# MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS



OUR HOPE FOR MANKIND

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

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, DSIDE FRONT COUCK

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Meditation at the United Nations is a monthly bulletin of the United Nations Meditation Group, compiled basically of transcriptions of the Group's regular meetings which are conducted by Sri Chinmoy.

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#### UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP



### WE BELIEVE

... and we hold that each man has the potentiality of reaching the Ultimate Truth. We also believe that man cannot and will not remain imperfect forever. Each man is an instrument of God. When the hour strikes, each individual soul listens to the inner dictates of God. When man listens to God, his imperfections are turned into perfections, his ignorance into knowledge, his searching mind into revealing light and his uncertain reality into all-fulfilling Divinity.

Sri Chinmoy

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

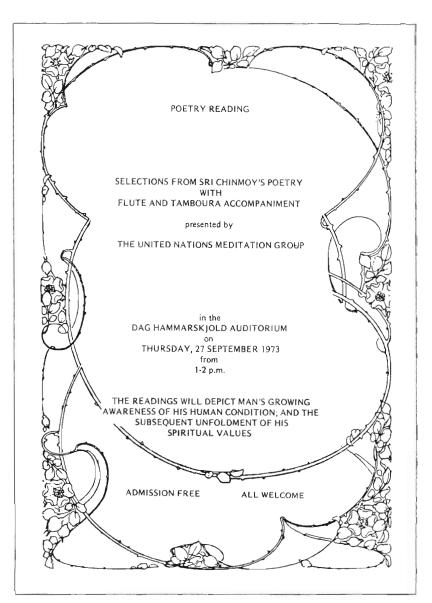
The United Nations Meditation Group was inaugurated on April 14, 1970, when Sri Chinmoy, the eminent Hindu spiritual teacher and philosopher, was invited to conduct its weekly meetings. The Group began its meditations in the Peace Room of the Church Center for the United Nations, but this small room was soon outgrown. Drawn by the immense spiritual wealth of the Master, many new seekers joined the Meditation Group. Coming from every department of the Secretariat as well as from associated organizations and various missions to the United Nations, they were deeply moved by the sublime peace and profound wisdom of Sri Chinmoy.

With its increased numbers and greater activities, the United Nations Meditation Group now meets on Tuesdays at 12 noon in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations and on Fridays at 1:00 p.m. in one of the Secretariat Conference Rooms.

Membership is open to staff members of the Secretariat, delegates and representatives from Missions, Specialized Agencies and accredited NGOs to the United Nations.

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#### SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER 1973

Regular Weekly Schedule

Thursday, 1-2 p.m. September 13

Once a month Sri Chinmoy delivers a lecture in the Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium as part of a continuing series of talks on various spiritual subjects relating to the mission of the United Nations. This month Sri Chinmoy will speak on: "How Secure Are We?" All are welcome. Admission free.

Friday, 1-2 p.m. September 7, 21, 28

Every Friday, in a Conference Room of the United Nations, during the lunch hour, Sri Chinmoy holds a brief meditation and then gives a short talk on some aspect of the spiritual life. The Master then invites questions on the spiritual life or on the inner problems of the individual seeker. All are welcome.

[Please note, due to U.N. Staff Day activities on September 14, there will be no meeting that day.]

Tuesday, 12-1 p.m. September 4, 11, 18, 25

Every Tuesday at noon, Sri Chinmoy conducts an hour of silent meditation in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, corner 44th Street and 1st Avenue (side entrance).

Other activities Thursday, 1-2 p.m. September 27

Poetry reading. Please see facing page.

#### CHANNEL 5 (WNEW-TV) INVITES SRI CHINMOY TO OFFER ITS MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS

Five months ago the religion division of Channel 5, as part of an expanded coverage of the growing spiritual movement, invited Sri Chinmoy to start offering their morning and evening prayers twice a week. Sri Chinmoy is the first spiritual Master ever to be invited to give these prayers, which have traditionally been reserved for Christian and Jewish clergy.

Following is the September schedule of Sri Chinmoy's prayers:

September 6, Thursday: 6:21 a.m. September 7, Friday: 2-4 a.m.\*

September 11, Tuesday: 6:21 a.m. September 12, Wednesday: 2-4 a.m.\*

September 17, Monday: 6:21 a.m. September 18, Tuesday: 2-4 a.m.\*

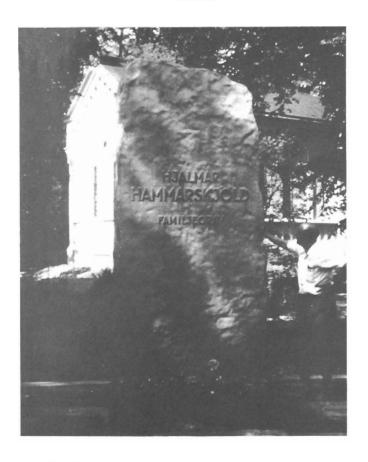
September 21, Friday: 6:21 a.m. September 22, Saturday: 2-4 a.m.\*

September 24, Monday: 6:21 a.m. September 25, Tuesday: 2-4 a.m.\*

September 28, Friday: 6:21 a.m. September 29, Saturday: 2-4 a.m.\*

<sup>\*</sup> After the last movie, which ends some time between 2 and 4 a.m.

