

CLASS at Wisdom's Goldenrod, Hector, NY
with Anthony Damiani (AD)
January 18, 1984
PB PARAS; PHILOSOPHY

TOPIC: PB Paras

SUBJECT: Philosophy

SUBSUBJECTS: Philosophic Yoga, Metaphysical Thinking, Witness-I

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BOTH THE CAPACITY TO THINK DEEPLY AND TO STOP THINKING ARE NEEDED TO
ATTAIN THE GOAL

BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Paul Brunton, *Notebooks*. 16 vols; Vol. 1 entitled *Perspectives*.
- Paul Brunton, *The Wisdom of the Overself*
- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

PLOTINUS QUOTES READ OR REFERENCED: V.3.4

NOTE: Earlier transcript versions exist.

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1984 01/18 at Wisdom's Goldenrod

PB Paras; Philosophy

Readable Edited Transcript

PHILOSOPHIC YOGA

[Audio File 1984 0118a Begins] (paras read & student discussion as follows, no AD)

PB: "Ancient spirituality thought that what was most important was to cultivate individual soul. Modern materialism thinks it should be social betterment. These two goals have usually been placed in opposition. But modern spirituality refuses to accept such a false dilemma. Let us seek *both* the cultivation of the soul, it declares, and the betterment of social conditions. Why, when we open our eyes to the one need, should we shut them to the other? Humanity's outer need does not justify the neglect of our own inner need, nor this the neglect of the other. No amount of humanitarianism can counterbalance the duty of devoting time and energy to spiritualizing our own self also, but this ought not become so self-centered as to become a total and exclusive devotion." (20.4.215 (also in 1/11/84))

PB: "It is not enough to negate thinking; this may yield a mental blank without content. We have also to transcend it. The first is the way of ordinary yoga; the second is the way of philosophic yoga. In the second way, therefore, we seek strenuously to carry thought to its most abstract and rarefied point, to a critical culminating whereby its whole character changes and it merges of its own accord in the higher source whence it arises. If successful, this produces a pleasant, sometimes ecstatic state--but the ecstasy is not our aim, as with ordinary mysticism. With us the reflection must keep loyally to a loftier aim, that of dissolving the ego in its divine source. The metaphysical thinking must work its way, first upwards to a more and more abstract concept and second inwards to a more and more complete absorption from the external world. The consequence is that when illumination results, whether it comes in the form of a mystical trance, ecstasy, or intuition, its character will be unquestionably different and immeasurably superior to that which comes from the mere sterilization of the thinking process which is the method of ordinary yoga." (Perspectives p. 261 and 20.4.62)

KD: What does he mean "carry thought to a critical culminating?" In the first case, in ordinary yoga it's not enough to stop thinking. In ordinary yoga you negate the thinking process. In the second case, you use thought to go back to the source of thought, and that somehow takes you--I wonder what that could possibly mean.

(question about "whole character changes")

KD: I wonder if that refers back to the idea that if you pick an idea that means something to you--like the idea of Justice--and you love it and concentrate, that somehow brings you in deeper.

(St omitted . . .)

KD: I think it's important to remember that there's something else involved here than conceptual-- He states that if you go back to your source that it's not just a discursive thinking that brings you to your source, but that something else is involved. If you pick an idea that means something to you then you have to love it. I think it's probably more that than some kind of discursive conceptual thing that will bring you to that.

(discussion: direct the mind towards a concept--different from meditation exercise)

KD: The quote almost suggests that there's something in the thinking process--that metaphysical thinking is different than just thinking about a concept, trying to figure something out, like trying to figure out an idea. That there's almost like a type of thinking that he's calling metaphysical thinking that will lead you to an actual state of consciousness, that will lead you to some kind of transcendent state of consciousness, that is completely unlike our ordinary conceptual thinking. So that what you're contemplating or thinking about isn't a concept, but it's something that, when you end up arriving closer to it, that it somehow it's the source of your being, somehow it's alive, living.

(St omitted . . .)

LR: You're using the word concept. You have to start somewhere. You have to start with the ordinary mind. You brought up justice. The ordinary mind has a concept of what that is. You have to take that concept and work it, try to immerse yourself in it. You don't start outside the concept. I think that very thing that you're calling a concept and discursive is actually what gets transformed. It's not something other than that.

KD: It gets transformed. At a basic level you start out with that but-- (the reason that I put it negatively is that somehow) you can't just sit down and start thinking about any old idea.

(discussion: thinking has to be directed to its source)

KD: What does that mean? If the idea of "What am I?" doesn't mean anything to you than how can you do it? Just because some sage told you to do it? It has to be a real problem. It has to be something that means something. Then it will involve more of you than just the conceptual mind.

(St omitted . . .)

KD: What's involved in the bringing out or articulation of a concept? What else does it do? Is it a state of identity? Does it bring you to your source? Do you feel it as part of, constitutive of, your thinking processes?

(St omitted . . .)

KD: It sounds as if, if you practice metaphysical thinking the way he's describing it, that somehow contemplating is either close to what he's calling the source or is somehow part of the mind itself.

S: . . . rarified atmosphere what would be . . . what would be the content . . .

