

## **Consciousness: Research or Realisation?**

**from: Dr. S.K. Chakraborty, Convenor, Management Centre for Human Values, Calcutta, India**

I have been gradually coming to the conclusion that more often than not 'experiential truths' are more reliable and durable than 'experimental truths' especially for the conduct of our lives. I regularly discover that ancient proverbs, wisdom statements, aphorisms are able to throw immense light on predicaments of our times. Humility ought to replace the hubris of the modern mind particularly in the subjective realm of human existence. The current wave of 'objective vanity' sweeping across the world needs to be restrained by conscious efforts towards 'subjective sanity'. Laszlo's essay in the December issue claims that 'consciousness research is the new frontier in science'. Others like Willis Harman etc. have also earlier argued for this development. With my oriental (Indian) background and practice, I sense a risk in 'consciousness research'. It reflects a continuation of the intellect-centred objectivised mode of acquiring knowledge. Sri Aurobindo, the most comprehensive and authentic writer in English about consciousness, reminded us long ago: 'The root of the difficulty is that at the very basis of all our life and existence, internal and external, there is something on which the intellect can never lay a controlling hold the Absolute, the Infinite'.

1. The study of the ultimate casual subjective through the fragmentist intellect science cannot do otherwise (sci Greek root means to split, break up). The error of principle here is that we are trying to understand the higher in the light of the lower.

For me the phrase 'consciousness realisation' is more appropriate for this aspect of human endeavour. The likes of Sri Aurobindo realised Consciousness, and did not merely research about it.

2. We need to understand this experiential tradition of realisation by accepting the truth that Consciousness cannot be found by the lower instrumentalities of reason or intellect. The traveller on this path is transformed into Consciousness-in-itself. Research is unlikely to lead to Realisation. Detached objectivity in research can hardly contribute to subjective realisation. Realisation is the limited ego's complete identification with Infinite Consciousness. Objective research is predicated on preserving the ego. One has to let go of the ego for the sake of Consciousness.

The point I am trying to make is that unless we complement secular research with sacred realisation on equal terms in its own right, not as another branch of science we may again waste a lot of our time and resources. The emotions of sacredness and reverence have been repeatedly demonstrated to be pre-requisites for Consciousness realisation. Interconnectedness must be felt deep into our being, not just intellectually assented to.

### References

1. Sri Aurobindo; *The Human Cycle (1962)* Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, p.103 (1992 ed).
2. The major works of Sri Aurobindo which cover the whole ground are: *The Life Divine (1973)* ; *The Synthesis of Yoga (1948)* ; and *The Human Cycle, (1962)* all published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, India.

## **Values Education, Ethical Behaviour and Spirituality**

***from Dr Bill Robb Centre for Alleviating social problems through Values Education (CAVE),  
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I wonder how many readers of Network 64 noticed the extensive discussion in values: Mary Midgley's report on scientific spirit as a moral force; Emilios Bouratinos' inter-personal dialogue involving love of truth, self-respect, and ego-free discussion; Winston Franklin's tribute to Willis Harman involving servant leadership, and respect for others no matter what their social standing; and Network's own values guidelines involving humility, honesty, care for others, respect, empathy, kindness and understanding.

Hardly a day goes by without newspaper articles and television and radio programmes calling for more ethical behaviour, from adults as well as children. There is no debate that more ethical behaviour would enhance the well-being of all. To achieve this end, high level committees (such as The Committee on Standards in Public Life) are established, a Parliamentary Commissioner on Standards is in place, codes of conduct/ethics abound in private and public organisations and educational institutions are bombarded with advice and materials on moral education, religious education, peace education, spiritual education, drugs education, sex education and personal and social education, to name only a few.

Unfortunately, there is ample research to show that all these attempts are not having the desired effect. Crime and social problems and the accompanying misery are increasing. Why?

In my experience all these efforts are in the main failing for three main reasons.

1) Insufficient time, resources and energy are devoted to them. To give only one example: in Scottish primary and secondary schools the recommended minimum curriculum time allocated to religious and moral education is 10% and 5% respectively. Even this meagre time is diluted as the time is often used for 'more important matters'.

2) Most of the many 'educations' whose stated purpose is to help people behave more responsibly, concentrate on transmitting technical information instead of getting people to think about the consequences of their actions and why they should behave responsibly.

3) There is still too much telling. Pupils are told what values to abide by, managers and employees are told what the corporate values are and what codes of conduct must be obeyed.

Officialdom's unwillingness to examine carefully new ideas and fear of change (changing one's mind for many in our culture is seen as a weakness an initial mistake).

Values education offers a glimmer of hope. It is a non-indoctrinatory, non-telling way of getting people to evaluate their values for their own well-being and the well-being of others. It can be done with almost any age-group, but it is not easy. For the time that values education is underway, the teacher's or facilitator's opinion is treated as no more and no less important than other participants' opinions. If the topic in a values education class was, 'Is science really benefiting humankind' questions such as the following could be explored

- What is a responsible scientist?
- Are scientists really making life better?
- What rules should scientists follow to help them be good scientists?

