

MEDITATION
AT THE
UNITED NATIONS



OUR HOPE FOR MANKIND

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE
UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

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(BETA K)

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UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

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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

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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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NOTE: Due to technical reasons in preparing programmes for 1975, WNEW-TV did not issue a schedule of Sri Chinmoy's morning and evening prayers for March. These will be reissued in April.

We warmly invite everyone at the United Nations and those officially associated with it to join us in our regular weekly meetings and other activities.

SCHEDULE FOR MARCH 1975

Regular Weekly Schedule

Tuesdays, 12-1 p.m.

*March 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).

**March 25: Mohammed's birthday. Sri Chinmoy will give a short talk on Mohammed at the regular Tuesday meeting.*

Fridays, 12-1 p.m.

*March 7, 14, 21, 28***

Every Friday at noon in Room 550 of the

Secretariat, Sri Chinmoy conducts a meditation and, if time permits, invites questions on the spiritual life from those present.

***March 28* · Good Friday. Sri Chinmoy will give a short talk on the Christ at the regular Friday meeting.

Special Announcement

Every Tuesday Sri Chinmoy will give a short talk and answer questions on the spiritual life in the Peace Room of the Church Center for the United Nations, between 11.30 a.m. and 12 noon, prior to the regular Tuesday meditation downstairs in the Chapel.

All who are free at this time are warmly invited and urged to attend.

(Sri Chinmoy inaugurated this additional half-hour of spiritual guidance at a meeting he conducted in the Peace Room on Tuesday, February 25.)

Other Activities

*Vegetarian Luncheon
Wednesday, March 19*

The menu this month will include corn chowder, baked potatoes and sour cream, spring salad, strawberry shortcake and many other goodies. Boss Room, Church Center for the United Nations at 1 p.m. Tickets will be on sale on the fourth floor outside the cafeteria on March 18 from 12 to 2 p.m. Price: \$2.00 per person.

*Play Performance
Monday, March 24*

In observance of Easter, members of the U.N. Meditation Group will present a performance of scenes in the life of the Christ taken from *The Son* by Sri Chinmoy in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium at 1 p.m. Hot cross buns and cookies will be served. Admission free.

NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY

1 February 1975

In observance of National Freedom Day, we are reproducing the following talk on freedom, the inner freedom, which Sri Chinmoy delivered at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Connecticut on 8 April 1970

THE INNER FREEDOM

The outer freedom is to see what we should. The inner freedom is to be what we must. What we should see is the golden face of Truth. What we must be is the flowing Life of God's Vision and the glowing Breath of God's Reality.

The mother of freedom is Light. The father of freedom is Truth. The wife of freedom is Peace. The son of freedom is Courage. The daughter of freedom is Faith.

Freedom rings where Light shines. Freedom rings when Truth sings. Freedom rings if Peace expands. Freedom rings because Courage demands. Freedom rings, hence Faith blossoms.

Somebody said, "When there's more freedom for mankind, the women will have it." This deplorable statement fails to breathe in the inner world. In the inner world, woman and man have equal freedom to cherish the mind's inspiration, the heart's aspiration and the soul's realisation. Furthermore, inspiration is woman; aspiration is man; and realisation is man and woman both.

We fight for the outer freedom. We cry for the inner freedom. With the outer freedom, we see and rule the four corners of the globe. With the inner freedom, we see the Soul and become the Goal of the entire universe.

True freedom does not lie in speaking ill of the world, or in speaking ill of an individual or individuals. Again, true freedom does not lie in merely appreciating and admiring the world or humanity at large. True freedom lies only in our inseparable oneness with the world's inner cry and its outer smile. The world's inner cry is God the Realisation. The world's outer smile is God the Manifestation.

Freedom is expressive. This is what the body tells me. Freedom is explosive. This is what the vital tells me. Freedom is expensive. This is what the mind tells me. Freedom is illumining. This is what the heart tells me. Freedom is fulfilling. This is what the soul tells me.

My outer freedom is my self-imposed and self-aggrandised obligation. My inner freedom is the birthright of my eternal aspiration and my endless realisation.

Now the paramount question is whether or not my inner freedom and my outer freedom can run abreast. Certainly they can. Certainly they must. My inner freedom knows what it has and what it is: realisation. My outer freedom must know what it wants and what it needs: transformation.

When the freedom of my life without is soulfully and unreservedly transformed, it immediately becomes the mightiest might and the highest pride of the freedom of my life within.