KD: Maybe as you approach the idea through your own thinking, it becomes more and more numinous and it ceases to become an objective. (And somehow what he's describing results in a state of whatever that is.)

(St omitted . . .)

KD: The more you think about it the closer . . . it ceases to become something objective, it ceases to become a content. Maybe the idea is constitutive of your very nature, your very self.

RC: . . . a correct concept . . .

KD: I don't think that's what he's talking about, a correct concept. I think he's talking about something a lot deeper. That these ideas are constitutive of your very inner nature. That maybe the gods that constitute you. And that as you approach them you go on bended knee. And then they cease to become something outside you. And then you're approaching Divinity.

RC: . . . thinking working its way upward to more abstract . . .

KD: Abstract doesn't mean necessarily something ultra-conceptual, some kind of mathematical conception.

(St omitted . . .)

KD: I think that the meaning is you. And as you approach it you go to your source. It's not something you take out and observe. This process of thinking brings you to the. . . is found to be none other than your very source.

(St omitted . . .)

KD: That process itself dissolves the ego, because you can't continue on that process and have the interference, the past the future and the restlessness of the mind. It would get canceled out by the very power of that thinking that he's describing.

(para reread, discussion)

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1984 0118a Ends; Side 2 Begins)

PB: "It is not enough . . ." (reread)

AD: Kathleen, you remember the example we used where we said there's a piano out there, and you strike a note on it, and it vibrates with a frequency of 440? And you're a few feet away, and an interaction takes place between that so-called material vibratory activity, and the physical organ--the ear, the inner ear--and even, let's say, there's firing of synapses in the brain and etc. Now, in this simple example, a condition or a state of matter--if I could use that word--arises, and then someone says, or you say, "That's the note A." Now, who is it that passed a judgment on the modification or the conditions of matter at that moment?

KD: Not the ego, not what we are calling the empirical subject. It would be that consciousness, or the Witness, that has that one thought, that contains both what we call the empirical subject and that object which would be the known.

AD: Now this Witness-I that you're referring to--or can we make it more difficult and say this unperceived Perceiver--could we say it that way? Because we're saying that the Knower, in a sense, is an unperceived Perceiver. But he knows; he's the one that knows. In a sense we're saying that the complementarism that exists between the so-called empirical subject and the empirical object, that both of these things are objective to the Knower, because the Knower is passing a judgment on that. Right?

KD: Right.

AD: You notice how you made a transition from analyzing your experience of the sensible world? In other words, the activity of the vibratory strings and the inner tympanum which responds to that and the

firing of the synapses in the brain, and the arising of images in the brain, etc.--you notice that all of that is objective to the Knower? But when you try to understand the nature of this Knower, you recognize that, in a sense, you cannot perceive that Perceiver. Now haven't you made a transition from the analysis of the gross and the sensible? Through a process of analysis you've reached a level of abstraction, where, so to speak, you've distinguished, let's say, the gross, the sensible from the immaterial Principle or the immaterial and the unknown Knower? You noticed that? In your analysis you had to become more and more abstract until you reached the notion of this unperceived Perceiver.

KD: Are you saying, when you use the word 'principle,' that the unperceived perceiver...

AD: Forget the word 'principle'. This knower, who passed the judgment on the condition, or the state of matter that exists.

KD: Ok.

AD: But you notice how, in the process of following me, you had to become more and more abstract in your understanding.

KD: Yes.

AD: (said quietly) Yes, and this kind of culminated in a very abstract notion: the unperceived Perceiver. And in the process of trying to understand that, you have to even discard the ego. And now if you try to further understand this unperceived Perceiver, and let's say you focus your attention on it, there begins a process of inwardizing your consciousness, your attention. Just think for a minute. Just go over what I'm saying. Concentrate now on this notion of the unperceived Perceiver. What happens? You have to leave words behind, concepts, even thoughts. You have to leave them behind, don't you? So that what's happening is that your consciousness is getting inwardized.

KD: Ok. Then what? (laughter)

AD: The first time you heard this, you became very, very happy. Why? For an instant, you entered a thought-free state. Your consciousness was inwardized. (pause)

Alright, now could we go on to the next quote? Could we try another example? You want to try another example? For instance, we say that after a vigorous process of reasoning, we've gone through an analysis of experience and you suddenly come to the conclusion--and, of course, I can't do this, it would take the rest of the class--you come to the conclusion: PERCEPTION IS IMMEDIATE. In that understanding--like the example: I give you, when you're looking at a dream, you don't have a pair of eyes and you're looking at the dream. You see the dream without any eyes. So you understand: perception is immediate. You don't need any senses to see the dream. Is that true? Perception is immediate. What happened? You have to go through an enormous process of abstraction. You have to practically recognize that the mind which judges is not that which is being judged. What is being judged is the condition of matter; the body and the way it interacts or responds with its environment. These two things together, constitute let's say, a state of matter. And something is judging that state of matter. That something which is judging that state of matter is not the ego. But then who the hell is it? Immediately you're thrown into an abstract situation.

KD: . . .