## SRI CHINMOY VISITS THE GRAVE OF DAG HAMMARSKJOLD



During his recent visit to Sweden, Sri Chinmoy paid a visit to the grave of the former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold in Uppsala. The Master was moved by the simplicity and modesty of the family tomb.

Sri Chinmoy has dedicated the lecture series which he delivers at the United Nations to the memory of the profound truth-seeker in Dag Hammarskjold. Following is an excerpt\* from a lecture by Sri Chinmoy, in which the Master quotes from the writings of Dag Hammarskjold:

"What is the first and foremost thing we expect from meditation? Peace. Peace and nothing else. Meditation is the embodiment of peace. The present-day world needs only one thing: peace.

"The peace-lover, our ex-Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, offers us a sublime message:

'No peace which is not peace for all...'

In peace, what looms large is eternal, fulfilling rest. He says,

"... No rest until all has been fulfilled."

<sup>\*</sup> From The Garland of Nation-Souls, pp. 23-24.

## MONTHLY LECTURE OF THE DAG HAMMARSKJOLD SERIES

#### Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium August 2, 1973

#### YOU OR I?

O God, are You responsible for all the suffering, darkness and ignorance in the world, or am I?

"Son, I am responsible. I am responsible for everything; I am responsible for everyone; I am responsible for My entire Creation. It is I who reside in everything as inspiration and as aspiration. It is I who approve of everything or tolerate everything, show compassion for everything, or forgive everything. Therefore it is I who am responsible for everything whether it is good or bad, divine or undivine. It is I who am responsible, in everything, in every action, in every human life."

O God, You want to change the face of the world. Do You want to do it alone, all by Yourself, or do You need my help and dedicated service?

"Son, I do not want to change the face of the

world all by Myself. I cannot change the face of the world alone. I need your assistance. I am the tree. You, all human beings, are the leaves, flowers and fruits. A tree without leaves, flowers and fruits is worthless. I need assistance from my created human beings. I am the ultimate realisation of your climbing cry. You are the ultimate manifestation of My descending Dream. The transformation of the earth-consciousness can take place only when you and I work together. Dedicated service from both the Creator and the Creation is needed to change the face of the world."

#### Aum. "You or I?"

When I think of the divine within my heart, when I meditate on the divine within my heart, I see, I feel my "I." This "I" is not a self-centred "I." This "I" is the infinite expansion of my universal oneness.

When I think of the undivine within my being, when I meditate on the undivine within my being, I automatically choose the life of bondage. I become the life of frustration. I become the life of destruction. When I meditate on the undivine or think of the undivine I choose mental limitation to be my own. I choose vital frustration to accept me as its own. I choose physical imperfection and un-

consciousness to take me as their very own. Each moment that I meditate on the undivine I enjoy, consciously enjoy, despair, frustration, limitation, bondage and death.

Here at the United Nations let us say "You and I," not "You or I?"

You and I. You as a nation — aspiring nation, searching nation, crying nation, illumining nation — can fulfil the Dream of God on earth. As a seeker of the Highest Truth, with your dedication you can fulfil the Dream of God.

When, as a nation, you think only of yourself, I see you as a petal of a rose. But when, on the strength of your dedication to the world at large, you need the Divine in you to think of you and to meditate on you, I see you as a whole, a rose complete. I do not see you as a petal, but as a fully blossomed rose.

"You or I?" is determined by our actions. The Divine within us gets abundant joy when we act devotedly and soulfully. The undivine in us gets joy when we want to possess and be possessed. We know the secret of joy. When we do the right thing, on the strength of our inner cry, we get joy. But the supreme Joy will not be, cannot be, our joy unless and until we know how to devote ourselves. The result of our actions may be satisfactory to us, but if we do not get this result by virtue of our devoted and selfless service we will not get infinite Joy and supreme

Joy.

Our dynamic joy constantly pleases God. Our inner silence constantly feeds God. Our total and integral surrender devours God.

Each action of ours affects the world at large. A state of mind can affect the entire being. An individual can affect the entire humanity. An iota of God's Concern can illumine all of mankind.

Joy is in self-transcendence. Joy is in self-offering. Joy is in self-fulfilment.

Each individual knows that when he was in the animal world he got joy in struggling and fighting. Now he knows that in the human world he gets joy, real joy, abiding joy, in serving and in self-giving. He knows that in the future, in his life divine, he will get joy only in becoming what he is in his transcendental Self: all the Light, the Wisdom, the Perfection of the Supreme.