My outer freedom is my life-boat. My inner freedom is my life-sea. My God is my Pilot Supreme. Today I am my journey's searching and crying soul. Tomorrow I shall be my journey's illumining and fulfilling goal.

My soul of freedom is my God's compassionate and constant necessity. My goal of freedom is my God's smiling and dancing transcendental assurance everlastingly fulfilled.

Fairfield University
Fairfield, Conn.
April 8, 1970

TRIBUTES
TO TWO GREAT MEN

George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, revered and crucial figures in United States history, were both born during the month of February. Two poems follow in tribute to the "Father of His Country" and the "Great Emancipator." These are reprinted from Sri Chinmoy's book America in Her Depths:

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(22 February 1732-1799)

A divinely inspired dream, daring
and desperate;
A surprise that made history:
A farmer's son founds the New World.
"Inferior endowment from nature,"
he thought of himself.
But the Divine made him His efficient
instrument.

High character and majestic will
Powerfully blended with courage
and capacity:
Thus stood forth the Man of the Hour,
The Man of Destiny, the Man of God.
And from his mighty dream mightily
executed
Burst forth a new free world,
Destined to be the hope and defence
Of more free worlds to be.

Victory in the War of Independence:
England lost her own offspring.
England won for herself a mightier friend.
A new era heralded,
A new shattering blow
Struck at man's domination over man:
Independence the first step to unity,
And unity, one Truth of God.

George Washington, first to embody
America's hope,
First in inspiration, first in confidence,
First in war, first in victory,
First in conquering the heart of his Nation,
First to envisage a federation of states,
Single, powerful, united, whole.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(12 February 1809-1865)

Born under no lucky star,
But dynamic in his dreams,
He fought his way to Luck:
"From log cabin to White House."

No soul on earth supreme over another—
Equality every man's birthright
and treasure—
Black and white, brown and red
Make no difference—
This nation cannot exist half-slave, half-free:
From his voice these bold truths rang out.

He had the gift to dream of union,
The courage and capacity to fight,
The confidence to win,
The patience that knew no flagging.
Faith in God's Justice was his stamina,
Faith in God was his might.

Natural the affinity of vision-luminous
souls;

So Emerson could say of Lincoln:
"His heart was as great as the world,
But there was no room in it to hold
a wrong."

"Force is all-conquering,
But its victories are short-lived."
Love is all-conquering,
And its victories live on forever.

What is really important?
Are we God's or is God ours?
The idealist in Lincoln reveals:
"We trust, Sir, that God is on our
side.

It is more important to know
That we are on God's side."

NGO STATUS
GRANTED TO THE
SRI CHINMOY CENTRE CHURCH, INC.

The Sri Chinmoy Centre Church, an incorporated non-governmental organisation of which Sri Chinmoy is the spiritual head, was recently granted NGO status by the United Nations. The basis for an organisation to be thus listed with the United Nations Office of Public Information is the "redissemination of information in order to contribute to greater public understanding of the aims and activities of the United Nations."

The U.N. Meditation Group offers its sincere salutations of deepest respect to United Nations Representative Sri Chinmoy, together with its prayers that this significant honour will enable the Sri Chinmoy Centre Church, Inc. to supremely fulfil and universally manifest this lofty ideal.

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 February.

February 4

To know the value of love is to buy the Kingdom of Delight.

To know the value of Delight is to buy back one's own True Self.

February 11

Earth cries to marry the beauty of love.

Heaven cries to marry the revelation of perfection.

February 18

When I touch the heart of the world, the world gives me its hands. When I use the hands of the world, God smilingly sits on my shoulders and places the world inside His very Heart.

February 25

To complete His Joy,
from above
God looks at man
with His
descending Compassion.

To complete his joy,
from below
man looks at God
with his
ascending determination.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Sri Chinmoy recently received the following letter from Secretary-General Waldheim, to whom he had sent a copy of the November issue of *Meditation at the United Nations*, which was dedicated to the memory of U Thant.



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

20 February 1975

Dear Sri Chinmoy,

I wish to thank you for sending me a copy of "Meditation at the United Nations", which is dedicated to the memory of my distinguished and esteemed predecessor U Thant. I very much appreciated your kind gesture.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kurt Waldheim".

Kurt Waldheim

Sri Chinmoy
Spiritual Director
United Nations Meditation Group
Room 3401

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POETRY SELECTIONS

COURAGE

The animal in me
Showed the animal courage
By fighting and strangling.

