



HOW TO THINK

The subject for the session today I chose as 'How to Think'. It is an unusual topic because we all think that we know how to think. It is something we have been doing ever since we were born. It is something which happens so naturally that we are not even aware of how we think. We just take it for granted. In fact, if I were to stop you at this moment and



ask you, 'What are you thinking of', the answer normally would be, 'Nothing, nothing in particular'. And you ask, 'No, but something must be going on'. And you say, 'Well, I don't remember'. Anybody, at any moment, catch them on the road and ask what they are thinking of, and you will end up with this answer - first, 'Nothing' and then, 'I don't remember, I don't know'. And yet, we have this grand illusion that we are thinking consciously, that we know how to think. Is that really so? Can you actually improve your thought process if you are not even aware of what's happening in your mind? How can you even say that you are thinking of the optimum that you are capable of? In fact, if you observe carefully, the quality of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts, feelings, and much of the time our thoughts are of a very poor quality. To be able to observe your thoughts, to know them, to consciously cultivate the thinking process is a part of culturing of our own personality. And unless you can think better you cannot live better.

THE NATURE OF THOUGHTS

Well, let's begin by observing what the thoughts are like within ourselves. And as we observe our thoughts we find broadly there are two categories of thoughts which arise. The first category,

which is the most common, consists of thoughts which rise out of some sensation. You step out of your class, you experience the heat of summer on your skin and immediately a sensation... from the sensation of heat comes an emotion - discomfort, dislike and annoyance or anger. And then comes the thought, 'Well, what can I do now? Where is some

drinking water?' But the thought itself is the result of an emotion which is the result of a sensation. You are sitting in class, you are bored. From that boredom you just start getting uneasy, uncomfortable, you start looking around for something to do, something to catch your attention, to distract your mind. From the sensation or emotion of boredom comes a need for a thought and you start looking around.

Actually, if you see, there are several parts within us which are always conflicting with our thought process - just as your mind is thinking of something, your feelings are pushing you in a different direction, your body's needs are pushing you in a different direction. The net result is one big confusion going on. From that confusion rise out a few vague thought impulses. This is the most common type of thinking that we experience 99.9% of the time.

And then there is another category of thoughts which is of abstract thoughts - thoughts which are not based directly on material sensations. For example, you ask yourself, 'What's my purpose in life? What do I want to do?'. Or you ask yourself, 'Why does the apple fall down?'. Well, in a sense it starts with the experience of the apple, but the question itself deals with a certain abstraction which is not dependent on your sensations or emotions. So, these are broadly the two categories of thoughts which

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we experience. The interesting thing to note is that the second category of abstract thought may lead to a feeling. But the first one is a feeling which leads to the thought.

What happens once the thought process starts in our mind? How does the activity of mind itself form? We notice here that most of our mental activity is mechanical. There is, so to say, a chain of associations which drives us. Just a moment back I felt thirsty. I started looking around for water. And then I saw this water and it struck me, 'I have read recently that mineral water bottles are often reused, and the water may not be safe. And you know the situation of the country today is that there is so much of corruption, nothing is pure anymore. We are ruining our environment. What's going to happen tomorrow? If that spaceship which is up there comes crashing down? You know the Soviets, they are going to bring down this space station. What if it falls on top of India?' You started with mineral water, you started with thirst and you ended thinking of the space station out in outer space. But that's typically the kind of mechanical association of thoughts - one thought leading to another, without our realising it, which goes on. You sit down to write an exam. You look at the first question. Five minutes later you find you are still looking at the question. In between you started day-dreaming. A chain of thoughts from the question arose which got you thinking of your first cousin's grand uncle's death or something like that. How did that chain form? There was no logical process. One thing connects to another mechanically, automatically - with no purpose, no direction. This is the normal state of our thought process, and we think we know how to think! Well, we are pushed around. The thoughts are meaningless - very much like what happens when you sit flipping channels on a t.v. But, to be able to make our thought processes meaningful, we need to take control. So, let's discuss briefly what are the steps required to acquire control over our thought process.

THE PROCESS OF THOUGHT CONTROL

OBSERVATION: THE FIRST STEP

The first thing you need to do to control is to observe. Unless you know what's happening you cannot control. As happened in the Kargil crisis, unless you know that the infiltration is go-

ing on, well, what strategies can you take to repulse them? You need to know what is the infiltration within your mind. So, gather your attention first. Gather yourself on one point and observe. The observation process itself requires the capacity for gathering your mind. Can we do that really? Most of the time we have not developed that capacity. Or if we have developed, it is only in spite of ourselves - simply by the pressure or need for preparation for classes perhaps. So, to be able to concentrate... let's observe what happens when you observe, when you concentrate on your thoughts. The first thing you notice is that thoughts seem to have a certain location within you.