"You or I?" Each individual, when he separates a portion of himself from his entire existence, feels his you-consciousness. When an individual uses his hands, if he thinks that his hand is the only reality and not his foot, his head, or

any other part of himself, then he will hear the song of you. But while using his hands, if he thinks that this is the time when he has to use his hands but there will be many occasions when he has to use his legs and other parts of his body, and that therefore all his limbs and organs are important, then there can be no "you." It is all "I."

When we meditate on the Absolute Supreme within us we see how clearly, how fruitfully both you and I can work together. We use our legs to go to the office, and then we use our hands to work in the office, and our head to think in the office. Everything has its own place. Everything has its own hour. Each individual has to abide by the inner hour and give due importance to each thing according to God's Will.

God, when am I going to know that You and I are one, or that You and Your entire Creation are one?

"The hour has already struck for you to know that I and My Creation are one. If you separate Me from My Creation and want to achieve joy or grow into joy, I will have no objection. But you will have only limited joy, limited achievement. If you unite both Me and My Creation as one, your joy becomes infinite, your achievements become infinite."

"You or I?" cannot solve the agelong problem of humanity. This problem is the sea of igno-

rance within us and without us. But you and I can solve this problem. When the unlit consciousness within ourselves and the lit and illumined consciousness within ourselves become one, that is the end of you or I. We become all oneness, universal oneness: the song of universal oneness, the life of universal oneness and the breath of universal oneness.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mr. Steven Hein: Your philosophy states that the soul is always making progress, but how do you reconcile that with the fact that when someone commits suicide his soul falls?

Sri Chinmoy: When one commits suicide the soul of that person actually does not fall. But it remains at a particular place and is covered by infinitely more veils of ignorance. It is absolutely covered by ignorance — layer upon layer of ignorance. It is the consciousness of the individual that falls. It goes backwards right to the starting point, almost to the mineral consciousness where there is no evolution. The soul is eclipsed by teeming ignorance, that is to say by infinite layers of ignorance. Before, the soul had perhaps ten layers, but now it has countless layers of ignorance. The soul has to begin again removing them one by one. Of course, it becomes infinitely more difficult for the soul to carry the individual to perfect perfection, liberation or salvation. The consciousness descends so far that it goes back absolutely to the starting point. That starting point, you can say, is the mineral life, where there is no consciousness, no

sense of evolution.

But if the Supreme wants to operate in a particular human being who has committed suicide, on very, very rare occasions, the Supreme asks the spiritual Masters, who have the capacity, to take care of that soul and not to allow it to be enveloped by teeming ignorance. In these cases, whatever the soul already has, is enough to bring the Grace and Compassion of the Supreme, and He will not allow a veil to cover the soul more than usual. But this is done only on very rare occasions. Otherwise, if a person commits suicide, evolution stops for that individual indefinitely — for one hundred, two hundred, five hundred, six hundred years or even more. He cannot go forward, and the heaviest possible load is placed on his shoulders. The process of his evolution stops. Because he has violated the laws of the cosmic game, he has to undergo the cosmic punishment. This punishment can never be imagined by any human being on earth. The worst possible earthly torture is simply nothing in comparison to the cosmic punishment the individual gets when he commits suicide. You cannot say to the cosmic forces, "I have done something wrong and it is none of your business. I shall reach my goal when I feel like reaching it." You have jumped out of the cosmic game intentionally, without God's permission and against His intention. He has not allowed you to leave the game, but you have actively and openly defied Him and tried to ruin the game. For this wrong action the punishment is most severe. This punishment is so intense that with our human heart we cannot feel it, with our human mind we cannot imagine it.

Mr. Anthony Hixon: Different organizations like the United Nations or the government of a country have souls. I know that you feel that these different souls have different qualities. But is there something inherent in all of them that is unchangeable and the same?

Sri Chinmoy: One thing that every soul has is consciousness. It is in this consciousness that we see the role of Peace, Light, Bliss and Power. There is no soul that does not have consciousness. But we have to see the consciousness within us. We have to see how it wants to manifest itself: with the help of Power or with the help of Light or Bliss or Peace. There will be some souls who would like to manifest themselves through Light, others through Bliss and still others through Power. But if you want to know the common characteristics that each soul has, then I wish to say that there is no soul that totally lacks consciousness. This consciousness is like a house. A man has to live in his house. He may

fulfil himself by becoming an artist or an engineer or something else, but still he dwells inside the house. Likewise, the soul becomes all Light, all Power, all Bliss or all Peace just as a man adopts any profession he wants to adopt.

There are souls that do not want to function at all through Power. Again there are souls that do not want to function through Bliss. These souls prefer to function through Light or Peace or some other divine qualities. But all of them have consciousness. The unchanging, or unchangeable quality within every soul is consciousness. But at the same time, this consciousness can be expanded. It cannot be annihilated, but it can be expanded. In each individual consciousness it can be expanded. But if we enter into the Universal Consciousness then it becomes infinitely easier for us to transform the limited human consciousness. We are constantly dwelling in the human consciousness. Ordinarily it is impossible for us to enter into the Universal Consciousness. But if we meditate on the Universal Consciousness it can illumine and perfect our individual consciousness.