AD: You see, what happens is through the process of thinking vigorously on a certain point, little by little the thought gets so attenuated that it becomes let's say, thinner and thinner and then it finally just dissolves. And you can go into nirvikalpa or a thought-free state, even if it's just for a second. But the point is, for that instant you've gone into a thought-free state. And you will very often experience a kind of happiness. But then the next moment, of course, the ego comes back and makes its claims, and you're back in the same habitual patterns of thinking that you were a minute ago, or before you started the process of intense thinking and reflection. (pause)

Now, for instance, you could take that theme--the unperceived Perceiver--and just sit down and meditate on it, and you'll see that your consciousness gets more and more withdrawn, more and more IN-drawn. It's like you pushed all the faculties of the mind to one corner, and you're just investigating into the nature of knowledge itself; or, thought is thinking about itself. And in that very process it becomes so attenuated that it dissolves.

Now, it's quite different than the ordinary yogi who sits down and says, "I'm going to crush out every thought that comes in my mind until I have no thoughts at all." And he sits down and does that, and he CAN reach a state that's thought-free. But he didn't know what happened. He had no idea what happened, whereas you can actually watch the process in philosophic yoga of thought dissolving itself -- into pure Thought.

KD: When you attempt to think about this unperceived perceiver--you've withdrawn your attention from the subject-object relationship . . . is that "thinking turned upon itself"? That attention, that self-consciousness, that self-awareness that constitutes that attention, is what you're calling "thinking turned upon itself"?

AD: Yes. Now it's turning upon itself and trying to understand its own nature. And in order to do so, it must STOP.

KD: In order to do so it must stop?

AD: It comes to a standstill, because it's trying to GRASP itself. It's trying to understand itself. And if it tries very intensely to understand itself, it will stop working. It will stop thinking. Alright.

AH: . . . From the point of view of that thought-free condition, both yogas would be the same, would they not?

AD: Well, it's one thing to go in through the door of understanding and it's another thing to go in through the door of dogmatism. You know what you're doing in one case; you don't know what you're doing in the other.

AH: . . . Is the distinction at the level of thought? It would seem that it could not be held as distinct from the point of view of the thought-free state.

AD: No, the distinction is not in the thought-free state; the distinction, of course, is within thought.

AH: So ordinary yoga yields the same result as philosophic yoga?

AD: No, that's where you're mistaken, when you say, "YIELDS the same result."

AH: . . .

AD: The thought-free state would be the same in both cases, but the results would be different. In one case there would be an understanding of what happened. In the other case there would not be.

(AD/MB question clarifications)

MB: Doesn't he say that the aim of philosophic yoga is loftier? . . .

AD: No. Isn't that what we just said? The experience is the same in both cases, whether you're a dogmatist or a philosopher; the thought-free state is the same in both cases, the experience of the thought-free state. The results, like I pointed out, are different.

MB: But I thought that the philosophic yogi goes beyond the thought-free state.

RG: He's saying that the results are different. He's saying that when either man or woman opens their eyes and looks at the world, the results of that looking is entirely different for the philosophic yogi. In that way the ego can be merged back into its source, because it reappears when you're out of the thought-free state. Because you understand the nature of thought and the ego is a product of that thought. Then you can fully integrate the ego to its source ALL the time whether you're thinking or not.

HE: What do we make of the very last part of the quote where he says that trance or intuition or ecstasy is of a totally different character, immeasurably superior not because of what happens afterwards. It seems like it's what happens right then.

LR: I thought Anthony just explained it. The actual state, the actual thought-free state is not different or distinct, but the part of you that UNDERSTANDS that state is not that thought-free state. So that would be a very different thing, if the rational part of the soul were understanding or actually being the knowledge of that, rather than being totally passive to that. That is what would make this state different.

HE: In the state, the rational part is being the state?

AD: Would you tell me what the quote is you're referring to?

(reread: "The consequence . . . yoga.")

LR: In one state it's just gone. The ordinary yoga--there's a complete wiping out of that ego state of conceptualizing. It's like complete annihilation. You're gone and then you're back.

HE: You're saying in the philosophic case when you're gone you're still there, in some way.

AD: There's a difference, Harriet. When the yogi who doesn't practice or understand philosophy comes out of a state, a thought-free state, the world again imposes itself on him, and he's faced with the same perplexity, whereas the yogi who understands philosophically what happens is no longer perplexed. So of course it would be a superior state. Is understanding nothing? To come out with the understanding as to what happened and to come out with no understanding--is that nothing? So the other one is quite superior.

But you don't have to make it so abstract. The point I was trying to get at also is that these are processes you could observe. And I used a very particular example when I was trying to get you to realize you have the 440, you have the state of matter which is the way the body is conditioned by that interaction, and then when I ask you, "Who makes the judgment, "This is the sound A?" and you recognize that it is the Knower, this is an intelligent understanding. Right? It isn't a blanking out of any

kind; it's an intelligent understanding that the Soul is making a judgment on these two complementary aspects: The seer and what is seen are seen as one; they're both objective to the Knower. In that very process of understanding what I've been talking about, do you notice how you have to drop the ego? In that moment that you drop the ego in order to be able to understand that there is a Witness or an unperceived Perceiver who recognizes this situation or this piece of knowledge. In that moment that you recognize that the Witness-I is what perceives, in that moment you have to drop the ego. And if you're introspective enough, you'll recognize that at that instant you felt a little happy about this piece of knowledge you got, because you dropped the ego at that moment. You don't have to be sitting in the Himalayas under a big fir tree. It could happen right here.