The human in me
Showed the human courage
By snubbing and belittling.

The divine in me
Shows the divine courage
In accepting and loving.

The Supreme in me
Shows the supreme courage
In transforming, widening, deepening
And finally transcending.

LET US TALK ABOUT OURSELVES

O soul, you and I
Have come into the world
To speak of God.
Since nobody
Wants to hear us,
Let us talk
About ourselves.
O soul, I think that
Without God's guidance
I can teach His world.
"O seeker, I think that
I can manifest God
Without your assistance."

THEY DO NOT WANT ME

I have wasted my time;
Therefore
Bliss does not want me.

I have neglected my duty;
Therefore
Peace does not want me.

I have rejected truth;
Therefore
Light does not want me.

HE IS MASTER OF HIMSELF

Fear has left him.

Therefore

Once more he is master of himself.

Doubt has left him.

Therefore

Once more he is master of himself.

He is master of himself.

Therefore

He knows how God in him proceeds

And

How man in him succeeds.

I HAVE MUCH NEWS

Faith, my faith,

Since you left

I have no news,

None at all.

Doubt, my doubt,
Since you left
I have much news.
God has come
 And
Is staying with me.
He is even thinking of hiring me
To look after His vast creation.

A PRINCE OF LOVE

When I was a Prince of gloom
I thought I could do
 Everything
In the twinkling of an eye.

When I was a Prince of Light
I discovered that patience and I
 Eventually
Would do everything.

When I was a Prince of Love
I realised that God and I
 Had already
Done everything.

HIS LIFE SINGS FOUR SONGS

His life sings
The song of beauty.
Therefore
Heaven loves him.

His life sings
The song of duty.
Therefore
Earth loves him.

His life sings
The song of Divinity.
Therefore
God loves him.

His life sings
The song of Immortality.
Therefore
He loves himself.

TWO DAYS MORE

Two days more
Until I go to Heaven.
Therefore
Today I shall buy
The aspiration-ticket and
Tomorrow I shall board
The Realisation-plane
To reach my sun-vast
Destination: Heaven.

TRIBUTE TO JHARNA-KALA

In tribute to Sri Chinmoy's latest phenomenal artistic achievement: *10,000 paintings in 100 days*, we are reproducing the poem below by Pramoda followed by a small selection from this recent wonderful outpouring of Jharna-Kala—Fountain-Art.

BEYOND THE BEYOND

Feast after feast
Glory after glory
Achievements ever expanding and glowing,
Like gushing waters
Born of sunlight pure
Running under snowy peaks,
Sri Chinmoy's fount of Love
Endless creative stream
Ceaselessly flows:
Sparkling mountain spring
Polishing and rocking
Gravel and rolling stones,
Rushing forth through
Twigs and trees

Giving them life anew,
In melodic waves
Of celestial rhymes
Feeding his earthly flock
Words of cosmic vision
Pearls of ancient wisdom,
Tinting the planet's crust
With brilliant colour hues
Revealing his Lordship's Master's Height
Under God's Loving Eye
In self-offering
To our aspiring souls,
Nectar divine
Flowing into
Earth's crying heart.

*To the lofty height of
SRI CHINMOY
and to the divine artist in him,
I bow, I bow,
Pramoda*



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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: What purpose does the mind serve?

Sri Chinmoy: Our physical body is composed of five elements. These elements are not self-sufficient. They need something higher, something deeper, something more conscious to guide them, and that is the mind. In an ordinary being, if the mind does not function at all, he cannot sustain his own life. He becomes inert, helpless. Without the mind at all, one cannot function in the physical body. Having a physical body is not enough; a mind is also necessary.

But the mind is also not enough. The mind makes thousands of mistakes. The mind tells us to do something and when we do it, the body gets hurt. The mind has limits beyond which it cannot go without the help of the heart and soul. That is why I say that when the ordinary mind comes to the fore, you have to take it as a bundle of imperfection and throw it into the heart. The heart is like a sea of purity. If I have an impure mind, I will try to catch the mind and throw it into the sea. Once it is inside the sea, it will be lost. In the

illumination of the psychic sea, mental thoughts, impure thoughts, undivine thoughts, unlit thoughts, will all be illumined. Once the mind is purified, it becomes a real help for the soul and for the soul's mission. Otherwise, it will remain a constant frustration.