Ms. Yvette Ripplinger: Many years ago, when people got certain diseases they would have died quite quickly. But medical science has developed medicines that allow people who have these diseases now to stay alive, although they are usually unable to function normally and have to remain in a hospital bed. If a person's life is prolonged by medicines in spite of the agony of the body, when it would have been given up at an earlier period of history, is there any spiritual benefit from it?

Sri Chinmoy: From the spiritual point of view it is not a matter of how many years you stay on earth, but of how you utilize your time. Every second, every moment has to be considered of paramount importance. You can go to India and to other parts of the world and find people who have been enjoying sound health for, say, two hundred years. They are two hundred years old but have no aspiration at all. Last year when I went to India I saw a man who was, according to some people, three hundred years old, and according to others only two hundred. But when I entered into him I saw that he had no aspiration. Now in the spiritual world, people who do not aspire are dead soldiers. Whether they stay on earth or leave is of no importance in the Eyes of God. This old man was just wasting his time on earth.

But if you are aspiring and in spite of your aspiration you are caught by ignorance-forces and have contracted some disease, if the medical science can be of help to you by prolonging your stay on earth, and at the same time if you

can continue to invoke Light from above in order to continue your spiritual march, that is a great opportunity for you. If one is aspiring and making progress in the spiritual life, then if that person can stay even one second more on earth, it is a great blessing for him and also a great joy for God. But if one is not aspiring, only wallowing in the pleasures of ignorance, and medical science enables that person to stay on earth for a number of years, then in God's Eve it is of no value. Only he who makes inner progress is of importance to God. If one stavs on earth for two hundred or three hundred years, only killing time and not inspiring anybody else on earth, then he is a disgrace to God's cosmic evolution. But if a person is aspiring and hostile forces have attacked him, or if nature's law is causing him to suffer, and he has tremendous eagerness to do the right thing and to become the right thing, to please God and to fulfil mankind, then in his life on earth every second is of greatest value, not only for himself but also for God, and for humanity's life.

We have to know if the individual is aspiring or not. If he is a seeker, every second on earth is of paramount importance in God's Eye. If he is not, then he is a failure in God's Eye and he is a disgrace to aspiring humanity. If a person feels that just to stay on earth is enough for him, God may say, "All right. If that is your goal, you stay." But if somebody has a higher goal, if he has a real goal, God will give him the opportunity in every possible way to stay on earth and reach his goal. Otherwise, he has to come back again. Human life is like a constant battle. If you have been fighting for a long time and if you become too tired to continue, naturally you will go and take rest, and then enter into the battlefield again later. But if you do not become tired and if you do not have to go and take rest, then you will continue to fight against ignorance, against imperfection, for a long, long time, and perhaps you will win the battle once and for all. And once you conquer the undivine forces which are constantly attacking you, once you are successful, at that time you manifest God, the inner Divinity within you.

#### TUESDAY MEDITATIONS

#### The Chapel Church Center for the United Nations

(At each Tuesday meeting, Sri Chinmoy conducted an hour of silent meditation. Following are the "Meditations for the Day" by Sri Chinmoy for the respective Tuesdays in August.)

#### August 7

Life is aspiration.
God is destination.
Man's love is God's Perfection.
God's Compassion is man's perfection.

#### August 14

Fear is the front-runner, but courage is the winner.

Doubt is the front-runner, but faith is the winner.

Hate is the front-runner, but love is the winner.

Death is the front-runner, but life is the winner.

My little 'i' is the front-runner, but God's Light is the winner.

God's Justice is the front-runner, but God's Compassion is the winner.

#### August 21

He who dies for God lives in the heart of humanity.

He who lives in the heart of humanity to serve, illumine, transform and fulfil humanity in Divinity is the very Breath of God.

#### August 28

I am without fear. I am happy.
I am without desire. I am happier.
I am without ignorance. I am the happiest.

The Supreme is with me. I am happy. The Supreme is in me. I am happier. The Supreme is for me. I am the happiest.

I am happy because I love the Supreme. I am happier because the Supreme loves me. I am the happiest because we love each other.

#### PAST MEETINGS

#### Peace Room, 1970

Mr. Paul Yu: For the past year I have been practising concentration and meditation with my attention focused on my navel chakra. But I don't seem to be making as much progress as I would like in controlling my thoughts. Have you got any suggestions?

Sri Chinmoy: What you are doing is extremely good. We have six spiritual centres in the body. You are concentrating on the centre which is called Manipura. This is the centre that they usually give importance to in Zen practice. From this centre, according to our Indian spiritual teachings, you get dynamic energy. If you use this divine energy for a divine purpose, then you create. If you use it for an aggressive purpose, then you destroy.

Now if you want to control your thoughts, you should concentrate on the centre between the eyebrows. If you become very stiff and your concentration is intense, then you should not concentrate here for more than two minutes. Otherwise, you will become exhausted in the beginning. Now if you concentrate on the heart

centre, you will get peace, love and joy. Try to hear the cosmic sound, the soundless sound, when you enter into the heart. If you bring love, joy, peace and bliss up from the heart to the centre between the eyebrows, then you will see that there will be no thoughts.