JG: So in that sense the ordinary yogic blankness is sterile. Is it undesirable?

AD: That's not important now. If some person doesn't want to engage in thinking but just wants to go ahead and plunge into yoga exercises, it's alright. I won't tell him, "Look, you'd better do this correctly." If he's going to sit and meditate, I figure that's a big enough pat on the back. Let's go on. Let's (inaudible).

PB: "The activity of analytic thinking has been banned in most mystical schools. They regard it as an obstacle to the attainment of spiritual consciousness. And ordinarily it is indeed so. For until the intellect can lie perfectly still, such consciousness cannot make itself apparent. The difficulty of making intellect quite passive is however an enormous one. Consequently different concentration techniques have been devised to overcome it. Nearly all of them involve the banishment of thinking and the cessation of reasoning. The philosophical school uses any or all of them where advisable but it also uses a technique peculiarly its own. It makes use of abstract concepts which are concerned with the nature of the mind itself and which are furnished by seers who have developed a deep insight into such nature. It permits the student to work out these concepts in a rational way but leading to subtler and subtler moods until they automatically vanish and thinking ceases as the transcendental state is induced to come of itself. This method is particularly suited either to those who have already got over the elementary difficulties of concentration or to those who regard reasoning power as an asset to be conserved rather than rejected. The conventional mystic, being the victim of external suggestion, will cling to the traditional view of his own school, which usually sees no good at all in reasoned thinking, and aver that spiritual attainment through such a path is psychologically impossible. Never having been instructed in it and never having tried it, he is not really in a position to judge." (Perspectives p. 262 and 20.4.65)

AH: In comparison to those schools that deny rational thinking, this view uses rational thinking to what end?

(reread: "The philosophic school . . . makes uses of abstract concepts . . . rejected.")

AH: Why do these concepts have to be provided by Seers?

DB: Maybe the reason is because they have found that when you read a book, like *The Wisdom of the Overself*, contemplate some of these texts written by men who know what they were talking about--that in the process of assimilating those ideas you're actually associating with--these ideas are not static, dead concepts. There's something of the Seer's own power or influence in them. They act to bring this about.

MB: What about the fact that he says that these Seers have had insight? Isn't that a remarkable recommendation in itself? . . . These are people that have actually SEEN what they're talking about! They have developed a mode of thinking that is in line with the truth that they have seen through insight. That is the highest recommendation.

DB: Are you disagreeing with me or what? I couldn't hear what you said.

MB: Well, you talked about the power of these ideas. Maybe you mean that they've contacted--

DB: I mean that they've got real power.

MB: Because of what? Because of the Truth that they've contacted. Your statement could be misinterpreted in a magical sort of way. You could have a black magician . . . they have power. The reason we want to follow these Seers that have insight is because of the insight.

DB: . . . But I think they do.

NH?: Doesn't the power come from the rightness of the idea? And that the Sage is carrying that power with him because he's aligned with the rightness of the idea and that's where the power comes from is the idea.

LR: I vote for Myra. Why don't we go on?

(para reread: "The activity of analytic thinking . . .")

LR: . . . Does concentration need to be attained before this kind of abstraction process can begin, or can the abstract concepts be a means of bringing about that concentration? Is the ability to focus the mind a prerequisite, or can certain of these ideas actually help effect the concentration?

AH: I think this quote suggests that it's both. Either/or.

LR: You think that's what he means when he says ". . . You can learn how to concentrate first . . . and then you . . ."

AH: Yes. In the quote it says that ordinarily there's a problem. Ordinarily thought is an obstacle to the spiritual consciousness. But there are very special concepts that are offered to us by Seers that have this peculiar and unique property.

LR: So you would say that intrinsic in the actual mystery, or attraction of that concept itself (inaudible), there is the indrawing power which itself is a concentrative power.

AH: (There would be a) certain special mood and cessation of thought.

LR: . . .

AH: I think so.

LR: So often we say, "Well, I can't do that because I haven't learned THIS." There's that tendency to exclude ourselves from the possibility of doing some of these things because we haven't (learned/attained) what we consider to be the prerequisites of these . . .

AD: I would be inclined to say, Linda, that generally some level of concentration is required before a person becomes intrigued by a concept which a seer has devised. For instance, if we take a word, if we try to use an example--like you say that thought is a manifestation of mind--and if there isn't a certain level of concentration already available to you, you won't stop at the word 'manifest' and be intrigued and bewildered and perplexed and puzzled "What does that mean?"

LR: So it's sort of like Catch-22.

AD: Not exactly, catch--what. Because generally the familiarity of words is of such a nature that unless a person has a kind of vigilance inbuilt into his attention, he won't stop the word and question it, but just assume that he understands it. Familiarity breeds contempt, and in the world of words, utter contempt.

AS: I thought he said CONTENT, they're too familiar.

AD: I guess both, conTENT and contempt, the one follows upon the other.

