
INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIVE CENTRES

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Mandali hall, Meherazad, India

August 2, 1981

15:15

PILGRIM 1: This is from Neti-Neti, which is the British newsletter regarding Baba. The title of the article is, "No Baba Centre is an Island", by Gareth Calloway of South Wales.

Dick Newman's letter, June Neti-Neti is a convincing reiteration of a theme running through so many of Baba's messages.

MANI: Just a minute before you continue. The reason why it was requested that we read out is that you know how when one works for Baba in the different groups, wherever there is Baba lovers group and their workers will. They all want to serve Baba, spread His name, work. And it is found that it is not always easy. It is difficult. It sometimes gets so difficult that it is almost impossible. Where Baba makes the impossible possible. And sometimes the possible we make almost impossible. And this is a. We were talking on this subject these last few weeks. Whenever it just come up and just today I was telling someone how a Baba lover who came to see Him in Mussoorie. It's above Dehra Dun where it's very cold. It was 1953. And she had been to the different ashrams. The ashram of Pondicherry, the ashram of Ramananda, the ashram of some so and so and on and on you see. And then she had come to Baba.

She had heard of Baba and had come to love Baba through Filis Frederick. So she came to Mussoorie and we were in the cottage and so word was brought in that this lady wants to see you. I believe her name was Audrey [inaudible]

ERUCH: Audrey.

MANI: So, Baba said, "Fine. I will see her. Tell her to wait." So she waited outside, yes. And she waited and she waited and she waited. After a while then Baba sent Rano. Now Baba was not particularly busy with something so that you know He asked her to wait. He simply said, "Tell her to wait." Then Rano goes over and she said, "Yes?" And Rano says, "Baba says that wait some more, Baba will call you."

By now she's not that calm, peaceful lady who was waiting for an interview with Baba, for an audience with Baba. She was a bit worried and she was crying and Rano came back. After still some time Baba said, "All right, go." And then after He talked to her she can come in. So when Rano goes back the lady explodes, "What is this? Everywhere I went I've been welcomed with open arms. In ashram of Pondicherry they just took me in immediately and did this and this and that and that. I went to such and such an ashram and what a welcome I got. And here, I'm asked to wait and wait and wait and all." And she came back and Baba said go tell her that, "You have come to the Highest of the High. Going to different ashrams as you have been and the welcome you received was fine according to where you went. But if you come to the Highest of the High it is not going to be the same. It is not going to be easy. So if you still want to see Baba, Baba will see you." [bell chimes] When that message was conveyed, she immediately accepted it beautifully. She realised that yes, this is different.

So then she came and Baba was very loving, very. I mean she even wanted to take pictures and Baba posed for her here and posed for her exactly as she said, you see. And she had this particular camera in which the lens was three dimensional.

ERUCH: No what I remember is that she said that she could capture the halo. [general laughter]

MANI: Really?

ERUCH: Yes. Halo of Baba and the aura of the people who are around Him.

MANI: So, and do you know what happened? Well she said, "Baba you and Kaikobad stand there. Baba you and the girls. Baba you and." He did everything, wherever she said, with whoever she said. Do you know, but over a year later when we said what's happened to those photos? Because we were very much wanting to [crosstalk]. Yeah, so and while He was standing and posing she would assume you know that [general laughter] [inaudible].

And when we enquired about a year later and she said, "None of the pictures came out at all." So then.

ERUCH: Because none of us had any aura nor any halo. [pilgrims laughing]

MANI: Well at least the horse could have come out. So you see the thing is that whenever Baba lovers ask, "Why is it that the simplest things become difficult?" And I say, "With Baba it is different." Like that story of the coco-cola and orange I told you about the other day with Vilu and [inaudible]. So as Baba said, "All that she did Vilu, was any of it for Me?" And she said, "No." "So this is for me, it's different." Here it's very interesting and heart-warming how the Baba lovers themselves are seeing it, understanding it, working it out and facing it. Read that page.

PILGRIM 1: Dick Newman's letter June, Neti-Neti, is a convincing reiteration of a theme running through so many of Baba's messages. "There can be no greater falling," Baba says, "than that the aspirant quarrelling with another over the pros and cons of this way or that instead of concentrating on his own onward march. Any work done in this quarrelsome spirit is no work at all. Differences of opinion and feelings of competition and jealousy lead to the breakdown of the very basis of works, be it political, social or spiritual." Dick in applying this undoubted truth to the work done by Baba's centres emphasizes that group or no, it is all a matter of the individuals' private life as Baba's close companion. By way of this emphasis however, Dick comes up with only a half truth. It is good to get together but it is not necessary. Dick in fact consistently understates an integral facet of Baba's work. The collective. The collective and the individual, the public and the private are all, I feel, one in Baba's love.