Existence, Consciousness and Bliss must go together for a perfectly divine human being. These are somewhat comparable to matter, mind and soul. In human beings, mind and matter are well developed right now. But the soul, the divinity in man, has yet to come to the fore. Only a very few human beings have developed an illumined mind. But it can be developed through our aspiration. Until this happens, man will be an incomplete and unsatisfied creature.

Question: How can we surrender the mind?

Sri Chinmoy: Here in the West we exercise the freedom and power of the mind. Although the heart and the soul have surrendered to the Inner Pilot, the mind continues to doubt. The mind even doubts its own existence and its own formulation of thought. Now, what should my disciples do about this? Each disciple of mine must feel that his path

is the path of love, devotion and surrender. On this path the physical mind either has to be totally illumined or it has to be totally ignored. The intellectual mind also is poisonous. If one wants to enter into the highest spiritual life, the intellectual mind, too, has to be transcended. Either we have to transform the mind or discard it by placing it in the Lap of the Supreme.

If we have a lump of clay which is soft, we should try to mould it. But if our lump of clay has become hard and cannot be moulded, then we should discard it. Likewise, if the mind is beyond repair, we should discard it. But if it is still plastic and adaptable, then we should transform it with the soul's light and our heart's deepest feeling of oneness with the Master. This is the easiest way to bring the mind under control. The light of the soul and the oneness of the heart have to enter into the mind and make it feel that, instead of being totally ruined, it will be illumined and fulfilled. Then there is every possibility that the mind will become one with the heart and soul. As spiritual aspirants, we can easily live on earth without using the gross physical mind and the sophisticated, intellectual mind. We will not act like an imbecile or an animal; we will act like a pure and simple child. And the intuitive mind still remains for us to use.

If we can remain with intuition, we are safe. Intuition will automatically bring forward our divine faith.

We can, however, freely utilise the physical mind in areas which do not conflict with the Master's utterances or way of action. In our day-to-day life we do many, many things in the physical world which have nothing at all to do with our Master's spiritual teachings. We remember not to touch the hot stove with our hand. If it is chilly, we remember to wear a coat. We count our change when we buy something. Our physical mind is operating harmlessly in all these things. But in the matter of our inner life, when the mind wants to enter into our purest aspiration, we immediately have to offer the physical mind at the Feet of the Supreme. When the gross, ordinary human mind leaves us and the divine, illumined mind replaces it, we become the richest person in the spiritual life.

Question: Why is the mind so difficult to surrender?

Sri Chinmoy: The human mind has made friends with ignorance. It is in collusion with

ignorance. You cannot discard the mind altogether just because it is in collusion with ignorance the thief. You cannot cut off your left hand just because it does not function well. The body is an instrument, the vital is an instrument and the mind is also an instrument of God. If I do not perfect all of these instruments, I cannot be integrally perfect. God has given me hands, eyes, nose, ears, mind and so forth. If I do not utilise my eyes, then I am depriving God, for God is seeing through my eyes. The mind, too, has to be perfected and utilised divinely.

Before we can utilise the mind divinely, we have to bring it out of ignorance. What is actually happening in our lives is that we feel that the mind is superior to everything. According to our understanding, the person who has a brilliant mind, the mental giant, is a superior being. But we have to know and accept the limitations of the mind. Unless we become aware of its deficiencies, we will not try to correct them. We will continue to feel that the mind is superior to everything, that the mind has not done anything wrong and cannot do anything wrong, that the mind is the boss and we are its obedient servants. Then we will always be at the mercy of the mind. One moment the mind will say this fellow is very nice; the next moment it will say he is an idiot; and the next moment it will

say that he is a criminal. The mind constantly contradicts itself, and we must dance on the waves of its ever-changing surface. Only if we feel that our present human mind is imperfection itself will we try to bring perfection into the mind.

How can we surrender our mind to the soul or to our Inner Pilot? First we have to know the limitations of the mind. It cannot take us far. It can only create big holes in the fabric of reality with its doubt and suspicion. Then we fall into these holes and lose our sense of reality. Once we are aware that the mind is not being utilised properly, but that it can be and must be used for God, for the service of the Divine, then we have come one step forward.

The next step is to know what is hidden inside the mind—what capacities, possibilities and potentialities the mind does already embody. The surface of the ocean is all turmoil, but when we observe the bottom of the ocean it is all peace and tranquility. Similarly, the mind is full of turmoil, tension and obscurity on the surface, but when we go deep inside the mind, we find the illumined mind, the intuitive mind, the higher mind and so on. These minds are constantly expanding, enlarging and trying to help the gross physical body to see the Truth, live the Truth and become the Truth. If we know what the mind can do for us

when it is used for a divine purpose, then again we have gone one step ahead.