AS: I had assumed that when he said that the other possibility of an interest in reasoning--anybody who's had a significant interest in reasoning will have developed some amount of interest, and that interest would be an aid in getting involved in truth finding. Just along with what was just said. I thought that when he said that the other possibility of reasoning--somebody that's taken an interest in reasoning would have some degree of concentration on meaning, so that would help the person right there to take an interest in these truth-findings.

JA: So you'd need not only some ability to concentrate but some ability to reason.

LR: Anthony, is this the principle on which a koan is built?

AD: No, I wouldn't include koans.

LR: You would not?

AD: No.

LR: Doesn't the reasoning mind exhaust itself through consideration of a koan?

CdA: There's nothing to reason on. There's no PROCESS of reasoning or understanding in a koan.

LR: But if you look at a koan, you don't have anything to start with except the conceptual. And the energizing of that has to exhaust itself. I know it's not the same as something like "the unperceived Perceiver."

AD: No, koans will bring you to lunacy.

LR: Why do you say that?

AD: I already know of two suicides from koans.

LR: But in principle?

AD: That's enough of principle for me.

LR: But you also know of people who have had satori by them.

AD: Yes. That's because they were crazy to start with. (laughter)

St: (inaudible)

AD says quietly: You're referring to me? (possibly in response to inaudible student above)

RC: Something Johanna was saying--they were trying to get at the meaning of content--translating from German--talking about, not really interested in translating the words, but trying to translate what the ideas were. There'd often be times when you come up and you finally get out of the first language what it is that the guy is trying to say and you can say "I've got the concept. Now I have to find words for it in another language." . . . That moment of having clear, distinct meaning present in the mind, is what I would mean by aiming at the concept. Then you can grope for the words or whatever. But that stage isn't to be equated with getting inwardly absorbed in the idea, being taking back to its source in thought. But having that locus now, ok, this is the discrete intelligible content we're going to deal with. (pause) You probably had that with French? Didn't you major in French?

KD: Who me? Yes. Go ahead.

RC: That seems to be what the word concept means.

KD: When you arrive at a meaning as to what--

RC: Not to be equated with getting totally absorbed in that meaning, a state of identity with it or whatever. It is a clearly distinct content.

KD: Isn't that--the whole idea that there's a real mystery about something? What was the phrase, that when the sage or the seer describes something, those words are a description of a perception, or a vision, and somehow the words themselves convey something that we can't see ourselves. There's something about the words that comes from the bottom of the ocean, so to speak, and they're being fished up from a very deep level. You start with a very great sense of mystery, and the intrigue is what pulls you in, not arrival of any meaning. I would think that any meaning that would be arrived at would be something produced by your ego.

PD: But why are you limiting it? Why can't a person be absorbed in trying to understand a meaning of what his own functioning is? So in trying to understand yourself you end up deeper in your own being.

KD: I thought Randy was saying that you've already defined an idea, you've already come to a description or a meaning as to what a concept is, and that's what you take as your starting point.

JA: I think that Randy was referring back to the first quote . . . metaphysical thinking that works toward more and more abstract concepts . . . were you equating meaning with concept?

RC: . . . getting any content means something very different from just the words or even just a state of fascination with the words, and actually getting the first clear contact with what is meant, before getting deeper into your feelings and so on.

JA: It seemed like it was suggesting that it was a process of refining . . . to get the meaning of what . . . in relation to that first quote, I'm wondering if that first stage that is spoken of . . . that has to be deepened. The first stage is actually a state of understanding . . . (hard to hear)

AD: Jeanne, I've heard every other word. Now would you repeat it; maybe I'll hear the ones I missed. Try again.

JA: I thought that Randy was saying that the meaning . . .

[Audio File 1984 0118a Ends]

[Audio File 1984 0118b Begins]

JA: . . I was wondering if the state that he spoke about, this certain attainment . . . might have to be actually transmitted. The state might actually be understanding, not a mystical state or something like that. Kathleen, when you were speaking of a sage describing, actually describing understanding or beyond that, I don't think it's quite so mysterious, when you think that the state of understanding is something that the mind actually receives. And if it's working towards more and more abstract concepts . . . as has been demonstrated in the conversation this evening . . . the operation of the mind itself . . . the ego seems to be the prominent factor . . . actually different states have to come into play even to consider what we're speaking of . . .

("Ancient spirituality . . ." reread, "It is not enough . . ." reread, 7 minutes student discussion)

REFLECTING ON A SAGE'S WORDS IS PART OF PHILOSOPHIC YOGA; WHITE MAGIC

PB: "Continued and constant pondering over the ideas presented herein is itself a part of the yoga of philosophical discernment. Such reflection will as naturally lead the student towards realization of his goal as will the companion and equally necessary activity of suppressing all ideas altogether in mental quiet. This is because these ideas are not mere speculations but are themselves the outcome of a translation from inner experience. While such ideas as are here presented grow under the water of their reflection and the sunshine of their love into fruitful branches of thought, they gradually begin to foster intuition." (Perspectives p. 262 and 20.4.66 (also in 8/24/83))

(3 min. student discussion)

PD: PB as a philosopher, employing the language that we think and converse in, has put forth a revelation that can directly contact our thinking consciousness. It's not a translation from a dead language by an academic philosopher or theoretician who can't put that living contact into the conveyance, whereas PB as a philosopher which conjoins wisdom with the communication vehicle, can do that.