(The speaker invited the audience to take any two points in their body and feel which one seemed closer - the elbow or the shoulder? The shoulder or the cheek? The cheek or the temple? The temple or the centre of the forehead? The centre of the forehead felt the closest.)

Can you find any other spot in the body closer than the centre of the forehead? No. It seems as if my 'I-ness' is centred around my forehead. Effectively, the focal point of my thought process is somewhere around here, which is why in developing concentration to control your thoughts, you are generally advised to gather your attention in the middle of your forehead - the point that they call the third eye, because it is here that the thought process is taking place. If you can gather yourself and focus yourself here, that's how you will acquire control over your thoughts, well, to be able to gather your attention and observe.

Now, when you observe your thoughts, the very attempt to observe fails normally because I see, 'Oh, I am observing my thoughts' and after a while I am lost in my thoughts. Again I realise, 'Oh, I was supposed to observe thoughts'. I detach. Again after a while I am lost. You cannot observe your thoughts unless you can separate yourself from them. As long as you are the thought, how can you know what the thought is? So, a part of you needs to detach from the thought process itself, and observe the thought as separate from it. How does that happen? Is it possible for the mind to do that?

In fact, most of us do it unconsciously under certain circumstances. Suppose tomorrow you had a very important meeting with the Prime Minister. Whatever you do today, even if



you are sitting down to write your exams, at the back of your mind something will say, 'Tomorrow I have this grand meeting'. The back of the mind is separate from the front of the mind. It can observe the thought process, just as it can think of something independent of what your frontal mind is thinking. To create this bifurcation, to observe your thought process by separating from it, well, observe the thought... what the thought itself is; observe its origin, observe the manner in which it flows and you will notice that most of your thoughts originate from sources which are not your own. Most of the thoughts originate from something you have read, something you have heard, something you have been told, or something you have been brought up with as a part of your family culture. Very often our religious ideas are relatively fixed, rigid, simply because we have grown up in that environment. You find it so difficult to change or to accept a new viewpoint.

And then you find there are also thoughts which seem to come as if from outside you, which seem to have no origin within you. You are just sitting and out of nowhere a thought floats, so to say, into you. You have no other way of describing it. In fact, it is true. A very large number of thoughts enter into our minds from outside. It is a fact of experience that all the thoughts are floating around. We are swimming in an ocean of thoughts, and these thoughts float in and out of our mind. We catch them, make them ours and fool ourselves into thinking that we created them. 99% of the thoughts which get into our minds have just floated in. That's how that chain of association, which we spoke of earlier, is so abstract and meaningless, because one thought floats in, connects to the previous thought and goes on flowing. A third thought floats in, connects and goes on. They are all coming in at random. Very few people or very few moments are there in our lives when we actually create a thought consciously from within our own minds. It is such a strange thing. We are so proud of our thinking capacities, and yet, most of us are incapable of creating thoughts most of the time. The creation of thought itself is something which is so rare and unless you can do that, you cannot really think for yourself. Well, this is the first stage of observation. For controlling your thoughts the first step is observation.

ANALYSIS: THE SECOND STEP

The second step is analysis. Analyse your thoughts and you notice that thoughts have characteristics, qualities. Some thoughts are stronger, some thoughts are weaker. A strong thought carries you. A weak thought can be easily dissipated. There are also some thoughts which are sticky and persistent. However hard you try to get rid of, it just keeps coming back. How do you deal with it? There are techniques of getting rid of these sticky thoughts. We can discuss it when you have questions, after the session. Observe that there are thoughts that stick to you for no reason at all and thoughts coming from your social customs, from your environment, and most of the time we are repeating thoughts which we have picked up from others. We also notice that within ourselves all kinds of thoughts can co-exist illogically, i.e. thoughts that are self-contradictory can still exist within us and we accept them. If I were to ask you, 'Was the Pokharan explosion really necessary?', well, some of you would say, 'Yes.' And you ask 'Why?' 'Well, we were being bullied and we had to show our strength.' That's one reason you will give. But, then you ask, 'How did it help? You showed your strength, what difference did it make? You just had to face sanctions and your economy went down. Wasn't really good that we had a Pokharan explosion.' And you say, 'No.' 'But then how long will you allow yourself to be bullied?' You are not too sure.

