

Meeting Sri Sri – Important questions to ask

I entered his room. He was not there, but at the same time he was. His presence was *very* strong in the room, the entire room was permeated by it, by this powerful and good energy. In fact, I was almost blown away by it, so strong as it was. It hit me, in my face, my body and everywhere. The room was one big thick ‘wall’ of energy. Incredible. I had never experienced something like this before, not coming close in any way. And it smelt like India.

We waited rather long, which was something I would get used to when meetings with Sri Sri were about to happen. In the train I had asked Joyce how to greet him. Sitting with your knees on the ground, and then bowing with your head forward, downward, eventually lightly touching the ground with your forehead, hands resting next to the head. So I did.

I did not have any problem bowing before another human being, as Imelda had. Although I myself was not into or attached to any form – bowing or whatever – I was not against it either. And this bow, for this master – or, in general, for ‘the Master’ – symbolized a greater, deeper Principle of Nature: the small bows for Something Greater than itself, whether this ‘greater’ was referring to Energy or to Consciousness. In the end, the Bowing would be before the Deepest manifestation of the Very Heart Itself. The Bow was anyway not for a person, for another. It was not what persons who were attached to their ego were so afraid of: an ego bowing for another ego. This would be impossible indeed, or, if done anyway, for instance because of hierarchy as a form, it would be fake. No, in Truth there was nothing to be afraid of. I Bowed for the Highest Principle and since recently I had become aware of the fact that That manifested – partially or anyway – in (some) human beings. I couldn’t have imagined myself feeling urged to leave the room, as Imelda, because at least at the moment of bowing my head was lower than that of the master.

Even if later it would have turned out that I was fooled, that Sri Sri would not be ‘true’, then so what if I had bowed already and couldn’t take it back? ‘I’ bowed for all there was to be learned, discovered, and that could not be done by ‘I’. ‘I’ bowed, sincerely, humbly, to quietly laugh the ego in its face. I also bowed for Sri Sri, and for however he had managed to, via his Body, manifest and radiate this enormous energy into the world, an energy so powerful I would never experience with any other master, before or afterwards.

Now that I would meet a master personally – Pir Vilayat was not personally approachable except for maybe small incidental encounters, like I had with him in the mountains asking for ‘my’ name – many issues arose in me that I’d like very much his feedback on. As I indicated earlier, in the vacuum old ‘truths’, illusions, had fallen away, Truth Itself had not arrived yet in full glory. There was no Overview yet. With the arrival of ‘the old wise man with the white beard’ a deep Love beyond myself had arrived but not Wisdom Itself. I was *very eager* to listen to what Sri Sri had to say on several issues. I had asked Joyce in advance if it was usual, or anyway all right, to ask Sri Sri questions. Although asking questions might seem totally normal in the ordinary world in which ego has the impertinence to assume it has a right for everything and certainly for asking questions, I didn’t take it for granted that I could ask questions. It was anyway not my custom, used as I was to solving questions by myself or read about it. But now, asking questions to a master –

just when asking questions would finally make sense, when finally a sensible answer might come in return – might be a bit or rather impudent and immodest, taking his time with my silly lacks of clarity.

His entrance into his own room, while Joyce and I were waiting there, was impressive, even though during our waiting I had already got more or less used to his strong energy. Joyce had told me that from his youth up, from the age of five or so, Sri Sri was educated and destined to become a tantric master. In some years he was supposed to and did indeed become the head of his tantric branch.

Sri Sri lit a few candles and a piece of incense. We were silent for a while. Sri Sri, meditating me, seemed to be staring in the far. I was not attached to bringing up my issues. After quite a few minutes, perhaps five, however, Sri Sri asked: “What can I do for you?”