(4 min. student discussion)

AS: Many philosophers feel that language is completely limited--'language is language', and there's no such thing as a SAGE writes a thing. It's all the same. It's language, you're caught in it. It doesn't touch reality. It doesn't get outside it, it's always relative. All these views of the modern schools. This quote says, there IS inspired writing. IN-spired writing is what will carry you past the words.

(LR/AS/LR/)

AH: I'm still confused.

AD: Can we hear it once more because I'm confused too. ("Continued . . ." reread and 10 minutes of student discussion, including:)

JG: I thought that they are so powerful because at the bottom of them is PB's experience, and that's why it is important for us to read them.

AS: Remember the 360 degrees are in your chart, and that through living out this life, you eventually assimilate that understanding and make them your own.

This may be another way of assimilating these ideas. You can get them without having to live them out, without them being in your chart, by actually reasoning and concentrating on these ideas here. Those will have the same kind of effect.

These are really detached reason-principles, that are available for your use.

RC: . . . The life that actually has become thoroughly rational, is a life in which you can say the ego has dissolved in its source . . .

EC: You can get a big intuition in a quiet time and then it takes twenty years to work it out! Those two processes go on all the time. Especially if you're not ready for the thought process, you can't use your intuition.

NH: I don't quite see what the question is.

EC: I went back to what Kathleen was saying.

AD: We should be discussing that quote.

AP: Couldn't we take some examples of some concept and--

AD: Sure. That'd be a good idea.

AP: And then we could discuss it.

AD: Get an example. Sure.

JG: Do you have one?

AD: She's got one.

AP: Mentalism--it's an example, isn't it? Because if that is an example, mentalism, it would help to foster an attitude of mind that would help you to assimilate the World-Idea on the philosophic path. Because, even intellectually when you begin to think that way, it helps you to take in more of the world. Isn't that an example?

AD: You could start with an easier example. Your example's good. But could we start with an easier example? If you take, for instance, Handel, who wrote "The Messiah"; take Beethoven, "Fifth Symphony"; take Bach, the last chorus from "The Saint Matthew's Passion." Handel, for instance, didn't stir for two weeks. You know what I mean? Like he sat absolutely immobile for two weeks, and his maid thought he was going crazy. He wouldn't eat. He just stayed there, staring into space. Then all of a sudden-- He evidently got very quiet, very silent--then all of a sudden he intuited an aspect of that inner glory, which let's call it exaltation, like when you listen to the last chorus you get exalted. On the other

hand, we think of Beethoven with the tremendous introverted concentrative ability he had, inwardly concentrating, and he comes out with the “Fifth Symphony.” And there you can see that that music is charged with victory, a noble victory. You think of Bach, with his pietistic bringing-up, and in the silence he received another aspect of that infinite glory, but he has to be silent in order for an intuition to come. You can be silent and an intuition may not come, and you’d be like Handel, sitting there for two weeks. That’s a long time to fast! But in this case, let’s say, in silence, the intuition does come and it’s about a certain aspect of this infinite glorious reality; in this case it was piety, humility, and all that. Now what the composer has to do, see, he has the inner experience, and he has the technique by which he could try to portray that inner experience. He knows enough about his material, in this case, he knows enough about music. He knows about all the forms in music and how to associate certain notes with each other so that they evoke the same vasanas in you that he himself is aware of. And so he puts it into this form, and then you listen to it, and there’s a duplication, there’s like a translation of his inner experience, alright: it is reduplicated in your consciousness. And now you reflect on that experience that you go through; that is, that is the ideas that he gave you, you reflect on them. And YOU start getting bright and cheerful about the intuition HE had, right? You might even experience that exaltation or that victory or that humility, whichever one he’s speaking about.

We’re not talking about a sage. An artist is something that is more comprehensible, in the sense that he has the inner experience, like a mystic, and then he also has the technique by which he can translate that inner experience into a form, into a suitable form that could evoke within you something of what he experienced.

Now, the sage does something similar. He has the experience of the mentalness of all things, that all things are mind, and then he has to find the appropriate words--and words, here, this is really practicing magic--He has to be able to combine certain words to organize the different memory traces that you work with in such a way that they will evoke in you an intuition of what he experienced. Then if you contemplate, or let’s say you reflect on that, and that means that you are very enchanted by them, they’re very meaningful and you reflect on them, then they start growing in you. Because ordinarily it wouldn’t be the case that the memory traces, they way they are in our being, would organize themselves in such a way as to portray inner states of being. That’s very unlikely that that would ever happen. But the other way, it can happen. The sage CAN use words in such a way that they will evoke the necessary vasanas or memory traces in you and produce an intuition. That’s of course a species of white magic, but he can do it. Do you think that was what he was talking about there?

JG: Yes. (laughter)

AD: Yes. I thought so too but I got confused there for awhile.

CdA: If that’s white magic, then so is music though!

AD: Music IS white magic, of course! It’s not only white magic, it’s a miracle.

KD: What does that mean that he knows how to elicit those vasanas and evoke the intuition?