Constantly we flip between two states of thoughts. Some of you who would have observed the stock market - some days you feel the stock market is going to go up, a few minutes later you think it is going to go down. Whichever way it happens the next day, you say, 'Oh, I knew it'. Actually you knew both things and one of them had to come true. Constantly we are full of self-contradictory thoughts and we don't even recognise it. When we are in this state, this seems normal; when we are in that state, that seems normal. Well, this is what we observe, this is what we analyse in our thought process.

Next, how do you train the thought itself? The training process of thought involves many different aspects. Just as training of your physical body, of your muscles involves so many different things, so many different approaches. So too training of thought, because thought is a



multi-dimensional process, involves several different efforts. To begin with you need to be able to quieten your mind. Our mind is so confused, so many hundreds of thoughts are competing for attention that to be able to train it we need first to make it quiet. It is like a hall which is full of a hundred people shouting at the same time. Well, if you want to get anything across, there must be some silence. In fact, scientists will tell you that we use hardly one-tenth of our thought power, because the other nine-tenth is lost in meaningless activity. We are sitting down to write an exam and then at the back of your mind goes on this silly song, silly jingle, ‘*Dil to pagal hai, dil deewana hai*’. It’s extracting energy from your mind. At the same time there is another thought which says, ‘Oops! I have to go back in time because today I have to meet my cousin who is coming from out of station.’ That’s also extracting some energy from your thought process. If you observe inside you have at least 5 or 6 different processes going on simultaneously while you are trying to write your exam. And you think you can do well? If you can make your mind quiet, that is to say, shut out all thoughts, then you can deliberately allow a single thought to form. And you can use full 100% of your thought power to concentrate on that one point. Making your mind silent is the first multiplier. You think more clearly, more rapidly, more precisely.

How do you quieten your mind? Have you ever tried it? If you sit down and try to make your mind quiet, you find the first thing which happens, more thoughts come in. How do you tackle it? The more you try to quieten your mind, the more the thoughts try to come in. Well, there is a very simple technique which is given to us from the Yogic system where quietening the mind is extremely important, and the trick is very simple. Observe how your thoughts are deeply connected with your breathing process. When your mind is excited, your breathing is shallow and rapid. When you are angry, you go, ‘Hmf...hmf... that fellow... hmf...hmf’. When you are quiet, calm, your thoughts are clear, your breathing is slow and deep. It is not just that the thought makes the breathing slow, the reverse is also true. If you can deliberately make your breathing slow and deep, your thoughts automatically become quiet. If you practise this... just let’s try this three times. Take

three breaths, take it very slowly. Feel the air as it enters the nostrils, all the way up, down to the chest, and then follow it back, feeling the air move until the nose tip. Just three times, let’s try this.

(The speaker led the audience into a simple exercise of sitting straight, closing the eyes and letting the breath flow in... observing its flow into oneself, through the nose, up to the top and down... in the throat, the chest and then as one breathed out, rising up, and slowly out through the nasal cavity.)

Now open your eyes and tell me what is the state of your mind. Do you find any difference? A little? Very much? How much difference? Little difference? Anything... anyone had a greater difference? Well, just three breaths can make a difference which is so clear and so distinct. If you continue this for 3 or 4 minutes, you can make your mind still – not silent, but absolutely still. And then you tackle the problem before you or you sit down to write your exam or study your book or paper – whatever it is. You will find you can put all your thought power into it. And you can do so much more in the same time.

Well, the first part of training is to be able to quieten your mind. The second is to sift your thoughts. You have so many contradictory thoughts as we saw. Observe them and sift between them. Drop the thoughts which are of a poorer quality. Choose thoughts which are closer to a higher level. Sift them by your higher knowledge. What is right, what is better, what is superior, what is higher, what is deeper, what is larger? Thoughts have these characteristics. Choose the ones that make more sense, which are more comprehensive, which are more meaningful - deliberately.

THOUGHT ESSENCE: THE THIRD STEP

And then the third step – to unclothe the thought form from the essence of the thought. This is a very important thing. Most of the time the thought which comes into us is not just a clear single strain. It is a fluff. There is a complexity involved of which there is an essence behind. To be able to separate the essence from the rest of the stuff is a very important part of training. Let me give you an example. Very often we condemn somebody and say, ‘This fellow, he is very bad.’ Okay, you have got a clear thought – ‘He is very bad’. But, if you look into



it, why is he bad? What is it that makes one feel him as bad? Try to explain it. You are not too clear. You'll end up with some vague descriptions like, 'Well, he is too proud of himself' or 'He is always shouting at us', 'He never understands', 'He is too self-centred' – whatever it is. But, is that the whole of it? You will be able to get into an essence of it and then you find that the essence is true. But, your 'He is very bad' comment is a generalisation from the essence. So, separate the fluff of the form from the essence of the thought.

