I certainly have no personal worries of that kind now and haven't have for quite a few years but that has only been possible in this country, it was not the case in India. Most of the time I virtually supported myself by writing book reviews, giving English lessons and so on and so forth; I certainly don't have to do that now. (Pause.) Also another aspect of it - this occurs to me just now, just off the top of my head - the question was: what people had done for me. I don't really distinguish, I don't make a hard and fast distinction between me and the movement. If people do it for the movement I feel as though it's done for me. When people want to do something for me I suggest that they did something for the movement because in a sense, though only in a sense, the movement is a sort of extension of me, an embodiment of some part of me. So one can also say that. It's not a question of what people do for me in a narrow sense because I regard whatever is done for the movement as in a sense is done for me, I feel as though it's done for me, not that the movement belongs to me - not that either.

Abhaya : Kulamitra has a question which is related to this.

Kulamitra: Have you got any advice as to how order members could improve their relationship with you as teacher or as kalyana mitra or as guru?

S: I think again it becomes quite basic though in some ways it's quite difficult. At least they have to keep in touch with me; at least think of me if they have not time to write letters or come and see me. I do mean that quite seriously because for instance the Indian order members, they only see me when I go over there and they do think about me, they don't forget me; I am very well aware of that. They don't write letters; Indians on the whole are not letter writers; we're very rarely getting letters from the Indian order members but I know quite well that they don't forget me and that they think about me a lot; I am very well aware of that. So, yes, the first thing is to keep in touch. So, just keep in touch; there is nothing esoteric about that. I know that for purely practical reasons it's nowadays a bit difficult; there are after all about 250 order members so even if I was to spend say a day with them a year that will take me a year to get through the whole order, what to speak of mitras; there are 500 roughly of them and other friends and relations. So clearly it's not possible for me to spend much time with people individually so therefore I think it's all the more important that I can spend time with people collectively. I am quite happy to appear on men's events and take the chair and make a few remarks and look around and I can see 50, 60, 90 people at the same time and they can see me. So this kind of contact is quite good and quite necessary even; I would be quite happy if it was hundred of thousands, I don't mind any amount of people in that sort of way; of course in India I do get it, not the order members but mitras and friends. And I can have a genuine contact in that way; it does not have to be a sort of one to one, very private

and intimate. In this connection the Indian order members though they see so little of [213] me, they very rarely when I am over there ask to see me privately; they are quite happy to see me along with everybody else or to listen to me giving a lecture unless they've got something definite to discuss, they - in their terms - don't bother me; they're quite happy and satisfied even to see me even from a distance. (inaudible) bring along their wife and children to pay their respect, that's it; some would just come on and greet me but they would not expect to enter into conversation. They're very, very happy to see me; that's very obvious but they very, very rarely demand personal attention. They are very undemanding in that way which is perhaps quite interesting and significant. So, yes, keep in touch and especially through these larger events, that is to say the Men's Events, the Order Weekends, I am available to some extent. And, yes, we are going to have the convention, so yes please do come to that if you possibly can and apart from that I would like the more experienced older order members to come and spend time at Padmaloka so that I do have a bit of personal contact with them. I don't think it's possible for me to have much contact with mitras and new inexperienced young order members. Mostly they can get all that they need, nearly all they need, in both cases from more experienced order members. They don't need to have so much contact with me, in some respect they are not ready for it, not personal contact. But in the case of order members who have been around for some time, especially those who have responsible positions such as mitra conveyors, chairmen and secretaries and so on, I think they should make a point of coming and spending a bit of time at Padmaloka from now and then as guest of the order office and, or the order office community, and just being around. It's not that I probably will have very much time to spare for them but at least we will meet at meal time and have a few conversations and I think that will help. (Pause.) And you can always write letters if you can, I can't always promise to reply - not personally - but it certainly keeps me in touch with what's happening, what you are doing, what you are thinking, what you are feeling, where you are at and so on.

Abhaya There is just one last question from Ratnaguna about the current problems we might have to (inaudible).

Ratnaguna: You have given in this series a number of problems encountered by people following the path of higher evolution. Are there any other problems you've encountered since which you would now add were you go give the lecture series again?

S: I think there are and I think I've touched on them, that is to say problems relating to competitiveness between male order members and possibly male mitras or male order members and male mitras. I think I certainly would add two or three problems of that type, problems of that category. I can't think of any other off hand, perhaps some of you can. Oh, yes I can think of one. There is problems relating to a conflict between being attracted to the Dharma and being attracted or wanting to practise, one of the Arts; that is to say: wanting to be an order member but at the same time wanting to be a musician or a painter. There have been problems in this area with at least four or [214] five people whom I know. So, yes, perhaps I would add this problem to the list. You notice the problems are diversifying; they are getting away from relationships. They are of another order altogether; perhaps this is of some interest. Anything else? And competitiveness; problems arising from competitiveness. Problems arising from a conflict between one's feeling for the Dharma and one's feeling for one of the arts which seems to require quite a greater part of one's time.

\_\_\_ Economic problems?

S: Problems connected with the dole. Are they on the same level? No, they are not, not really. One knows what's right, what's wrong. (Pause.) Whereas in these other cases there can be a genuine problem in the sense that there is something which seems almost insoluble.

Padmavajra : Do you think there is a genuine problem arising in the Order between people's personal development and their ... in a sense work for the movement, their ... (?)

