

Satsang

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AGNIHOTRA & Psychotherapy

It is reported from Baltimore that there is a situation where psychotherapy is being performed in an environment with the vibrations of AGNIHOTRA, the ancient process to purify the mind through the agency of fire. The setting is the private practice of a traditionally trained, prominent psychiatrist where group, individual and family psychotherapy is offered. The clientele covers a range of persons, all ages, ethnic backgrounds and presenting problems. Most of the clientele are seen in group psychotherapy that takes place three evenings a week. Families and individuals are seen during the day or on a four week night. A follower of the Fivefold Path and therefore an AGNIHOTRI, is part of this situation as co-therapist and is, therefore, at the offices at evening AGNIHOTRA time three or four times each week. The office is actually a suite of rooms that includes a large room for groups, a small consultation office, a small utility kitchen and a second large room that is used sparingly. Since the Fall of 1973 in the second room, AGNIHOTRA has been performed on evenings when therapy is in session. The room has come to be known as the 'meditation' room.

During a given week, approximately 50 persons attend group therapy sessions at the office. No effort is made to encourage group participants to meditate. However, most group participants are aware that AGNIHOTRA is performed by the co-therapist each evening. Consequently, group participants who express an interest, leave the regular session a few minutes before AGNIHOTRA time to join the co-therapist in meditation. Those who express further interest are referred to the Fire Temple most convenient for their use. In a Fire Temple silence is maintained all the time. There is no priest nor deity; only AGNIHOTRA is performed on the circadian rhythm of sunrise - sunset. No instruction or in-depth explanation is given at the professional office. AGNIHOTRA and meditation are not discussed in the group therapy sessions. The psychiatrist, a man of deep sensitivity and openness, does not meditate but he allows the practice to continue because he views any introspective process as integral to the mental health of his group members.

The therapists agree that there has been a change in what takes place at the office. The change has been gradual. The change has

been in the direction of less emphasis on the expression of problem situation and less expression of psychological stress. More time is now spent in expressing good feelings - sharing of feelings of love of a spiritual nature among group members. Members come more readily to accept that difficulties can be solved by learning to find themselves on deeper levels by expression of LOVE. Members now seem to rid themselves of presenting distress earlier in the course of treatment. The average length of group participation extends. Practically all new group members are referred by present or past group members. The therapists make less intervention in the treatment process. Both therapists concur on the acceleration of their own personal growth and development. Communication and complementarity have heightened between the therapists to a level which would have usually required hours of consultation and coordination behind the scene.

The therapists note that certain unexplainable cycles and other commonalities develop in the groups that do not seem to be consciously initiated by either therapist. Such things have come to be accepted as unexplainable reality. For example, for a period of a week each group independently will deal with the same theme, with identical statements being made by participants in different groups meeting different nights. Group members have, during the same time period, expressed similar insight and enlightenment. Experiences resembling classic spiritual states have been more frequently reported. The regularity of these types of events coinciding suggest to both therapists a Divine Presence.

Some things are remarkable, coming from the patients or group members. Some who return to the group after a period of time are most expressive about the change in the groups. Some return who left the group prior to the time that AGNIHOTRA began to be performed. As stated, the time that AGNIHOTRA began at the office coincides with the time that changes began to become pronounced. It has been expressed that the group once taught how to feel love and now teaches how to become love.

Many have reported that problems fade away when they arrive at the office. Many report a lessening of tension and an experiencing of a tranquil state. It is common to hear members make specific statements about the atmosphere of the office. A married couple with a nursing baby reports that the AGNIHOTRA smoke aids the child's temperament and the babe usually goes to sleep during or shortly after AGNIHOTRA. Those who regularly attend the meditation note that there is a subtle but detectable quality of peacefulness after meditation among group members, whether or not they attend the meditation.

SAPTA SHLOKI
(The Seven Verses)

Verse 4: आर्षग्रंथेषु सर्वेषु श्रुतिप्रामाण्यमेव च ।
सर्वतः सारमादद्यात् निजकल्याणहेतवे ॥

Arsha grantheshu sarveshu
Shruti pramanya mevacha
Sarvatah sara madadyat
Nija kalayan hetawe

Purport: Of all the literature given through the seers, Vedas is the standard reference. Extract the essence for thy benefit.

Commentary on Verse 4 (Continued)

...Vasant

Review of World Religions
Teachings of Zarathustra (Zoroaster)
(Continued)

"Ye who seek knowledge, please listen carefully to what I say; perceive the truth in the light of reason because it is possible for each man to have a separate creed."
(Zoroaster's First Sermon, Gâthâs: 30)

Avesta is the scripture of Zoroastrians. Most of the original scriptures are, however, lost. The philosophical part of the teachings of Zoroaster is nearly lost to posterity and what remains is mostly connected with rituals and prayers. It is said that the teachings of the Master were inscribed on several parchments and were stored up in the Royal Palace. A copy was also kept at another place within the reach of the Royal household. When Alexander of Greece defeated King Darius of Iran the Royal Palace was set on fire and the teachings were lost. The other set was removed to Greece from where it was partially recovered later.