The next step is to surrender the mind. In order to know the secret of the mind's surrender, we have to be sure of the heart's surrender. Very often, after an outburst of emotion we feel that we have given everything to God. This emotional outburst lasts for a few minutes or a day, but it is not the heart's total, absolute surrender. The heart's total, absolute surrender means constant oneness with the object of adoration inside the heart. When the heart has really surrendered to God or to the Guru, the seeker will always feel oneness with the Guru or God in his heart. At that time the heart identifies itself totally with the Master or with the Supreme. Once the heart's surrender is complete, we will feel that the soul has already achieved its total identification with the Absolute inside the heart.

The soul's identification and the heart's identification with the Supreme or with the Guru have infinitely more strength than the mind's sense of separateness. Two are fighting against one, and these two are very powerful. Why? Because they are connected with the Highest. The soul is connected with the Highest and has always been connected with the Highest. And once the heart surrenders unconditionally, it also becomes consciously con-

nected with the Highest. Since two divine powers are already connected with the Highest and have the Source, the Supreme, as their aid, how can they lose to the mind? Naturally the heart and soul will win.

How can you help them to conquer your physical mind so you can offer it to God? You have to feel during your intense meditation that you have nothing and are nothing but the heart. Feel that you do not have a body, you do not have a mind, but you have and you are only the heart. Then feel that you have nothing and you are nothing but the soul. When you can feel that you are only the heart and soul and nothing else, then try to look inside yourself. There you will see an uncontrollable vital, which is not the divine vital but the aggressive vital. Go and stand in front of the vital with your soul and with your heart. The unlit vital will immediately attack the heart and soul. But by attacking these divinely powerful beings, which are surcharged with divine Light, the uncontrolled vital will lose all its strength, just as my hand would break and lose all its power if it repeatedly struck a wall with all its force. Then it will have to surrender to the light of the heart and soul.

Also, you will see the unlit physical which is not allowing you to surrender. There again you must

go and stand with your soul's light and your heart's light. The gross physical consciousness will also start striking the heart and the soul, and it, too, will lose all its obscure, limited power in this way and surrender to the heart and soul.

Now the mind also has to be conquered. Where is the mind? We will feel the presence of the mind wherever there is contradiction, limitation, doubt, for this is the play of the mind. Now you will stand in front of the mind with your soul and your heart. The mind, with all its doubt, contradiction, limitation, frustration, anxiety, tension and so on will strike the heart and soul mercilessly. But it, too, will lose all its undivine strength in this way and will have to surrender to the light of the heart and soul. When someone loses a battle, he surrenders, and when he surrenders, he obeys the will of the victor. So when the mind, vital and physical surrender to the soul and heart, the soul and heart will be able to utilise these members of its family for a divine purpose, to fulfil the Divine.

So start with the feeling that you are the soul and the heart. Then confront the vital, the physical and the mind with your divine power of light. All will have to surrender to the light of the soul and the heart, since the soul and the heart are in communion with the Highest Absolute.

Question: What can I do to make my aspiration stronger in the mind?

Sri Chinmoy: The only advice I can give you is this: if the mind is constantly involved in our aspiration, then we will not succeed. Suppose you have two brothers. One brother is sick all the time, and the other is always healthy. If you think of the sick brother all the time, then you will also feel sick. If you go to the hospital four or five times a day, you are bound to feel that you are also sick, even though the doctors may find nothing wrong with you. So if you spend most of your time with your sick brother—that is, the mind—then you will be affected. But if you spend most of your time with your strong brother, your healthy brother—the heart—then you will get strength from him. When you become strong by mixing with him, then you and your heart—the two healthy and strong brothers—can come to help the sick brother.

Always try to mix with those who are stronger than you. It is not that you should neglect or avoid the weak ones, but right now you are not strong enough to help them and if you associate with them, they will rob you of what little strength you have. Once you have gained the strength of the healthy heart, then you can go to the sick mind and make it well and strong.

Question: We are brought up in the West not to accept anything unless it has been proven. Should we have a mind that accepts things without questioning and without thinking?

