

Inner Voice

- from the teachings of Eugene Halliday TTBIII:144-156

There is a proverb that says: "To **voice** is to invoke". This means that when we utter a word, we call into our mind that which that word represents. If we say "War", we stir memories in us of conflict. If we say "Peace", our memories change to more harmonious forms. Let us remember this: "To **voice** is to invoke".

In India this idea that speaking wakens memories hidden in the mind gave rise to a whole system of mind control which uses words or sound patterns as determinants of the contents of our consciousness. This system is called **Mantra**-Yoga, and of recent years it has become somewhat popular. A Mantra is a sound-pattern, or a word, or a group of phonetic vibrations, or even a single sound, used to tune in the mind to some **mental, psychic, spiritual or physical state**.

But although Indian Mantras have caught popular imagination, the truth that sound patterns or words can influence the human mind and stimulate it to react has not been confined to India. All the great religions have taught the efficacy of sounds to produce effects in the human soul, mind and body. Every hymn sung seriously is a mantric invocation. Every prayer **sincerely voiced** is a sound pattern with tremendous power to awaken the soul to awareness of capacities that otherwise would lie latent in us. **Real, sincere prayer is magical**, that is, it awakens powers of performance in us that ordinarily we know nothing about.

We have said, "Every prayer **sincerely** voiced". It is not enough simply to say the words of a prayer. We must **know** what we are saying, **understand** what we are saying, and **mean** it. We must back what we are saying with our **will**. Will empowers **speech**. Without the will to make our words operative, it is useless merely to move our lips, vibrate our vocal cords and move our tongue to modify the sounds that result from the air that we breathe out. Our **heart** must be in our words. **The heart is the centre of our real feelings, our innermost motives**, and it is these feelings and motives that model the energies of our **soul** and make them effective within our being and in the world.

Prayer is work, mental, psychic and spiritual work that can change things, determine events, create relationships in the various parts of our being and the external world, even in material things. **Real prayer is operative power**. So far, we have not taken the power of prayer seriously enough. We have thought that the idea that "faith may move mountains" is a mere figure of speech, an allegory, but **sincere faith is prayer at work. Faith is the very substance of things hoped for**. Faith is power. Things are modalities of power, ways that power or energy behaves. Properly formed sincere prayer is **faith in process of modelling events**.

Events themselves are but **behaviour patterns of power**, and we are to remember that power and intelligence are but two aspects of the one ultimate mysterious somewhat that is the originating **source** of all things.

In these days of general fear of nuclear war, we need **faith** in our ability to survive, **faith** in our power to influence events, **faith** in our inherent intelligence, which will tell us what to do if some unfortunate madman presses the fatal button that initiates equally mad retaliations.

It is certain that **a mind charged with intelligent power** has the greatest survival probability in any situation. It is certain that **faith gives us our greatest positivity**, and that positivity is the power that put us here in the first place.

To "posit" is to establish power-patterns. **Positivity** is our power to establish a pattern of events for ourselves and for our world. The existential world itself is proof of the positivity of the power that created it.

To "negate" is to say "No" to something, to inhibit its development, to halt creative tendencies. To be negative to events is to think that we have no power over them. In states of negative feeling, we believe that we are at the mercy of forces that act on us, that they can determine what is going to happen to us, that there is nothing that we can do about things. But this state of negativity arises from the way we talk to ourselves about events. Let us remember: "To **voice** is to invoke".

We hear **voices** in our mind and we tend to think that these **voices** are our own. When we think, we tend, consciously or otherwise, to believe that what is being thought is **our own**, originated by ourself. If we listen carefully, we will find that **not all thoughts that we find in our mind are created by us**, not all of the talking in us that formulates our thoughts is our own. We have all stored up in our minds the statements of all the people we have heard voicing their assessments of things. The **voices** of our

parents, our relatives, our friends, our teachers, and the world at large are all recorded in our mind, most of them **unconscious**.