The Avesta that we have today consists of the following:

- YASNA (including Gâthâs): Prophet's teachings, prayers, sacrificial offerings, rituals.
- VISPARAD (invocations)
- YASHTA
- VENDIDAD (laws of purity)
- KHURDEH-AVESTA (selections of prayers)
- NASK, etc. (dealing with sciences)

Gâthâs are divided into five groups, each in a different metre:

AHUNAVAITI (Divine Will)
USHATAVAITI (Divine Bliss)
SPENTA ARMAITI (Divine Wisdom)
VOHU KSHATRA (Authority)
VAHISHTO ISHTI (Greatest Boon)

Perfect wisdom is steadfast wisdom. This is STHITAPRAJNYA of the Bhagawatgeeta. This leads to immortality as mentioned in the Upanishads.

The teachings of Zoroaster are based on the triad HUMTA (good thoughts), HUKTA (good words), HVARASHTA (good deeds).

Vendidad (18:17) states that man should be always alert in good thoughts, good words and good deeds. Let him be slack in the opposites. The opposites are:

DUZMATA (Sanskrit DURMATI) - Evil intent
DUZUKTA (Sanskrit DURUKTA) - Harsh words
DUZVARSHTA (Sanskrit DUSHKRUTA) - Evil deeds

When a man follows the above rule, then according to the Law, he receives from SPENTA MAINYU (the Spirit of MAZDA) steadfast wisdom. Thus, man has to use his power of discrimination and choose the right path.

Ahura Mazda's six attributes are as follows:

ASHA VAHISTA (spirit of truth and righteousness,
the Eternal Law)
VOHU MANAH (loving mind)
KSHATHRA VAIRYA (sovereign authority)
SPENTA ARMAITI (love and devotion)
HAURVATAT (health and perfection)
AMERETAT (immortality)

The Master's teachings that each person could develop these attributes and attain Bliss eternal may be compared to the words uttered before and after Zoroaster.

"Be thou perfect as thy Father in Heaven is perfect."
(Jesus)

"The works that I do you may also do and greater works than these." (Jesus)

"That all of you may become Sons of God." (Jesus)

"SAT-CHIT-ANANDA" (Ancient Sanskrit wisdom)

ASHA is pursuit of knowledge about the spirit. Zoroaster taught the path of ASHA, the eternal Divine Law, Eternal Religion, SATYA DHARMA.

Asha Vahista is also the name of Sacred Fire which is kept burning all the time in Zoroastrian places of worship (fire temples).

Vohu Mano (Loving Mind) is the essence of spiritual practice taught by Zoroaster. To establish ourselves into the state of Vohu Mano, he insisted on the agency of fire. Atmospheric purification through the agency of fire leads to purification of mind and is a great material aid to spiritual progress.

Zoroaster taught that good and evil are twins. Satan is not the enemy of God. Satan is that power which is described as 'flesh' and the 'flesh' is liberated by the spirit. The Divine power was dormant before creation. This state is called ZRAAVANE AKARENA. From this came forth the first created AHURA MAZDA. Devotion to AHURA MAZDA purifies the mind. The Divine Will created a stir and the 'Word' was uttered. This 'Word' is partial manifestation of God. The ONE without a second become spirit and matter. Whatever obstructs the manifestation of spirit is evil. There is a hierarchy in creation. Fire is called the 'Son of God'. All Divine laws must be obeyed. Purification of atmosphere through the agency of fire is a Divine law and hence it must be obeyed.

Religious practices at the time of the advent of Zarathustra (Zoroaster) consisted of offerings of animals to fire. This was the time when the pure form of YAJNYAS based on the ancient Vedic science of bioenergy was lost. Burning of specific organic substances and medicinal herbs to the accompaniment of specific vibrations called Mantras and in specific conditions of circadian and infradian rhythms of nature was the material aid to purify the atmosphere. This is YAJNYA. Purification of the atmosphere leads to purification of PRANA and therefore purification of the mind. Purification of mind means unburdening the mind from the grip of desires and hankerings. Then, automatically GRACE manifests.

In course of time, offerings of animal flesh and blood came to be introduced in YAJNYAS and this had a devastating effect on the atmosphere and therefore the mind. This happened in India, Iran, Arabia, Israel and other parts of the world. Zarathustra, Buddha, Jesus came to stop these wrong practices. Buddha asked the people to perform YAJNYAS in the ancient pure fashion as given through the Vedas and said, "The righteous attend such Yajnyas."