The heart is the safest place for you to concentrate and meditate on. If you do this, automatically you will get purification, because inside the heart is the soul, and the soul is one with the Infinite. It is from here that you will get everything.

Question: Could you speak a little about the significance of dreams?

Sri Chinmoy: When we have a dream, we have to know which plane of consciousness the dream comes from. There are seven higher worlds and seven lower worlds. When we have dreams coming from the lower worlds, the subconscious worlds — or you can say, inconscient worlds — we have to feel that these dreams have no value. They cannot change our nature. They cannot inspire us. They cannot give us any hope for our future fulfilment. When we get a dream from the vital plane, we will see that the dream will be constant movement. It is like a battlefield; everything is breaking and smashing, people are being killed. These dreams cannot help us at all

in our spiritual life. The best thing we can do is forget them. If the dream comes from the mental plane, there will be some poise — not full poise, but a little poise, a little calm and quiet there. If it comes from the psychic plane, we will feel affection, sweetness, compassion and concern for the things or persons we are seeing. And if it comes from the soul's plane, it will be all Light and Delight, all Peace.

When we have a dream from the lower worlds, we do not want to identify ourselves with it, for we are badly frightened by it. The dream comes to us as a threat. But a dream that comes from the higher worlds comes as an invitation. We get inner joy and inner satisfaction, and immediately feel our identity there. Enter into it. Grow into it. A dream that comes from the subconscious world, where we are quarrelling and fighting and doing many undivine things, will not necessarily materialize. But a dream that comes from the higher worlds is bound to materialize. Today's dream is tomorrow's reality. Why? Because the dream is coming from a world which is living and palpable. With our limited consciousness we do not know this. But when we meditate we consciously enter into many higher worlds, and the reality of these worlds enters into us in our dream.

If you want to have sweet dreams, inspiring dreams, then you should meditate most soulfully early in the morning - say 3:30 or 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. — and then go to sleep for about half an hour or forty minutes. If your meditation is sound and genuine, if it comes from the very depth of your heart, any dreams you have afterwards will be divine, significant dreams. They will be about angels and gods, or about your dear ones; or you will see some encouraging, inspiring things. If you want to have good dreams before 3:00 a.m., please try to meditate on your navel for about ten minutes at night before you go to bed. The navel is where emotion starts. Emotion itself is not bad; it is a question of how we use it. When we have human emotion, we only bind and bind. But when we have divine emotion, we extend, we extend our consciousness. So if you concentrate on your navel centre for ten minutes, you can bring the human emotion under control and allow the divine emotion to go up from the heart, upward to the highest.

If you read books for the interpretation of dreams, each book will give a different answer. Perhaps each book is right in its own way. But you have to get your own interpretation from your dreams. When you have a dream, try to feel your own existence in the dream; try to feel that you are inside the dream itself. Those

who meditate daily will not find it difficult to do. But others may find it difficult. An ordinary man sees a dream as something totally separate from the rest of his life. He feels that he is living in the reality and the dream has nothing to do with reality. It is something sweet, something precious, something encouraging, something inspiring, and so forth, but he does not feel that it is more than that. But when a spiritual man has a dream, he immediately feels that this dream is the precursor of reality. Something more, he will see that this dream is tomorrow's reality. How does he do that? He does it on the strength of his meditation. When he meditates for ten or fifteen minutes in the morning or in the evening. he widens his consciousness. Right now our consciousness is separated into three parts. At this moment we are in the waking consciousness. But when we sleep we will have another consciousness: sound sleep, deep sleep. Then we have a third, dream consciousness, in the dream state. But one who meditates widens his consciousness into all three planes.

How can we derive benefit from our dreams? We can derive benefit from dreams if we feel that each dream is a step or a stepping stone toward our divine Goal. There are some people who say they do not have any dreams at all, but they are mistaken. They do dream, but when they come out of the dreamland they totally

forget. Some people have the capacity to retain their dream consciousness while they are fully awake, early in the morning. If you feel that you had a dream at night but cannot remember it, then early in the morning, try to concentrate on this particular point, at the back of the head, just at the top of the neck. When you have dreams, either they will manifest through your physical mind or, for some time, for a few hours or even for a day or two, they will be registered there. So if you want to recollect any dream, try to concentrate there. If you can concentrate there for ten or fifteen minutes, you will be able to feel that you are knocking at a particular door. And when the door opens, you will be able to remember your dreams completely. Everything will come back to you.