S: For some people, yes. Maybe the two eventually come together but, for some people, at least for a while, there is a problem of this sort. It's as though if they want to do what the movement needs to be done, they have to sacrifice their personal development; not go on retreat, not to meditate so much and so on. It takes some people quite a while to effect a proper synthesis or resolution to come to that. In some ways the conflict is there to some extent but one has learn to live with it in a positive manner and one does not always succeed on every occasion, in every instant on actually transcending that conflict. Time is short, time is limited and there are a lot of things that need doing. It only become a problem when you start worrying over it, worrying that you can't do more than actually you can do when you are honestly doing as much as you can. I won't say as much as is compatible with you own spiritual development because by that time you don't perhaps see what is not compatible any longer. (Pause.) So, when I looked through my notes of that particular lecture - The Problems of personal Relationships - I did get a feeling of the range of problems being quite narrow and quite restrictive which was the position in those days, it's significant that now we've got more problems than we had before; a wider range of problems that is! Is that it or is there any more?

Abhaya : I quite would like to ask you a question arising from what we have been talking this evening about these Tibetan gurus who had wives and children and families, you said they seemed to get on all right, how do they manage, I mean how is it?

S: You mean economically, psychologically or spiritually?

Abhaya : In every way, I mean they've got that extra baggage.

S: For one thing, they've got the support of tradition in the case of the Nyingmapa gurus so they don't feel any sense of strain or conflict, they don't feel they are outside tradition. They have traditional precedents of that way of life; they are going back to Marpa; (they might claim back to Vimalakirti as a spiritual ancestor, but it's a rather different case) but certainly Marpa, that's one point. And of course, they did live in a thoroughly traditional society.

[215]

You notice usually the wife respects the guru-husband very highly and is very faithful and devoted, does her best to make it possible for him to get on with his teaching and so forth. Tibetan women are often very capable of managing and are quite able to run the household, quite independently of their guru-husbands. He can just leave all that to them, he does not have to bother, that's the usual pattern. These Tibetan women are very capable as I said, even (though?) of managing. It's the question of even very often on the material side of things, well she just looks after him and the family; it's not that he is actively looking after her. Money comes in, disciples make offerings and she just runs the material side of things. She is as much his manager as his wife you might say. You might as well go so far as to say, this just now occurs to me, that a Gelugpa lama will have a secretary-cum-manager; in the case of a

married Nyingmapa lama his wife will do all that. Tradition is influencing them from every side in every way; which is not the case in the West

Abhaya : You don't think we could do that, some of us?

S: I think some order members could if they found the right kind of wife; there is the snag. If you could find someone who is completely devoted to you personally and who is prepared to put the Dharma first and did not have any sort of possessive attitude with regard to you and was prepared to do everything possible to make it easy for you to carry on with your work, that would be rather another matter, but I think such women are very rare, such as it were almost dakini-like women are very rare indeed. Even Tibetan lamas were not unknown to be hen-pecked; there are the odd cases. and not even Tibetan lamas are exempt, but it's just a different set up. I can see that sort of set up possibly appeals to some order members! These things vary; often there were children but I mean the children are influenced by tradition; they grow up respecting their father as a guru; they may be deeply influenced by the Dharma in some cases.

I mentioned this in connection with the Sufis. I mentioned that many Sufi masters were married but marriage seemed to be no problem because of the general nature of the Islamic tradition because they often live in sort of spiritual communities with their disciples and did not usually live at home. Disciples and supporters made offerings and their families were supported out of that. If they wanted they could be celibate even though they were married. Very often they were celibate. They had very often sons, sometimes born when they were still quite young and sons often - in fact very often it seems - were disciples to their fathers and carry on their teaching. All this was possible because, to put things in a way that would not be acceptable from a modern point of view, the women were under control, they could not encroach. They were there, they had their place but few of them in a few cases, the wife or daughter was also herself a Sufi and a disciple of the husband or the father. That was not unknown; in fact there were a few women of that kind who were quite remarkable but there were just a few of them as far as we know. Maybe one in every two or three hundred men Sufis. But it was due to the general nature of Islamic society, the general nature of Islamic social set up that that was possible. So, for a Sufi, it would seem that sex was not a problem. First of all, Islam does not make it a problem, it's very unlike Christianity; even Judaism. Islam does not make sex a problem and nearly all Muslims including Sufis were married when they were young and if they wanted to practise celibacy, it was not because their religion required it or [216] they felt guilty but just as a result of the natural momentum of their spiritual life, they just felt like being celibate and many of them were; and by that time their son is grown up and often their disciples and so on. This seems in some ways a quite positive sort of pattern or set up but we don't have that kind of social order so I think we can't think in this sort of terms. You find the same thing to some extent among the Brahmins of India when they are married but their married life is governed by very strict rules, even when they should have intercourse with their wife and in what circumstances, what ceremonies have to be performed at the time of intercourse, which mantras recited; this all has to be kept very much under control. And there are certain days on which you must not have intercourse with your wife and so on and so forth; there are strings of mantras to be recited at the appropriate moment! (Laughter.) So it really, as I said, sort of keeps certain things under control and often you find that the Brahmin's sons learn scriptures from him and become teachers in their turn. But we've lost all that; it's as though the woman is being let loose, whereas in the past there were so many traditions which were keeping her, to use an

expression which might be a little unpleasant, under control. But you see what I mean. It's as though the interests represented by women, more those of the race, have their place but they should not be allowed to encroach on the interests of the individual and on the whole sphere of the individual spiritual development. If a woman does not wish to participate in that [fair enough], but at least she should not get in the way of it or not be allowed to get in the way of it. (Pause.)

That is it, Bhante.

END OF SEMINAR

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