It's very interesting that especially in the advertising industry people deliberately mix the essence with the fluff of the form. That's the only way they can plant an essence of thought into your mind. For example, they want you to drink or to smoke. And well, you have been taught since your childhood that it is bad for your health, it is socially unacceptable. So, you have to be taught to drink and smoke by making it look very beautiful and attractive and exciting. So you have this image of people dancing around and music going on, with a blue ocean and green palm trees, and swaying on the swing. And then comes this bottle pouring out and 'Bacardi rum!' You didn't think of it for a moment but the mood was created within you - you felt good, and then this seed was planted in your mind. Next time you want to feel good, the seed pops up. But, if you are careful when you observe something coming into your mind, you separate the seed from the fluff. Well, you enjoy the fluff, you can observe the seed, but you won't be carried away by the mixture of the two. Observe the fluff and uncloth the thought and get the seed.

RECONCILIATION: THE FOURTH STEP

The fourth step of training is to deliberately reconcile contradictory thoughts. We have seen how there are contradictory thoughts within us but how do you reconcile contradiction? Let's take an example. You are told that you should always tell the truth. Fine. But you also know that whenever you tell the truth you get into trouble. So it is best never to tell the truth. If you tell lies you can get away with almost anything. So you have a contradiction. You can see the truth of each. How do you reconcile this contradiction? One simple way of reconciling is, 'Yes, I will always speak the truth, but I don't

need to always speak what I know. I can keep quiet if I don't want to say something which is unpleasant or which will create trouble.' That is one way of reconciling. But you can see how the contradiction exists at one level. When you reconcile it, you have to rise to a higher level. Two contradictory thoughts can never be reconciled at their own level. You need to rise one step higher to reconcile the contradiction. Now, here is this very interesting process because each time you try to reconcile, your thought process shifts up one step. Observe how each contradictory thought has a grain of truth within it. Get to the essence of that grain and then you will find at the level of the essence the grains can easily join into a higher reconciliation. Now, when you face this kind of contradiction, you must know that ultimately it is always possible to reconcile however great a contradiction.

We are also faced with what are called paradoxes – self-contradictory statements. A paradox is not wrong, a paradox is only a gateway to a higher truth. Let me give you an example. If I were to tell you that all bearded people are liars, so, well, I am a bearded person, therefore, I am a liar. Therefore, my first statement is wrong, which means all bearded people always tell the truth. Okay you end up contradicting yourself by the very statement you have made. How do you reconcile this self-contradiction? Well, there are two ways you can reconcile it. The first way is to say, 'Well, a liar need not tell lies all the time. A person may be a liar but there are moments when he can tell the truth also.' That is one reconciliation. You have already had to think in a different way. But, there is still a higher reconciliation which is – observe what happens when I am making this statement. I make this statement, 'All bearded people are liars' in an objective way. I do not count myself in it. I make it as a statement of observation where I am separate from it. I make that comment as an observer, as an independent observer. So, I can stand back from myself and observe myself make a statement and therefore, there is no contradiction. You have actually to rise above one step from your ordinary thought process in understanding this. It is very interesting. Every time you try to resolve a contradiction, your mind actually expands in its flexibility, in its scope. You actually open new doors and windows to your mind's processes. Let me give you another



example. There is a statement... all these are common self-contradictory statements... you can say that God is omnipotent, all-powerful. Can he therefore make a stone which he cannot lift? If he can make a stone which he cannot lift, that means he cannot lift the stone, so he is not all-powerful. If he can't make a stone which he cannot lift, that means he is not all-powerful because he can't make that stone. So, you end up with a conclusion that god is not all-powerful. How do you reconcile this apparent contradiction? Well, there is one way by which you can do it, which is to observe the statement again, a little deeper. Rise one more step and you say, 'Yes, god can make a stone which he cannot lift because he is all-powerful – he can do something which is beyond his own capacity.' You feel that thought for a moment... to be able to do something beyond your own capacity is the ultimate test of your all-powerfulness, isn't it? So, the answer to that question is, 'Yes, he can make a stone which he cannot lift because he is all-powerful.' You can see how you are actually forced to make an effort to rise in your thought process to a new level, and your mind... it stretches, its envelope expands a little to incorporate this new idea. Well, this is a very interesting exercise – reconciles contradictions and it does lead to very rapid expansion of your thought capacities.