- Should scientists work on projects like the hydrogen bomb knowing that their knowledge will be used to kill thousands of people?
- A company pays a scientist to develop a wonder drug to cure all cancers, and the scientist succeeds. At the beginning of the project the scientist agreed that the company was the sole owner of the formulas for the drug. The company decides to sell the drug at such a high price that only rich people can afford it. Should the scientist steal the formula and make it available to everyone?

Some people mock the Socratic dialogue that striving to answer such questions involves. They see it as going round in circles and achieving nothing concrete. However, a more extensive study would show that values education, if persisted in, requires people to penetrate to the ultimate Questions: What does it mean to be human? Why am I here? Where am I going? These ultimate questions could be called spiritual questions because humans are questioned as well as questioning. Another question shows the interrelatedness of humanity, ethicality and spirituality: What do I have to do to become even more human, that is, how must I respond to others if I am to experience meaningfulness in the face of nothingness?

### **Spontaneous Raising of Kundalini Energy: Pseudo-Schizophrenia or Spiritual Disease?**

*from Dr Jean S. Galbraith (formerly Robertson), 3 Lincoln's Close, St Albans, Herts, AL4 9YQ, England*

I am seeking doctors, 'healers', or sufferers who are interested, like myself, in the phenomenon of Spontaneous Raising of Kundalini Energy (SRKE).

This rare disorder is not understood in the West, but has been for centuries in the East. Modern technology now seems able to support this knowledge. With greater use of eastern spiritual pathways in the West, this condition is likely to be seen more frequently, and needs to have improved diagnosis, and treatment. SRKE is usually an unexpected and dramatic event, which involves the sense of fire, or a strange energy surging through the body, from the toes, or from the coccyx. It is often felt as a spiral, moving up the outside of the spine and out through the crown of the head, there may be associated feelings of burning of the skin. The acute event may last less than a minute. It is invariably associated with a simultaneous change in consciousness, and either meaningful or dysharmonious 'visions', or auditory information. This can be followed by severe insomnia for several weeks. A manic, then a depressive state may ensue. The acute full-blown case may require emergency hospital admission. There is usually no past history of psychosis.

Western Psychiatrists often label this disorder 'schizophrenia'. Milder forms do not reach the Psychiatrist as patients realise that the doctors are not likely to understand their problems!

Dr Gustav Hansen wrote<sup>1</sup> of two patients whom he believed were wrongly diagnosed. He stated that: 'the experience falls outside the categories of both normal and psychotic. When allowed to progress to completion this process culminates in deep psychological balance, strength, and maturity'.

Disabling bizarre physical symptoms may also occur, these may relate to the relevant damaged body 'chakras' (energy centres). Minor symptoms of headaches, and 'fire' rushing up and down the spine may persist for some months or years. Certain musical notes may produce involuntary twitching of various muscle groups. This can make attendance at a

concert a terrible nightmare, both for the sufferer, and the audience! Other bizarre effects may include the short circuiting of electrical appliances such as radios, or computers when touched! Significant spiritual gifts are sometimes received with SKRE's (e.g the gifts of healing, or clairvoyance) and these have to be assimilated into the personality, which may take several years. Recurrent SRKE's may present in different forms and have different outcomes.

Harry Oldfield's Polycontrast Interface Photography (PIP) appears to demonstrate energy fields, and chakras. His camera is also able to show the abnormal red kundalini energy on the computer screen funnelling out apparently from the patient's base chakra on to the floor. Printouts of these computer pictures can be obtained from this equipment, and I possess some copies.

I should be grateful to hear from any member of the SMN who can offer any suitable cases, or, who is interested in publication so that greater understanding, support, and treatment can be offered to future sufferers.

#### References

1. Ugeskr-Laeger Jul 31:1995. 157(31): p4360-2 (Danish). I have an English translation on request.
2. H. Oldfield's work is described in *J. Alt & Comp Med.* Sept. 1995. Vol 13(8), p16-17.

#### **A Hippocratic Oath for Scientists**

*from Dr. Edi Bilimoria, Lotus Cottage, 152 New Road, Chilworth, Guildford, Surrey GU4 8LX, England*

Professor Chris Clarke's correspondence entitled Energy Talk is just the sort of invigorating and pungent tonic that should be poured down the throats of those who exercise their larynx in loose talk about energy, without a rigorous definition of terms, and no statement about context of application. But alas, the matter needs to be taken a stage higher. Can all those practising physicists who would justifiably turn apoplectic about the New Age use of the term 'energy' claim to be scientists in the true sense of the term?

Science derives from the Latin *scientia*, a noun formed from the present participle of the verb *scire*, : know. So is their understanding of knowing merely a reshuffling of their peers and their own prejudices, or do they accurately reflect what could well be a Hippocratic Oath for scientists:

*I, as a scientist, do solemnly swear that I have neither desires, nor prejudices. Truth is my sole aim.*

Sir William Groves, slightly modified