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THE VOID WITHIN (2)

"How is that?"

To recognize something, you must have known or experienced it previously, and this experience is stored up as knowledge, memory. Recognition comes out of the past. You may have experienced, once upon a time, this void, and having once experienced it, you now crave for it. The original experience came about without your pursuing it; but now you are pursuing it, and the thing that you are seeking is not the void, but the renewal of an old memory. If it is to happen again, all remembrance of it, all knowledge of it, must disappear. All search for it must cease, for search is based on the desire to experience.

"Do you really mean that I must not search it out? This seems incredible!"

The motive of search is of greater significance than the search itself. The

motive pervades, guides and shapes the search. The motive of your search is the desire to experience the unknowable, to know the bliss and the immensity of it. This desire has brought into being the experiencer who craves for experience. The experiencer is searching for greater, wider and more significant experience. All other experiences having lost their taste, the experiencer now longs for the void; so there is the experiencer, and the thing to be experienced. Thus conflict is set going between the two, between the pursuer and the pursued.

"This I understand very well, because it is exactly the state I am in. I now see that I am caught in a net of my own making."

As every seeker is, and not just the seeker after truth, God, the void, and so on. Every ambitious or covetous man who is pursuing power, position, prestige, every idealist, every worshipper of the State, every builder of a perfect Utopia—they are all caught in the same net. But if once you understand the total significance of search, will you continue to seek the void?

"I perceive the inward meaning of your question, and I have already stopped seeking."

If this be a fact, then what is the state of the mind that is not seeking?

"I do not know; the whole thing is so new to me that I shall have to gather myself and observe. May I have a few minutes before we go any further?"

After a pause, he continued.

"I perceive how extraordinarily subtle it is; how difficult it is for the experiencer, the watcher, not to step in. It seems almost impossible for thought not to create the thinker; but as long as there is a thinker, an experiencer, there must obviously be separation from, and conflict with, that which is to be experienced. And you are asking, aren't you, what is the state of the mind when there is no conflict?"

Conflict exists when desire assumes the form of the experiencer and

pursues that which is to be experienced; for that which is to be experienced is also put together by desire.

"Please be patient with me, and let me understand what you are saying.

Desire not only builds the experiencer, the watcher, but also brings into being that which is to be experienced, the watched. So desire is the cause of the division between the experiencer and the thing to be experienced, and it is this division that sustains conflict. Now, you are asking, what is the state of the mind which is no longer in conflict, which is not driven by desire? But can this question be answered without the watcher who is watching the experience of desirelessness?"

When you are conscious of your humility, has not humility ceased? Is there virtue when you deliberately practise virtue? Such practice is the strengthening of self-centered activity, which puts an end to virtue. The moment you are aware that you are happy, you cease to be happy. What is the state of the mind which is not caught in the conflict of desire? The urge to find out is part of the desire which has brought into being the

experiencer and the thing to be experienced, is it not?

"That's so. Your question was a trap for me, but I am thankful you asked it. I am seeing more of the intricate subtleties of desire."

It was not a trap, but a natural and inevitable question which you would have asked yourself in the course of your inquiry. If the mind is not extremely alert, aware, it is soon caught again in the net of its own desire.

"One final question: is it really possible for the mind to be totally free of the desire for experience, which sustains this division between the experiencer and the thing to be experienced?"

Find out, sir. When the mind is entirely free of this structure of desire, is the mind then different from the void?