Most of what we think is derivative from the expressed thoughts of others, stored unconsciously in our mind, and stimulated into activity by random events of the world. Careful internal listening will prove this to us and make us realise that we have **inner** work to do on ourselves, a work that must be done if we are to gain the freedom that we know we need.

To **think a thought that is truly our own**, we have to learn to discriminate between our own **inner voice**, and those innumerable **voices** of all the people we have ever known. This sounds like very hard work, and is so. But it is not impossible work. It is work within our capacity. After we have taught ourselves to listen well to the **voices** that conduct the thought processes in us, we begin to recognise the **voices** of parents, friends etc. expressing their opinions of things, and we become able as we listen to say to ourselves, "That **voice** is not mine! It is the **voice** of my mother or father, or aunt Matilda, or uncle Ronald, or my friend, or my old teacher, etc."

We begin to be able to **recognise** our own **voice** among the others, and to **separate it** from them, and to know whether it is **truly expressing what we really mean**. We begin to find our **own true inner self**, the self whose view of reality is our very own.

Our ordinary life is led for us by the **voices** and opinions of the most impressive and forceful persons we have known, our parents, relatives, teachers, friends, enemies, and so on. Not many of us are quite uninfluenced by the opinions of people we have met or heard of. Great men create followers, famous women fascinate the public. We are seldom left free to examine our own **innermost self** and to decide precisely **what we really are or will to become**. Our ordinary life has been dictated to us from the moment of our birth from our mother, the birth that we call our **first**. But we have another life possible for us, a quite non-ordinary life, **a life of intelligent creative power**. This new life requires us to undergo a **second birth**. This is what is meant when we are told we must be **born again**.

Ordinary life is lived under orders from outside ourself. Our first birth, the physical birth from our mother, puts us under the authority of the external world's organisations and institutions, and this subordination to outer authority is very necessary for the formulation of our character as socially adjusted beings, members of human society, **able to relate effectively to each other**. We have **duties to perform** to justify our position in relation to other people in the world.

But we have duties to perform not only in order to be able to adjust our actions to those of other people. We have also **a duty to our own self, to develop our self and our talents, which are God-given**. A Beethoven, a Bach, a Mozart, a Michelangelo, a Turner, each had his duty to perform, in accord with his talents or genius. This duty is a **divine imperative**, and to become able to perform it, we must go through the process we call being "born again". We must at some point begin to **listen to and obey** our own unique, **innermost voice**, the **voice** of our **deepest essential will**, for this **voice** is the **voice of God within us**, telling us what **very special talents** we have and are to develop and to express, for the glory of God and the further enrichment of the collective human soul and the world.

How are we to distinguish between our **own God-given, unique, innermost voice** and the **innumerable other voices** that we may hear speaking in our mind? The **voices** of other people that we **innerly** hear have a certain **urgency** about them. Urgency is the sign of **private aim**. Private aim is found in most people most of the time. **Private aim is the aim that seeks to benefit some creature or group at the expense of other beings**. It aims at self-aggrandisement or self-security, or self-survival, without regard to the effects of its actions on other selves or groups. It is precisely because of its private nature that the selfish aim is characterised by urgency.

Of quite opposite character is the God-given **innermost voice**, for this has no urgency, no intent of private gain. The **God-given voice** is "**a still, small voice**". When all the noise and bluster and cunning suggestivity of **private voices** cease, we can hear **a very quiet voice** within us, a **voice** that needs no urgency because it has no private purposes, and **speaks only Truth**.

When we say that a triangle has three sides, the self-evidence of this statement makes it unnecessary for us to shout about it. Extra loudness of **voice** will not make the statement more true than it already is. We do not need to jump up and down or bang our fists on the table-top to prove that two times one makes two, or two times two make four. Urgency has no place here. Self-evident truth needs no special extra weight to display itself.