When you have a frightening dream, please pay no attention to it. Suppose you dream that something bad is going to happen in your life. If you are frightened, you are already dead. But if you are not frightened, then during the few hours or the few days that lie between your dream and the actual occurrence you can fight against it. And the divine Grace is bound to come and help you at that time. Suppose you have a dream that a friend or relative of yours will pass away, and your dream is absolutely correct. Tomorrow he will surely die; but if you are frightened now, then today he is already

dead for you. If you surrender to the dream you will suffer unnecessarily before the actual hour. Also, your fear will immediately enter into the future victim and create an additional burden for that particular person. What you should do at that time is try to fight against the possibility of his death through prayer and meditation. Pray to God, "I have seen it. Oh God, save him. save him." Instead of being frightened, try to offer your prayer to God. Perhaps you think that prayer is something feminine or delicate. No! Your prayer is your greatest strength. God's strength is His Compassion and man's strength is his prayer. Or you can meditate. That will be an even mightier strength. If you fight and God's Grace descends, I assure you that you can delay the possibility of this person's death. Many times it has happened that spiritual seekers have dreamed that their relatives are going to die and immediately they have started meditating and praying to God. Then, God's Grace has descended. But God does not nullify the possibility. No. He may just delay the actual event.

Now why does God help the aspirant in cases like this? God helps because God is not bound by cosmic law. Cosmic law is created by God, and at any time He can break His own law. That is why He is omnipotent. If He cannot break His own law, then He is not omnipotent. And you can make God break His law through

your soulful prayer. God says, "This is to be done." He has recorded this, but when human prayer enters into His Heart He may cancel His own decree.

When you have hopeful dreams, illumining dreams, encouraging dreams, when you see that something significant is going to take place in a friend's life — what you should do is consciously try to identify your soul with his soul. How will you do this? Through your meditation. He will eventually get joy from the event because it belongs to him. But this joy, by God's Grace, you have received before he actually has. So if you are wise, you will go deep within and assimilate the joy that you have received and then try to offer it to him inwardly before he gets it directly from God. Otherwise, if you tell him, "You know, I had a wonderful dream about you," he will be happy for a second, and then he will doubt you. He will say, "Oh, it is all mental hallucination." Despite your best intention, his doubtful mind will throw cold water on your encouraging message. So instead of telling the person verbally, try to offer him the joy of the dream consciously through your meditation. At that time, he will get additional strength. Before he gets the experience of your dream, which will come to him in the form of reality, he will start getting inner peace, inner joy, which he cannot account for, because you have started injecting him, preparing him to receive something very high, very meaningful and fulfilling. And when you have dreams about yourself, go deep within and prepare yourself to be ready, to be a fit instrument for the reality, to receive the reality as it should be received.

One thing more I wish to say. It is not bad for an ordinary seeker to pray to God for dreams. Dreams are necessary, as experiences are necessary. But again, if you do not have dreams. if you do not have experiences, that does not mean that you are not fit for the spiritual life or that you are not fit for God-realisation. There are people who do not have any experiences. They curse themselves and think that God is displeased with them. Far from it! God is most pleased with them. Suppose I want to reach a door. Now there are two ways of going. One way is to go there consciously. My calculating mind says that I have to take four or five steps to get there: one, two, three, four, five. Each step is an experience for me. If my physical mind wants to be convinced at every moment while I am walking towards my goal — towards the door — then I can say that step one is an experience, step two is an experience, and so on. But again, if I know that my destination is there, it may not be necessary for me to have constant experiences each step of the way. What is necessary, in my case, is only my destination. So I just go there and God is ready for me.

If you want to have dreams or experiences. they can serve as preparatory steps — one, two, three — or they may not be necessary at all. The human mind always wants to be convinced and wants to get joy at every step when it does something. But if we live in the soul, in the heart, then we need not give that kind of importance to experiences and dreams. They are not necessary because God is preparing us in His own way. If He does not want to give us convincing experiences, no harm. But again, if we pray to God for convincing experiences or sweet dreams, there is no harm in our prayer either. Eventually a day will come when we shall offer to God the highest prayer: "Oh God, if You want, give me dreams. If You want, give me experiences. If You don't want to give me dreams or experiences, it is all up to You. Only make me worthy of Your Compassion. And if You don't want to make me worthy of Your Compassion, it is also up to You. Only do with me as You will. Let Thy Will be done in and through me. I care for nothing except for Your own fulfilment in and through me." When we have that kind of prayer within us, then God comes to us and says, "Do not be a beggar. Do not cry for dreams; do not cry for experiences. Take Me, the Reality itself."

Note from the Editor: We have been receiving many queries from our readers who wish to learn more about Sri Chinmoy, his life, his background and his activities other than those at the United Nations. Excerpts from various writings on the Master will therefore be included in forthcoming issues of Meditation at the United Nations.

## THE LIFE OF SRI CHINMOY PART I

by

Nancy Elizabeth Sands

## CHAPTER II\*

The following Sunday fell on Christmas Day in 1966 and I remained with my family. When I returned to the AUM Centre, the next week, I was very moved to find a small Christmas tree in a corner of the room. The lambent flame of its

<sup>\*</sup> Chapter I appeared in the July issue of Meditation at the United Nations (Vol.I, No.7)

lights, soft gold and orange, seemed somehow endowed with a most poignant significance and this symbol, which had lost almost all meaning in our modern holiday celebrations, became once more a real reminder of the Birthday it commemorated.