Joyce had said earlier that it was not becoming to ask many issues. One question would do, or else maximum three. I would limit myself to five. My hunger for truth was too big to respect norms. Sri Sri was, obviously, man enough to stop me if I had too many questions. Anyway, I was not a mind questioner. I was not someone who asked a question, listened to the answer and on to the next question. I no longer lived in the mind, as I did in my twenties. I would let any transmission of an answer wholly go through me, as deep and serious as possible. Instead of giving any response immediately, Sri Sri let me first mention the issues that I considered relevant, that were (still) running through me without finding peace yet:

. I always lost so easily ‘my’ energy, ‘my’ force, the healthy tension one needs for daily life. ‘I’ got lost, not consciously but energetically. Was this just happening to me, my system, or did I do something in this respect, and, if so, how? Related: how could I increase the level of energy?

This question, like all questions, had an ego-based component in it. Ego always wanted to have more energy, so that it could run after its goals 24 hours a day. It cannot accept any lack of energy. A lack of energy stands for death, according to Ego. I had already been forced to accept that ‘my’ body would never function any more as other human bodies and as it functioned before ‘my’ breakdown ten years earlier. In an energetic sense I would always be on the border, walk a thin subtle line, and many times fall off to recover afterwards. My concern now was not related to the fact that I would like to have more energy for its own sake, to feel better, not so uncomfortable, or to be able to do more things. Rather it had to with the intuition that in order to do what I had to do on earth, to give what I had to give, in order to Manifest ‘Myself’ as I Was, I, this Body, seemed to need Energy. Now that I started to discover some spiritual talents of ‘mine’, the issue hadn’t lost any of its relevance.

I had no Clarity yet on a Deeper Level of the fact that Energy Bows for and Follows Consciousness, that it didn’t make sense to help Consciousness Manifesting by increasing or in any way manipulating Energy. On the contrary, this would prevent the True Deeper

Process from Unfolding in a pure way, in the way It Should. The result would be something else than the Pure Truth Itself.

Extremely sensitive as 'my' Body was, I could in a natural way allow processes that would undo, get rid of, discharge the deadening life-killing energies and, thus, be revived, resurrected, of Itself, by the Power of Consciousness, the Real Power Beyond Energetic Power, Allowing Life after Death, Death after Life and so on, Allowing Duality to Alternate, Freely, without ego-based intervention.

. *In my right nostril I had a wound for 13 years already by then.*

Joyce had told me that Sri Sri had had an education in normal medical science with surgery as a specialization – as well as in alternative healing and medicine. In combination with his spiritual knowledge it seemed a fine opportunity to gain more clarity on the inner nose wound bleeding almost every day.

. *Why can't I just have a quiet, loving relationship with a woman? Or, how can I let go of 'Woman', the One Woman?*

Well, in fact, it was not possible to let go of the One Divine Woman, since, as Man, I was, Beyond myself, 'Married' to Her. She was Inseparable Part of Me, of Man. The question arose as a remainder of an untransformed loan, something I had had to borrow from Woman until I got Clarity on it and was able to Go Beyond it. For it was Woman Who was busy with this, in fact, how to let go of Man, how to be independent from Him, how to make Him stop hurting Her, as he seemed to do, and so on. It was part of the Process of Letting Go of having to let go and, instead, just keep meditating something or someone as long as it or she was arising and active in or through 'me'. In fact, I had at a rapid pace become a specialist myself in letting go of a Woman-form. In that sense there was no need to ask Sri Sri. But, it is true, at that time I was not Clear yet about the Divine Woman, how She would Manifest. I still assumed somewhere that She would or should manifest in one Woman-form – even though no longer assuming that we would live happily ever after, for which every need or serious longing had fallen away.

It is, or seems, surprising that, with my experience of the past years, I nonetheless asked Sri Sri why I couldn't have a quiet, loving relationship with a woman. Well, I didn't Understand Duality yet to the very Bottom, nor did I, *therefore*, Understand Myself and my Relation with Woman wholly. Sri Sri interrupted me at my third issue. "This one first", he said. First I had to find out about the issue 'Woman', about 'women and me'. Well, this was not something for a Sunday afternoon. Even though *the syrup* had left me, further clarity would, probably, (only) arrive when a next Woman-form appeared. Potential Clarity Itself (Man) was not enough. It had to be filled with (next layers of) dust, obscurity, form, to Manifest this Potential Clarity in the Body.