When the **still small voice** speaks, its truth is not private, does not aim at merely selfish advantage. It is happy to let itself give universal benefit to all who will receive it. The truth of the four-sidedness of squares has universal application. The structural strength of triangles is for anyone to use. Regardless of

race, colour or creed, everyone who understands pi-ratio, or the principles of geometry, or universal logic, may benefit from their use. **"God is no respecter of persons", nor of their private selfish purposes.** He has no need for urgency. His all-powerfulness makes it unnecessary. His mills grind slowly, but down to the smallest grains. He has eternity to work in, while creatures have only limited time. Hence He has no need to raise His **voice**.

When we listen inside ourselves to the endless chattering of the **voices** of everyone recorded in our mind, if we observe carefully, we find **bias** in them; we find the **voices** loaded with **degrees of emotional urgency**; and we know that each **voice** belonged originally to a **person with a purpose**.

A purpose may be **private**, or it may be **universal**. A private purpose, precisely because of its privacy, must to some degree be **afraid**, for someone may frustrate it. Privacy is always fearful of frustration. Privacy must guard itself against those it fears. It is this guardedness that creates the tension that we hear and feel in the urgent **voice**. To be free from this tension and urgency we must be happy to see the benefit of any truth made universal. When we are prepared to let whatever benefits we have been given universal distribution, urgency ceases, because private purpose with its personal fears and tensions also ceases. Then **we can hear the still, small voice of God within us**. The clamour of private urgencies has ceased, and nothing now drowns **the little voice of eternal truth**.

People with private selfish aims are necessarily secretive about their intentions. Having to keep a secret creates tension, and tension expresses itself as urgency. Hence the records of **voices** of people in our mind are usually charged with urgency. Just as the person with private purposes use emotional charges on their words to influence our responses and persuade us to obey their suggestions or commands, so the mental records in us of their **voices** are emotionally charged, and, if we are not careful, may drive us into activities that later we have cause to regret.

In our minds are the records of all the words we have heard, and most of them are emotionally charged and urgeful. Ordinarily we tend to accept the words recorded and replayed in our minds as of our own thought processes. When we hear sentences spoken in our mind, we tend to believe that we ourselves are so speaking; we think that we ourselves are thinking the thoughts the sentences and words express. But seldom is this really so. Most of the ideas and thoughts that run through our mind are second-hand or third-hand, or from even more remote sources. **The only ideas we could truly say would be our own, would be those that after deep consideration we would agree with wholeheartedly.**

None of us like to be deceived. All of us, in our **innermost** selves, would prefer, if possible, to **be truthful to ourselves**. Only if we know the truth do we know where we stand in the world and in ourselves. But although we do not desire to be deceived, we find that in certain parts of us there is a tendency to find **certain truths uncomfortable, or even painful**. Whenever we have allowed ourselves to fall into the pursuit of private gain at the expense of other persons, we tend to be afraid that our private aims may be exposed and that our self-image may be damaged. To pursue private advantage over other persons sets us on guard against possible exposure. Here is the source of much of our guilt.

"Guilt" is the feeling we experience when we think that there may be reprisals for something we have done. When Cain murdered his brother, there at once arose in him fear of reprisals. "Now every man's hand will be against me," he said, and began to guard himself against counter attacks from other people.

What today we call **"stress disorders"** are largely **the products of fears of reprisals**. Everywhere in human society people seek advantage over each other, and know that they do so. Our society is, as we say, competitive, internationally, in business, in personal relationship, in all the affairs of daily life, and because of this, we do not wholly trust each other. How can we trust each other, if we know that we have private purposes, if we know that we are competing for the limited gains human society has to offer? If we ourselves are misrepresenting to others our purposes, are we not bound to suspect others of doing likewise?

Everyone knows that great nations spy on each other, misrepresent to each other their aims, hold banquets to exchange ideas, but take care not to leak out their own intentions. At the top level, all accept the rules of the game. They applaud the maxim "May the best man win" and do their utmost to be this "best man". They accept that in the pursuit of power and control over territories rich in raw materials and strategic advantages, other nations will do their best for themselves and their own nationals. According to their lights they fight what they believe is the "good fight", the fight for the survival of their own kind.