ACCEPTANCE & REJECTION: THE FIFTH STEP

The next step – part of the training of your thought – is to recognise that most of the thoughts are coming from outside, as we discussed earlier. Once you recognise that they are coming from outside, you know that you can control them. You know that you can reject thoughts which you do not want, accept thoughts which you do want and more importantly, reject old thoughts for new thoughts, reject poorer thoughts for better thoughts. You must constantly be revising your world view, your understanding of the world, your understanding of every single thing and your beliefs. We must not be afraid to throw out the old and to take in something new. We must not be afraid of making a mistake because making mistakes is a part of the process of growing in your thoughts, part of the process of discovering real knowledge. Making an error is not falsehood. Error is defective or partial knowledge, falsehood

is deliberate distortion of knowledge - that is not what you are doing. We are changing our thoughts to try to find something better and greater.



SINCERITY: THE SIXTH STEP

And finally, a very important part of thought training is to be sincere in your thoughts. Be sincere in deliberately facing the truth, however uncomfortable. Don't prefer convenient thoughts, don't reject inconvenient thoughts. You should be able to face squarely whatever the thought places before you – however uncomfortable you feel. 'Yes, I have been brought up in an environment where I have been taught to believe this is right. Now someone comes and tells me, no, it is like that. Instead of just saying, 'No, you are wrong', let me see... let me see what the truth is in what he says. Think about it from his viewpoint and from that viewpoint see my earlier thought.' If you find a direct contradiction, try to resolve it by going one step higher. If you find that one of the thought is superior to the other, reject the poorer thought, but you must be able to face head on however inconvenient. This sincerity is the bedrock of all conscious training of your thought process, and to be able to accept the truth of each thought keeping an impersonal attitude, without getting carried away. You will find that sometimes the most profound thoughts may come to you from most unexpected sources. You will observe very little children have a way of saying something which is so poignant – it just hits you, pierces you sometimes – deep thoughts even. Also, don't accept blindly whatever you believe or hear.



Question it. That means facing the truth. Question what you are told. See what is the extent of truth in it. Very often you are thrown jargon. Recently there was this collapse of currencies in the South Asian countries. You will have hundreds of articles in different journals stating the reason for the collapse. They called it a meltdown, a global meltdown – overheating of economy. You accepted it perhaps. Ask yourself, what do you mean by ‘overheating of an economy’. Nobody seems to bother to define that. What do you mean by ‘a global meltdown’? You are describing a collapse of currency by saying overheating of economy. But, you don’t explain why – you just put a label there. It was very common 200 years ago in the West, where they used to ask questions in examination papers, ‘Why is water flowing?’. And the answer to the question was, ‘Because it is a liquid’. You never defined what the liquid is. What you said... you put a label up by saying there is a liquid. If this is a liquid it has to flow. What makes water a liquid? You never answered the question. In fact, if you look deeply, most of what we are taught today eventually boils down to labels, descriptions, not explanations. Simple example: we all know gravity. We have formulas describing gravity – apple has to fall. What is gravity? No answer. You just have a label of gravity which describes the process of attraction between objects. You describe the laws, the equations which describe the attraction, but you don’t know what gravity is. Do you now what is love? Do you know what is thought? Do you know what is happiness? No. We just have labels, we are dealing with labels most of the time. Eventually, almost all formal knowledge boils down to simply the play of labels. You must be able to face this head on and accept that you do not know. ‘Not only, I don’t know, it looks like a lot of people do not know. Can we really find the answer?’ That’s when your real search will begin.

THE OCCULT DIMENSION OF THOUGHTS

Well, these are only some of the points for training of the thought process. And there is much more to thought than that. I will specifically give a brief insight into an occult dimension of what thoughts are like before I will open to questions. As we saw a moment ago, the thought process tends to centre around the centre of your fore-