Sri Sri said I had to definitively say goodbye to Tiara, if I hadn't done this completely yet. In any case I felt very quiet the moment I surrendered to him and accepted: it will never

become something between Tiara and me, it is over, for good. A stable relationship in which the Process of Man and Woman could unfold with two responsible persons was just not possible with her. It was perfectly all right, at least for me – despite that for her it was sad, to be too much damaged for being in relationship with a man who is available. If at all something could still have fallen away from me, the last remainder of doubt or a tendency to still contact her for a possible next attempt, then it fell away from me for good now that Sri Sri had given his short, determined comment. He confirmed my own intuition, as he would do more often.

Furthermore, Sri Sri said I needed to find a tantrika, a woman suitable for tantra. This would be good for me. Then, when I had found her, Sri Sri would teach me how to practice tantra with her. Wow, this was a truly nice, if not paradisiac prospect.

The conversation had taken its own course, so I didn't finish the five questions I had prepared, let alone the other issues going through me in that period or in general and looking for clarity, issues I liked to hear Sri Sri's view or feeling on. Like:

. I felt in myself beautiful spiritual potentialities. Should I focus less or rather more on (meditating) them – preferably all day long? Do I need to manifest 'myself', my qualities, creativity, first, more or next to that, in the world?

. How could I protect myself better, regarding 'negative' energy of people, trouble with radiation from computers and so on?

If I let go of my will, if I let the body go by itself, 'I', at least my body, gets in a strange cramp, taking the form of a foetus. Should I do something with this? It felt like it was something important and something that partly determined my life up to then.

I never asked Sri Sri, but in the next spring I, indeed, freely experimented with this, with quite an important result. I will address that at its proper place.

. In order to learn, to be able to let go of it, was it necessary to look for 'my' pain?

Another very relevant issue. The role of Pain in people's and even humanity's Growth Process, their Process of Becoming Conscious(ness). The uttermost important role of Pain in this. The question whether 'I' had to look for it, was not so relevant, in fact. It would show up anyway if I was serious about Growing. One couldn't become Conscious without Feeling Pain in many forms and to various degrees of intensity and depth. Because of my close, deep involvement with Woman, not to say my oneness with Her, I, later, became sort of an expert on (the role of) Pain in the Whole Human Process. Woman (the Female Force, in fact) and Pain could not be Seen really separate from one another, I learned. The Female Force *Was* the Separating Force and there was no difference in the end between 'separation' and 'pain'.

‘My’ big Love for Woman, the Drive to Establish Oneness with Her, ‘my’ big Impulse to Bring the Heart Down to Earth and Going Deeply into the Pain, were all the same Thing in the End.

I had ‘something’ (difficult) with breathing. Continuously, mostly subconsciously, I have the feeling that I must breathe instead of it coming.

Related to this: I fight. How to let go of fighting? How can I be while doing?

Big questions in a few words. The fight I noticed in myself could not be let go by me. That would again be *me* stopping fighting, which would in turn be part of a fight: me fighting ‘the fight’. No, the Fight – Duality was the Fight, every Fight – had to be Fought, just until it was enough and It Let Go. There was no alternative for life. Duality Was life. Life *was* a Fight. So why should *I*, important *I*, then have an exceptional royal position of peace – lifeless peace? My body has always been a battlefield in and as which the Dual Forces Fought their Fight. Why should ‘my’ Body breathe normally in the war? ‘My’ Body was not mine. It was Life Itself. If Life was cramped, if Unconsciousness ruled on earth – had the ascendancy at least – then ‘my’ Body was cramped. Only, by paying attention to its pains, cramps, suffocation, ‘it’ became increasingly Conscious, Wise.

In the cramp of suffocation due to form-ness, heartlessness on earth, there was a strong tendency to breathe by myself, in order to survive. But cramp should sooner or later be felt, not be avoided to arise in one’s awareness by going into reactive, ego-based breathing. In this crazy cramped fast and complex world there was hardly or no time to Wait, to just wait for a next, natural, breath. Yet, in spite of my Body being the world, and ultimately everybody’s Body was, my Body was different somehow, uncommon.