Sri Chinmoy: When you tell your son, "I am your father," why does he accept you as his father? Just because he believes you. When we come into the world, our very first step is belief. When a father says to the child, "This is fire, this is a knife. Do not touch them because they will hurt you," the child believes him. The father need not prove to the child that these things will hurt him. The child has no need to ask for proof. The simple faith that a child carries is the happiest thing. Arguments begin when his mind begins to develop. Then he may start doubting his very existence.

But in the spiritual life, faith is not mere belief. It is the oneness of truth. When you have faith, the Master does not have to prove anything, because you feel the essential truth of what he says, just as in the physical world you do not have to prove your existence to others because they themselves can see you and feel you. Their existence spontaneously becomes one with yours, and there is no necessity for any other proof. In the outer life you have to prove what you are saying. But in the field of consciousness, truth does not prove its own existence.

That is because we relate to the outer world with our outer senses. Therefore truth has to be proved by some kind of perception. But we also have inner senses. The mind has one foot in the inner world and one foot in the outer world. As an inner sense it is inadequate, and as an outer sense it is incompetent. So let us ignore the mind and deal with the soul. When we stay in the soul, truth's very existence is its own proof.

Question: Do you not feel that national boundaries, economic disparity and religious dogmas divide human beings into different camps, creating anti-spiritual environments and making peace for an individual, and so for a nation, a distant star?

Sri Chinmoy: I do feel that these national boundaries, etc., are really impairing the growth of our evolving human consciousness. But it is the clarification of the individual's mind and spirit that must precede the awakening of our social institutions such as churches and governments. It is the spiritual and mental elite who can infuse the general mass with its illumining light. As we know, the policies of institutions and nations are usually

the embodiments of the general consciousness. These policies can be influenced considerably by enlightened individuals. Mother India in particular has not lacked in such enlightened souls, nor does she lack them now.

It is a matter of time, and time itself will create an opening in order for the spiritual consciousness to permeate the individual and his society. On our part, a conscious spiritual effort has to be made so that the higher forces from above can come down and touch the very depths of our seeking hearts. The gap that we see now between our aspiration and its fulfilment in society will then no longer exist.

Question: My wife, who is otherwise the most reasonable of beings, insists that all religious beliefs are delusions brought about by existential anxiety. Most people find the thought unbearable that there is no meaning in life except for the biological and rational fact of life itself. This, she feels, should satisfy anybody. The fact of death, she believes, is to be similarly faced as a biological reality. It is an old theory, which, I realise, can neither be proved or disproved at an intellectual level.

Sri Chinmoy: The ultimate truth concerning life and death can never be adequately explained or expressed. It can only be felt by the aspirant. I concur fully with you that this view, as well as that expressed by your wife, cannot be verified intellectually. However, what she feels about life and death may not necessarily be so. Another view is that life is the link between birth and death, and, at the same time, it is life that precedes birth and succeeds death.

Human memory is not the first and last word of creation. If, at the age of eighty, I fail to recollect an incident that took place in my own life at the age of four, it does not mean that I did not exist then. Just as a series of years passes by between the ages of four and eighty, so is there a series of lives which connects the present with the distant past and projects itself into the imminent future.

Then, too, there is something beyond the comprehension of our limited body-consciousness. Even while a man is grossly involved in his most ordinary physical activities, he may feel within himself, at times, some strange truths. These are usually unfamiliar and greatly elevating. These truths come from a higher or deeper world, from a different plane of consciousness, and they knock at his mental door. Thus he possesses and is possessed by forces beyond his ordinary awareness.

It is when we put ourselves in tune with these higher forces, indeed with the universal harmony, that life ceases to be unbearable. I entirely agree with your wife's point of view that when a person sees no meaning in life, no goal or purpose, the thought, nay the life itself, becomes intolerable. However, regarding religious beliefs, I wish to place before her an analogy:

I am now living in New York City. If a child calls on me and asks, "Is there a place called Cologne?" I shall reply, "Certainly, my child, it is in West Germany." Suppose he says, "You must prove it to me!" Now how can I prove it to him, apart from showing him maps and photos? I can only tell him that I have personally visited Cologne and that there are millions of others who have also done so. His doubt cannot negate the existence of the city.

Similarly those who have realised God fully have every right to tell us that there is a God. Simply because we have not realised Him, we cannot deny the existence of God. Just as the child has to satisfy his physical eyes by going to Cologne, we can only prove to ourselves the reality of God by seeing Him. And this quest for realisation would give to an otherwise purposeless life an unparalleled meaning and direction.