Again, the meeting was conducted in very much the same form as when I originally attended, and this pattern has been followed on Sunday afternoons throughout the year. From time to time, the question period will be shortened for the presentation of some special event; a member will read some of his own poetry, or describe a visit to the Centre in Puerto Rico, or sing or play devotional music.

I heard of the AUM Centre in San Juan, Puerto Rico on my third visit to the Guru when it was announced that he would be spending the following two Sundays with the group on that island. During his absence, meetings were held at the homes of two of the members in New York. It was at the first of these meetings that I came to realise that Sri Chinmoy was infinitely more than a wise and remarkably perceptive philosopher.

For the meetings during his absence, the Guru had prepared tape-recordings to be played for the assembled group. We sat in the now familiar rows of chairs in another softly lit room, and listened to Sri Chinmoy's voice:

"Where is God and where am I? God is on the third floor and I am on the first floor. I come up to the second floor. He comes down to the second floor. We meet. We both meet together. I do not forget to wash His Feet with my tears of delight. Neither does He forget to place me in His Heart of infinite Compassion . . . "

I smiled, as the room where we were then sitting was located three floors below his own apartment since one of the members of the group was also his neighbour and landlady.

Then the Guru sang, accompanied by a harmonium, and as I sat wondering at the completely unfamiliar melody and words whose very language I could not guess, yet enraptured by the sweet sound of his voice, I was suddenly filled altogether with a radiant joy which spread through my whole being in a wave of incandescent bliss. Tears of delight welled in my eyes and flowed down my astonished cheeks. From the bottom of my heart, I thanked God for having brought me to this place.

This experience, which I was later to learn had been the spontaneous expression of my own soul's delight, left me in a most peaceful, blissful, and somewhat dazed state. When the tall, graying man who had conducted the meeting asked if we would like to send brief, individual notes to the Guru in Puerto Rico, I scarcely realised what I was writing.

At the end of the meeting, several of the aspirants were discussing their own sense of Sri Chinmoy's presence that afternoon, and I found subsequently that he is quite truly never absent at such times. Although the expression of this awareness may differ from individual to individual, it is clear to all that he remains with us wherever he may be.

For many weeks, because of my family and my job and the distance between my home and the AUM Centre, I had been unable to attend the Thursday weekly meditation held regularly there. On Thursday nights, Sri Chinmoy meditates for one hour with the assembled disciples in New York. On these nights, no address is given, no questions answered. I was to find that the Guru's most compelling message is conveyed most powerfully in utter silence.

From the darkness of the street below, the windows of the Meditation Room shone as a beacon. The odour of incense drifted gently down the stairwell as I climbed, rather more slowly than on Sunday afternoons, since my long day at work had exhausted me. The silence of the glowing room enveloped me as I took my chair.

Sri Chinmoy was seated on the low dais at the front of the room. Above his head, candles illuminated the portrait of the Goddess Kali, and in the Shrine at his left the pale green electric

flame symbolizing Aspiration flickered ceaselessly upward. The Guru was dressed entirely in white, the colour whose purity he absolutely personifies.

At the muted sound of a small bell, he rose, and with wordless eloquence invoked the Supreme. In the deepening hush he stood expectantly before us, his eyes closed, his head slightly lifted. Then he slowly raised his joined hands to their greatest height to arch above his head in an exaltation of offering. Descending, after a timeless pause, with the same deliberate dedication, he bowed most profoundly.

A tray of flowers was placed beside him and selecting one of the flowers, the Guru approached a young man in the first row. Sri Chinmoy placed the flower in his open hands, gently holding them clasped about its stem as he inclined his head in benediction over the aspirant. Then, stepping back a pace, the Guru continued for many minutes to regard the boy, his attitude somehow combining the most serene acceptance with a searching intensity and concern. At last he nodded and smiled as the devotee acknowledged his blessing with bowed head.

Returning to my own meditation, I did not follow the Guru's progress through the room. But from time to time, I opened my eyes to find him selecting still another flower, or standing before someone in deepest concentration. At

last, the blossom was enfolded in my own open hands. I wondered a bit apprehensively what his scrutiny of me would reveal. Raising my eyes, I saw the Guru's face as it had never appeared to me before. The classic perfection of his features reflected a repose so complete, and a compassion so profound, that my only thought was of immeasurable vastness. The bottomless depths of the ocean, the infinite reach of the starry skies seemed limited by comparison. His eyes were closed, but to my wondering gaze they seemed open, revealing the endless vista that is seen beyond the stars, beyond all points of measurement in time and space.

Suddenly his expression changed and for a brief moment he smiled, his eyes fully open, enormous, stunningly brilliant, radiant with delight. I sat momentarily breathless, blinking, for I had eagerly gazed into the burning core of the sun.