At the time of the advent of Zarathustra, flesh and blood offerings to fire were rampant in Persia. Therefore, he insisted that fire is the holy symbol of the Divine, the purifier of mind and hence should not be desecrated. He asked the people to stop putting anything into fire because if they were asked to put something they would con-

tinue the old practice of putting flesh and blood into fire. He told the people to get away from the old habit first. This was an important part of his mission. The unfulfilled part was the introduction of the purified form of Yajnyas.

Modern science backed by electronic gadgetry, knowledge of the subtle energies in nature and bio-rhythms will help fulfill the other part of the mission. The time is now and hence the spreading of AGNIHOTRA.

Thus, we can see how Zoroaster like all the other great Messengers before and after him came to reiterate the same message of Eternal Religion first given through the Vedas. The Fivefold Path is the basis of the message of all Divine Messengers. The Fivefold Path is denoted by five simple words:

- YAJNYA (Purification of the atmosphere leading to purification of the mind)
- DAAN (Sharing your assets in a spirit of humility)
- TAPA (Self-discipline)
- KARMA (A right action inspired by LOVE towards all)
- SWADHYAYA (Self-study, who am I?)

From Zoroastrian Scriptures

"Let there be purity in our thoughts, purity in our speech. Let us do works with purity. May our thought, speech and action be all pure." (Yasna 35/2)

"Know the laws of happiness and misery fixed for you by God. Those who do evil suffer for it. Those who behave aright will benefit. The laws are for the happiness of man." (Gâthâs 30)

"Thou art our benefactor. Thou shall reward all according to their words or deeds. The system is based on justice. This law prevails till the creation lasts." (Gâthâs 43)

Gâthâs 45 states that if you wish to avoid unpleasant happenings choose the right path by Free Will.

"O God of fire, Son of Ahur Mald, we approach thee; we salute thee. We accept our wrongdoing and pray to Thee. We approach Thee with good thoughts, good speech and good actions." (Gâthas 36-5)

"Oh devotees of lord Zarathustra keep your hands, feet and mind ready to do good works all the time. Avoid evil actions."
(Visparat 15-i)

"Happiness is to him who makes others happy."

(Dâstiyati Gâthâ- Yasna 43-1)

From within PARAMA DHAM (House of Almighty Father)

...By Ethan Simmons

When we enter PARAMA DHAM (House of Almighty Father) at Madison, Virginia, a sign on the door is seen that calls for silence to be maintained at all times. Why? When the voice and body are silent the mind can be seen carrying on its noisy business. When the mind is silent our Self may be seen illuminated by the Light of knowledge.

Purity is experienced at PARAMA DHAM (House of Almighty Father), the purity of simple love. This means that whatever love we bring into PARAMA DHAM will be given its fullest expression; therefore, we must leave behind the noise of our preconceptions, expectations, prejudices and the like. We must enter with our Self only. Grace arises from within. It cannot be hoarded; it must be given out. Within the purity of PARAMA DHAM even the merest hint of acceptance on our part attracts Grace overflowing. Here is happiness, the silent sharing of Grace with all. The message of PARAMA DHAM in the words of the Divine Messenger is "Fill all the spheres with LOVE".

Madison, Virginia

...By Bill Dunwody

Idyllic pretty much describes the Madison area. The landscape is certainly among the most beautiful in the world, a naturalist's paradise. However, the true beauty of Madison goes far beyond this.

I met Vasant in January, 1974. He suggested that I settle down in Madison near PARAMA DHAM (House of Almighty Father). He told us how PARAMA DHAM was chosen by the Divine Messenger to spread the message of LOVE all over the planet.

When Jan and I came to Madison to look for land we noticed from the beginning that the area just plain felt good. We found everything smooth sailing. Jan and I got married in May, 1974 at Madison. We purchased a lot of land a few minutes distance from PARAMA DHAM. We now live in a used army tent on the land and we are constructing our new house on the site. It is a thrilling experience.

We are treated very well by the people of the area. This was something new for me, to find virtually everyone I met friendly and helpful. As we got settled we found things getting progressively better and better. Folks in the area are always ready to help out when needed.

THE AREA ITSELF IS DEFINITELY AN ENERGY SPOT, thanks to the Divine

Messenger. I have accomplished more since coming to Madison than I would ever have believed I would have and it is obvious that the pace is picking up rapidly. At the same time, I feel better and seem to do more all the time. The odd part of the whole thing is that I really don't feel as though I'm putting out all that much effort. Everything is taken care of. All that is necessary is to make the slightest of effort in the correct direction in order to find oneself not inching but hurtling forward. Madison is shaping itself by Master's GRACE.

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