head. A person who has the clairvoyant capacity, can actually see thoughts floating out of your head. Each time you think, a thought takes on a form, a shape, a colour and it floats out of your mind, goes to execute itself. The clearer the thought, the clearer its shape. The more vague the thought, the more fuzzy its form. The more powerful the thought, the more power the thought form has and goes to execute itself. This is a very important truth. All the thoughts that you think are thrown out into the environment and because they are thrown out of your own stuff of mind, they are a part of you and eventually they return to you which means, if you are constantly thinking negative thoughts, all the negativity you are throwing out returns to you eventually, attaches itself to you, draws on your energy and goes out to spread negativity and returns again to draw out your energy. Observe how people who are pessimistic and negative are always weak and tired. People who are always optimistic and enthusiastic are full of energy. But, see the correlation now – you can understand why it happens. Observe, also know, that the thoughts which are going out, they are going to do something. That means if you think of something strong, big enough, repeatedly enough, it will tend to happen, which is why things which you are afraid of ‘tend to happen’ more easily, more often, because your very fear puts out thought forms, which makes that thing happen. You now realise that you actually have a responsibility of what you are thinking, because the thoughts which you put out will come back to you and harm you. Also, they will harm others – along with environmental pollution of chemicals, there is an environmental pollution of your thoughts. We have a responsibility to think healthy, meaningful, beautiful thoughts if we want to contribute something worthwhile to our own lives and to the world.

LEVELS HIGHER THAN THOUGHT

EXPRESSING ABSTRACT IDEAS

But, thought process is not the only thing which our mind is capable of. Above thought is a different level of working which we call the abstract idea. It is very interesting that an abstract idea can be expressed in many different thoughts. The idea itself is independent of language. It can be expressed in different languages. Let’s take one example. If you take the thought that ‘I want



to serve my nation' – now, this is a thought, this is an idea which can express itself... you can express it in different languages, in different thoughts – 'I will serve my nation as a soldier', 'I will serve my nation as doctor', 'I will serve my nation as an engineer', or whatever it is. The specific form of thought is different but you have in your mind the sense of wanting to serve the nation. It is an idea which can express in so many different thought forms. You can gradually train yourself to think at the level of ideas. When you can think at the level of ideas you will find your thinking process can be very rapid. Your grasping power multiplies at least tenfold and you can gain insights into whatever you are studying or whatever problems you face.

THINKING OF CONCEPTS

But still above the level of thinking of ideas there is a higher level of abstraction which is the level of thinking of concepts. A concept is unformulated. It is something like an abstract feeling, unformulated, which can express itself in many ideas, for example, the concept of Freedom. When I say the word 'freedom', what does it mean to you? For some people it will mean the freedom of the country from alien rule, for some people it would mean to be free of family or my responsibilities of a social life, for some it will mean going out to do whatever you want to do. These are all again different ideas. Now each idea will then be expressed in different thoughts. Imagine the level of abstraction at which you think at the level of concepts. If you can train yourself to think at the level of concepts you will find that not only the rapidity of your thought will become the level of a genius, but you will be able to perceive connections and relationships between totally unconnected, different ideas and thoughts. It is a very important capacity which geniuses tend to practise automatically, but which each one of us can develop within ourselves to rise out of the process of ordinary thought to the level of idea, from idea to the level of concept.

RECEIVING INTUITIONS

And finally, after one is capable of this, one opens oneself to the capacity to receive an intuition. Intuition is a level of working which is well beyond even the thinking of concept. Intuition actually bypasses or rises beyond thought proc-

ess itself. Thought process, as we saw before, is a sequencing of thoughts. Intuition bypasses all sequencing, jumps straight to the answer. A problem is placed before you, you look at it and bing! you know the answer. This is the working of intuition, however difficult, however complex the problem. And it is again within the reach of each one of us to find that capacity and consciously to bring it into effect in our lives. The first requirement is to be able to make your mind absolutely quiet, because intuition is something which, to begin with, comes very gently. If your mind is clouded with all kinds of thoughts, it cannot receive the intuition. In the traditions they describe how the mind should become absolutely quiet like a lake; the surface of a lake when it is absolutely quiet reflects the sun or the moon with a clear picture. Intuition is like the knowledge which is always there available, but to be able to receive it in the mind, your mind must be made absolutely still. And it is when you can bring into effect the intuition, even if in brief flashes, that's when you can make a really worthwhile contribution to humanity. All great musicians, all great scientists, engineers, researchers or whatever it is that people have done great in their lives, have finally drawn on their greatness to bring something new into the world, have drawn on this capacity to gain intuition. Because, it is only through intuition that you can bring something into the world which is not already there. All thought process is only a combination and manipulation of existing thoughts. Intuition is the only faculty which allows you to bring in something not already existent. To be able to open yourself to the intuition, to develop the capacity for intuition will make you capable of making a worthwhile contribution to the world in your life. This is a brief outline of all that I had to say and I will now invite your questions on anything we have discussed, or anything else that you wish to ask.

- Sradhhalu Ranade