But although almost everyone accepts the facts of international espionage on the world scale, and loves to read novels about it, or to see plays dealing with international trickery, yet few are happy with the

idea that perhaps not only great nations, but small groups also play similar games. Not many people are able to contemplate with equanimity that there is a war and espionage even amongst very small groups, as small perhaps as a single family, where, as Jesus said, there would be father against son, mother against daughter, and so on. Yet we all know of inter-family squabbles over properties and money and the means to self-security.

But **all these external battles** of nations, and governments and trades-unions and sub-groups and businesses and families **are not what is meant by the "Good Fight"**. There is no real good in the external battles of peoples with each other. **The only real, true "Good Fight" is the battle which each individual has inside himself with the contradictory elements of his own being**. Inside us all are innumerable **voices**, multitudes of feelings, emotions, impulses, all needing to be brought face to face with each other, for only in this face-to-face meeting may their contradictions be exposed and resolved.

Amidst the hubbub of contradictory **voices** in us is waiting **the still, small voice**. We shall not hear it until the clamorous multitudes are **stilled**. When the storm ceases then we can hear. We can know what it means to say, "Be still, and know that I am God".

To gain this stillness, we have to know that **the urgencies that would provoke us to reaction are not from the real spiritual self**. We have to divide ourselves into **voices of truth**, and **voices against truth**. And we have to take sides for truth, against falsity. We must **blow hot for truth, and blow cold against untruth**. If we will not choose truth and refuse lies; if we try to compromise with them, and blow neither hot nor cold, the God of Truth will have nothing to do with us.

There is **no room for compromise** in the battle of Truth and Untruth. The one is not the other, and we must choose between them. Inside our own mind we must distinguish between the One Truth, **the Truth quietly voiced** by the non-urgent **still small voice**, and the legions of lies told urgently by the voices of the privately purposed persons to whom we have been from childhood so long exposed.

A little child records in its innocent mind all the **statements** of everyone around it; and not only the **words** are recorded, but also the **emotional charges** upon those words. Thus the little child is conditioned, not only by the words it hears, but by the emotional attitudes of the ones who speak them.

The little child at first has no developed **critical faculty of intellect** by which to discriminate truth from falsity. It takes its directives largely from the **emotional attitudes** of the grown-ups who surround it. The child can believe for a time in Santa Claus, in fairies, in goblins, in "goodies" and "baddies" and in hosts of things that later it will discard as nonsense.

But the **emotional attitudes to things that the grown-ups like or dislike** are not so easy to remove. If not re-assessed they will remain as they were when first acquired, and will **condition the whole future life of the child**. Hence it would be better for the adult who has misled a child to "have a millstone put round his neck and for him to be drowned in the sea". This is a very strong metaphor, and if taken literally would be very rough justice. But its meaning is hardly less comfortable. **Every time an adult misleads a child, the child acquires a false attitude to life, and will respond wrongly to its life situations**. And as the adult sees the results of the mis-education the child has received, they will be felt as a great weight upon him. It will feel as if in truth he has upon his neck a mill-stone, and that its weight is pressing him down into a sea of negative emotions.

We all know how an accidental or careless remark can lead a child into a false attitude to life, and we try wherever we can to avoid making such remarks. But although we are as careful as we can be to teach our children to **love and honour truth**, we find it much harder to do this ourselves in our dealings with adults. If we deliberately tell lies to a child, we feel uncomfortable, and tend to find reasons to justify them, and call them "white lies", backed by good intentions, stories told to pacify the child for the time being.

But when we hide truths from adults, we feel less guilty; we feel self-justified; we tell ourselves that our distortions of truth are necessary for our survival. We believe that other grown-ups are also engaged in misrepresenting the realities for the sake of **their** survival. We believe we are in a "cold war" situation, and that we are justified in our external battles, and in disguising them under the rituals of social intercourse and surface appearances of harmony and concord. We neglect the **inner** Good Fight for the sake of the outer bad fight. Its effects on our own souls we know little of. We are not such good psychologists as Jesus showed himself to be.

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