AD: First of all a man like PB, for instance, would always look up what does a word mean, now, today, not what did it meant in its roots or its etymology or two hundred years ago, but what does it mean now, let’s say to the collectivity. And he had, I would say, an ability to use words in their present-day meaning with all the connotations that our present-day culture surrounds those words with. And he would be able

to pick out those words that would correctly convey what he's talking about. That's a kind of magic, to make you keep reading them even if you don't penetrate it into the innermost depths. You still have a feeling of what he's saying. That's why a lot of people come over and disagree with me; they say, "Well, you can't tell ME what he's saying. I KNOW what he's saying." And I know what they mean: They say that they have a FEELING of what he's saying, because when I try to find out what they THINK he's saying, then we disagree.

He doesn't use a word like 'being' the way the Greeks would. And when you see the word 'being' in his writings, don't interpret it that way. You have to use it in the contemporary sense, that being is the object of the ordinary intellect that man works with, in other words, sensible becoming. That's what people mean by being today. The Greeks would wonder what you're talking about. So he has that kind of precision when he writes, that the words mean what they mean today is the way he's using them.

Now the art--and this is really the difficult art--is that he should be able to combine the words in such a way--and this is the magic--that it will evoke and organize those memory traces in you that to some extent could evoke or produce an intuition of what he's saying. That's the magic in his writing.

AS: Plato says somewhere that you can't directly communicate the idea. Plato, or whatever philosopher, would first have to put it into a vehicle and that was the only thing that actually could communicate. Somehow that word, the language, had to be manipulated, and then it would evoke within the hearer a reminiscence, if he were attentive to it enough . . .

AD: It does require this very serious attentative reflection and affection for these things, so that if you have regard for what was said tonight, "the unperceived Perceiver" you won't sleep. But if you have no affection, no true concern, then you'll sleep very soundly. (laughter) And if I said that, for instance, you cannot have any objective relations with the unperceived Perceiver, you'd get up and you'd start drinking coffee on top of it! Because you don't WANT to go to sleep now.

Yes, he's a magician. But then again, isn't any great man, any great artist, a magician? Any great sage.

NH: Anthony, I have a question. It may be a little off the point.

AD: Well, then, if it is, don't say it.

NH: Well, you were reading Sunday about the artist and we were talking about developing a fanaticism and really immersing ourselves in a work of art and yet PB is always talking about balance.

AD: Let's not go into that. Let's not get into that. You know, when he speaks about balance, he's speaking about people that have highly evolved intellectual abilities, highly differentiated, deep, intense feeling, people that have a demonic will: Those are the people that have to balance the faculties. You don't have to; I don't have to worry about balancing anything right now. (laughter)

VM: Just your checkbook.

AD: Let me go crazy first, and then I'll go balance some things.

BOTH THE CAPACITY TO THINK DEEPLY AND TO STOP THINKING ARE NEEDED TO ATTAIN THE GOAL

S: Shall we read koans?

AD: Koans? Mmm. As I mentioned to you, I know of two cases of suicide with those things. Let's go on to another one.

PB: "The logical movement of intellect must come to a dead stop before the threshold of reality. But we are not to bring about this pause deliberately or in response to the bidding of some man or some doctrine. It must come of its own accord as the final maturation of long and precise reasoning and as the culmination of the intellectual and personal *discovery* that the apprehension of mind as essence will come only when we let go of the idea-forms it takes and direct our attention to it." (Perspectives p. 262 and 20.4.67 (also in 1/25/84))

AD: Now, before you get into this, ok? If you have an unlimited supply of will and energy, and you think the problem of epistemology through--now remember, I said an unlimited will, an unlimited energy--what will come to an end will be thought itself. You'll come to a position where you've thought the thing out, and in the very thinking of it out, it dissolves. There is nothing further to be thought out, and you go into rest. Let's go to the next one.

PB: "This is the paradox: that *both* the capacity to think deeply and the capacity to withdraw from thinking are needed to attain this goal." (Perspectives p. 263 and 20.4.68)

AD: Your turn. Once more, Tim.

("This is . . ." reread)

MB: What's the difference between the capacity to withdraw from thinking and the deliberate stopping of the intellect? . . .

AB: The actual cessation of the intellect comes after you have exercised the capacity to think deeply to its fullest. It's a paradox.

AS: Yes. The paradox is that the deepest thinking leads you to the cessation of thinking . . .

LR: . . .

AD: But Myra, if you confuse this with the previous quote you won't know what THIS quote is about. Could I try to find out what this quote means?

RG: He's not equating them, but what's the difference? If the deepest thinking takes you to the thought-free state, then you don't need the paradox of the first part of the quote.

PD: To get to that point, you have to first have exercised the ability to stop thinking, and then at another point, to have the ability to think something through to its utmost limit. When both of those facets of your consciousness are available, then you can enter the transcendent state.

JB: Is it really a paradox, or isn't the deepest thinking the thinking with no content?

PD: See, then you're resolving the paradox.

JB: That's what I'm after . . . I'm kind of asking does thinking stop because that is the way it contemplates itself, or does thinking stop because it must inevitably FAIL to grasp itself? You could go deeper into the meaning of thinking and get away from thinking with objects, and perhaps a vision of thinking that is the deepest thinking of all which is thought-free state.

AD: May we have a repetition, a repeat?