Baba is careful to point out that, "When I say that each one of you be a Baba centre, it does not mean that each of you should work individually when you can work collectively in groups as Baba centres." But infinitely aware of our differences He goes on, "Neither does this mean that you should not work on your own." He then characteristically hands each of us the initiative by adding, "I have shown you how I desire the work to be done. It is for you to follow the method best suited to you." Dick has emphasized the individual basis of a relationship with Baba. And of course countless souls came to Baba by way of a private interview with Him. Dick's emphasis leaves room for and calls for an appreciation of Baba's love for darshans. Large gatherings of lovers in His name and of the general collective aspect of His work.

This is not however to suggest that the collective includes, excludes the individual or vice-versa. As Baba says, "The reason I have called upon you individually to work for Me is so that each one of you may share in the divine cause and these programs such as mass darshans are created to give an opportunity for the expression of individual and collective love." Whenever I have gathered with Baba people, whether at Oceanic or at the Norwich Baba Centre I have felt Baba's irresistible parental enjoyment of the situation. Both mischievous in the case of heat and friction generated where and if the friction is absent or overcome. Recently while enjoying an energetic chat with an Aussie, with an Aussie [inaudible] and another [inaudible] Pune at Oceanic, each of us as different as our homelands, I noticed Baba's face beaming over us and looking upward.

Caught sight of a biscuit tin with the family circle emblazoned upon it, ludicrous? Beautiful. But while on the subject of heat and friction, isn't it as Baba says, "Natural that amongst workers of any cause there are bound to be differences of opinion. You win some, you lose some. The point is not to get upset about it or else the work is destroyed at its base." So let us consider how Baba handled interpersonal conflict. Charles Purdom wrote, "It is a part of Baba's method of working to be in contact with crowds of people. These crowds were not His lovers or even necessarily true believers under another name but simply large sections of humanity at large. When He visits cities He almost invariably walks, now He drives in the most crowded streets and goes to cinemas and other places where people congregate. Again of course despite His evident love of life Baba would work for long periods in seclusion. Or with a handful of people. And He further indicated the benefit to busy people of solitude. Not fear of life. The gregarious aspect of Baba's nature accords perfectly with His complete humanity."

Dick devised in his letter a splendid praise about Western civilisation. Technology-the occultism and magic of our Western culture. He suggests that this technology provides an opportunity for the aloof Baba lover to share of Baba, ergo on tape, without having to get involved with Baba groups. True but such technology itself is the collective product of billions of working and social relationships. Western civilisation is a vast, complex group of souls working for and against each other and the whole. Whether we touch, do, think, the languages we sort out our thoughts in etc. are, like it or not, social influences. They make us bigger than our ego thinks, thank God. Baba's work through the whole is everywhere. The world is His Baba Centre. It is not surprising that the U.S.A. the synthesis of the white races and also the chief encounter zone of white and black races was the Western soil whereupon it was necessary for Baba as predicted to shed His precious blood.

"America," He said, "has great energy. But it is running amuck into material conflicts." He said He would direct the great energy into spiritual channels. America and Baba, what a team! The U.S.A. is certainly the heart of Western culture, heat and friction. It is also the home of Myrtle Beach, where is legendary for its Baba residences. It is also the centre of contemporary psychology both theory and practice. Social, material and mental conflict, tremendous creative energy. No wonder the psychologists have taken out a monopoly, or so it seems on American movies and T.V. scripts ranging from high art to soap opera.

It is also easy to see why Baba so often chose to adopt the language of modern psychology. Furthermore the pioneering work that is done in America and the West in general in various kinds of degrees in group therapy, not all of it good is

reminiscent of Baba's group working with the mandali and others, way back in the 30's. Having to share honestly what one's thoughts are, and maybe hostile with others in creative confrontation which precipitates first acceptance and then adjustment in a larger interest of social harmony. Acceptance is only the beginning and this acceptance of Baba's work cannot be done in solitude or by remaining aloof. It is collective in consequence and inter-personal in its dynamic. It should be noted that in quarrels amongst His mandali or indeed among any of His followers, Baba not immediately attempted to restore harmony but allowed discord to develop, even to provoke it. Purdom, "This emphatically is the world-wide collective situation at present and what can the solution be but adjustment."

This is the fundamental, easier said than done, lesson on Baba's curriculum. It is being learned now, at Oceanic. It is as much a part of Baba's work as the exquisite harmony of having tea twice a week with a compatible Baba contact. For better or for worse, as in marriage, so in love, so in Baba.

Then it says, Baba states, "There are 3 principle ways in which I work:
1] Individually, 2] Collectively for crowds and masses, 3] Universally. My mind being universal is linked up with every individual mind. It is for you to follow the method best suited to you." Meher Baba.

ERUCH: Thank you.