I bent my head to meet my folded hands, remaining completely still until the scent of the flower I held reminded me that the Guru had quietly proceeded to the next aspirant. I lowered my hands to my lap and examined the flower. Its starry white petals seemed to glow with a light of their own and my eyes once again filled with tears of wonder and gratitude.

When each member had received his individual blessing, Sri Chinmoy returned to the front of the room to sit in meditation with the group. As I watched, his form became enveloped in a luminescence far more radiant than that of the starry flower. Within the glowing cloud of light, his figure seemed to disappear completely, his presence evidenced only by the regular pulsation of his breath. Once more I blinked, but the phenomenon persisted. The windows on either side could be perceived as they had been, the candles, the paintings, but in the centre was a burning haze, within whose throbbing, the highlights of the Guru's outline appeared and receded. I remained transfixed until, at the sound of the small bell, the scene returned to its former aspect.

The meeting dispersed, and as I descended the stairs I remembered my earlier depleted state. My day at work seemed the remotest of memories, my exhaustion had vanished, but I remained subdued. The world below had been quietly transformed. The damp and foggy night was filled with the soft reflection of light, from the bright storefronts, the street lamps, the windows of the towering buildings, and from the far-off, unseen stars. Only an hour before I had passed through these same streets unseeing, complaining of the cold, dreary weather. Somehow, in that silent hour, the Guru had opened my eyes, my mind, and my heart. He had given a new birth to my aspiring soul.

## MEDITATION UNDER A YOGI-GURU\*

by

## David K. Burke

Down through the ages men have searched for a higher truth and the meaning of life. Within the past century, for example, they have looked for the answer in Art, in the Revolution and even in drugs. Yet while Western man has ranged far and wide, seekers in the East have followed the same path for centuries — the mystical path of yoga, which in Sanskrit means "union with God."

Although many people associate yoga with physical postures and breathing exercises, these are only preliminary and nonessential steps. What lies at the heart of yoga is meditation. For the beginner without a guru, or spiritual master, meditation can most easily be understood in terms of getting in touch with one's inner self. Most of the time this self is lost in the bustle

<sup>\*</sup> David Burke, a press reporter, has written several articles on Sri Chinmoy for the media. From time to time, we shall include excerpts from these articles in this bulletin.

and confusion of everyday life. In meditation, a person tries to dissociate himself from these outer distractions and focus his attention within. The mind is like a lake, and each new thought or image that flashes through is another ripple that clouds its surface. It is only when the mind becomes completely still that a person can find his deeper self. Suddenly he enters a silent world where all his questions are answered, where there is nothing left to ask. At this point, he has reached something beyond his ordinary level of awareness.

Though it is possible to achieve high states of consciousness by meditating on one's own, the surest way is to follow a yogi — one who has attained union with God. The path he points to, the type of guidance he gives, and the relationship he establishes with his disciples are difficult to imagine in any normal context.

In the Jamaica Hills suburb of Queens lives a quiet, humble man, an Indian yogi named Sri Chinmoy. Sri Chinmoy, who just turned forty-two, is one of the few yogis who have reached the highest transcendental consciousness. This is a state of mystical reality beyond *Nirvana*, where the personal consciousness constantly identifies with the vast cosmic drama in all its manifestations. In Eastern religious philosophy, this is known as the ultimate stage of Godrealisation and God-manifestation.

Sri Chinmoy came to the West nine years ago after spending twenty years in an ashram, or monastery, in southern India. Since then, he has lectured at various American and European universities, written a number of philosophical and poetic works, and opened meditation centres around the world. In New York, he conducts regular meditation sessions at the United Nations and his Jamaica Hills centre. There are also nearby centres in New Jersey and Connecticut.

What the Guru actually does for his disciples during a meditation might strike the ordinary person as strange and somewhat baffling. For one thing, it takes place in silence with no visible communication. And it cannot really be understood in terms of current scientific concepts. It's not a matter of hypnosis or ESP; nor can it be reduced to brain waves or biophysical changes. What happens, in effect, is that the Guru's infinitely developed consciousness descends into the unlit consciousness of his disciples, bringing down Light, Peace, Bliss and Power.

To the casual observer, Sri Chinmoy — whom his followers call "Guru" — appears to be in a trance. Dressed in a pale blue or white robe, surrounded by flowers, candles and burning sticks of incense, he sits cross-legged in the traditional Indian lotus posture, impassive and

silent. Sometimes the pupils of his eyes will flick back and forth very rapidly. This happens, he says, when he is moving through different levels of consciousness. At other times, his pupils will roll back behind his upper eyelid, leaving only the white portion visible. This occurs just before he enters his highest consciousness. On some occasions, his eyes may partly close, while his lips curve into the barest trace of a half smile. Or his face may suddenly turn inscrutable, as he slowly rotates his head from person to person.

People encountering Sri Chinmoy in meditation for the first time have different experiences, depending on their level of receptivity. Some call the whole thing unsettling or just plain boring. Others, moved beyond their power to speak, find tears coming to their eyes.

(More excerpts from this article will be included in the September issue.)