(reread, "This is a paradox . . .")

AS: This isn't a continuation of the previous one?

AD: No. That's why I (inaudible)--I got a little bird's brain. I can't take more than one sentence at a time.

AS: . . .

PD: In terms of practical attitude, one has to exercise meditational practices to still the mind, and gain the quietest state of mind that you can; and at other times, you have to think very intensely and deeply. These two paradoxical... (Q: the implication is that both are needed, and that the paradox should not be resolved into one understanding, but the rest was cut off by the tape--transcriber)

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1984 0118b Ends; Side 2 Begins)

AD: We could also state it a little differently--this is not a paradox--it is the nature of the Overself to be self-cognizant and also of a reasoning kind. (Note: the beginning of this sentence is from the PC transcript; the last four words is where this side of the tape begins.)

AS: It accords with its nature to be both still and active.

AD: Yes.

DB: Isn't this like the articulation in the individual--active and passive perfection--from the Greeks?

AD: If you leave off the perfection--

DB: Well, it's an approach TO that.

AS: To have the fullest realization, you need a method that's adequate to what you want to realize. If the essential nature of what you want to realize is of this complementary aspect, then the method must accord with the essential nature.

AD: Plotinus stated it very simply. The Soul is a double knower. [Note: Plotinus, V.3.4.]

RG: But if you did the second one deep enough, wouldn't you become the first one? Are they two different things really?

AD: Aren't they?

RG: I don't know.

AD: That takes us back to that very fundamental problem: What is reasoning; what is the reasoning soul? Is it something grafted onto the individual Soul by the World-Idea, or is it part of its essential nature?

AS: And even if it is part of the essential nature, is it still even there distinguishable from contemplation or insight?

RG: It seems from the way we've been interpreting these quotes tonight it seems that if you could abstract yourself in a very intense thinking state that it WOULD culminate in the experience of...

AD: But is that another way of saying that you've withdrawn from the World-Idea?

AS: In that example where the reasoning reaches its limit and stops, that's the question right there, at that point. If it actually ceases, (inaudible) and so it is distinct: it's not like the reasoning BECOMES, it's not like the thinking becomes that still contemplation--or is it? . . . Does it become it, or is it just that the reasoning ceases, the activity ceases and leaves just the still nature? Do you stop the activity of the World-Idea, or stop your relation to the World-Idea?

AD: That's still a question. We haven't resolved it.

AS: Either way could give the result that the deepening of reasoning could lead to the stillness, and so that doesn't solve the question.

RG: In this quote, he seems to be making a difference between having the capacity to reason, and the capacity to be in a state free of it.

LR: Because of what he defines as the goal: doesn't he say both are needed to attain the goal? We've discussed what his idea of the goal is: not a mystical one, but a philosophic one. Which includes not just the experience of mystical trance, but also the understanding, and the right action in the world. In that sense, there may be more than one path needed.

RG: From the way he has spoken about the intensification of thinking, and the abstractedness you can get from metaphysical reflection, and from the force inherent in it--it stops of its own accord to deliver you the experience of the thought-free state or illumination. I don't see why that isn't enough.

PD: But doesn't the sage have the ability to stay in the silence, or exercise reason, at his disposal?

That's not going to come about through just deepening the thought. Let's say you do end up in nirvikalpa samadhi through an intense train of reasoning, and then you come back out, and you can't go back in at your own--

AB: Isn't that the sage can do both at once? The sage can think and yet not lose the silence! Whereas we have to develop the ability to experience the silence, and develop the ability to think, and when they are both brought to their fruition you have the synthesis of both, which is insight, which allows you to have one without losing the other. If you didn't develop the ability to think, then the silence would preclude your thinking, and vice versa.

(AH/AB/)

CdA: Is the way you're using thinking really appropriate to the insight that the sage has? He has insight and is able to articulate that because he is able to reason, but it is not what you mean by thinking!

(5-10 minutes discussion, including KD, below)

KD: Somehow attention, the way we speak of the soul as attention, that might be a link between the two. Maybe the state of a person who can do this, attention isn't just going to be pulled by the contents of consciousness...not just restricted to content, and not just pulled away from thought, somehow involved with both its own inner nature, and involved with the World-Idea. Maybe that's what the sage can do! If we can develop that capacity through meditation, to control the attention--

A shift of attention is required to involve yourself in the triple relationship, and a shift of attention is involved again when you pull yourself out of that triple relation when you're in the Witness . . .

AD: We have time for one more.

PB: "We cannot afford to dispense with mysticism merely because we take to philosophy. Both are essential to this quest and both are vital in their respective places. The mystic's power to concentrate attention is needed throughout the study of philosophy. The philosopher's power to reason sharply is needed to give mystical reverie a content of world-understanding. And in the more advanced stages, when thinking has done its work and intellect has come to rest, we cease to be a philosopher and dwell self-absorbed in mystic trance, having taken with us the world-idea without which it would be empty. We can only afford to dispense with both mysticism and philosophy when we have perfectly done the work of both and when, amid the daily life of constant activity, we can keep unbroken the profound insight and selfless attitude which time and practice have now made natural." (Persp. p. 263)

S: It'll take twenty thousand lifetimes?

(AD rings bell.)

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