Writing down at the time in my Sri Sri diary the question “How can I be while doing?” revealed my hunger and eagerness to present and go through the big issues of life with a big man. If he had lived the issue himself I could resonate with the wisdom that had emerged from that.

Another way of formulating the question: “How could I be Man in Woman’s world? Or: how could I be and stay Aware of the Formless while busy in the world of form? How could I no longer be deluded in any way by Form, by the Deluding Female Force?”

This question came a bit too early – as every question came too early. First the Two Needed to Be Known, Both from Within. Or else, combining them would be a hopeless project. Only Consciousness Offered Freedom in the End – Consciousness Embedded in the (reality of the) Body.

*. Should I keep practicing vipassana meditation – and/or another form of meditation?
Why not ‘make’ – or Have – Direct Contact with the Divine, with the One? Why not part from the separation at once, at one go?*

An interesting question. If someone is capable of it, there’s nothing against ‘making direct contact with’, or even better, immediately Being the Divine. Only, the profane

(consciousness, perspective) will easily return. Then one can, once again, Realize to be the Divine – after which this Realization will disappear again. And so on. Also here, in this radical Directness, one cannot avoid to, sooner or later, ‘do’ the fundamental work of Observing Duality and one’s helplessness, hopelessness, in it. It was not up to (a) ‘me’ to decide to Be or make a Direct Jump to Realize Being One. One cannot skip the Pain and Frustration of (being in) the Other, undesired, difficult Side. Freedom always meant: Surrender (in)to the Two (Sides), not just to the One, the one (egoically) considered to be the One. The One without the Two is no Real One, however.

. Did I lack woman(’s energy)?

Did I lack man(’s energy)?

. Was it better to remove pictures of Tiara? Was it better not to call any more, not to read postcards and so on? Or should I rather walk the middle course: keep expressing my love and now and then say ‘no’ out of protection?

Reading again all my questions of that period, it’s funny to see how they all arise out of self-obsession, how they are all forms of it but packaged differently. What was, in fact, the difference between self-obsession and ignorance?

With a(n allegedly) wise man around and available I almost automatically put myself in the position of not-wise. It was, for instance, just my way to keep expressing my love to a woman after she left. Why should I possibly stop this behaviour, simply because there would be a wise man who might think it better to break off all contact? It was not about the fact that his wisdom was not proven yet – his powerful energy was not necessarily the same as wisdom – but about the fact that I had to do it my way anyway, no matter if the wise man was right or not. His rightness had nothing to do with ‘me’, with the way I needed to live, the way I needed to See, Discover the Truth. A child needed to make (a lot of) mistakes in order to learn. If I didn’t actually live through ‘my’ lacks of clarity – which, in the end, were everybody’s – I’d be a ‘dead’ wise man at best, no Man. My Way as Man was to be Available for (a) Woman who had Something with me, who had a deeper attraction related to the way I was Supposed to Grow, to Learn. Man didn’t have a Way on His Own. It was Totally Related to Woman.

Around the (supposedly) wise man, around That Which was (or should have been) Greater than ‘me’, I at least seemed to get more into (an) ‘I’ again, into doubt, into dilemma, into questions. It was also like an automatic Duality we got in, a play of roles nature put upon us. Yet, I was not against it. I felt it was good to Resonate with Sri Sri. Surrender to Him did not mean being a slave of his answers to ‘my’ – to everyone’s – inner Struggles. Answers to Duality did not exist anyway, in the end. I had to live them, to Allow Consciousness to Settle in ‘my’ Body. There was more to say about it, but meeting Sri Sri was certainly part of a test, for how stable I was in the things that I experienced and – more or less, to whatever depth – Saw already.

Next to possible Transmission by the master, being offered to meet Sri Sri privately was good if only for the fact that I had to become aware of and write down, formulate, the issues, dilemmas that were going through me. Getting Clarity on Duality was by then a not irrelevant part of becoming Conscious: simply being aware of the Fight, rather than having or heading for an answer. Every answer was inherently deluding, if indeed I would deny or go against the Other Side of the Duality.

So the list of questions continued, questions that hopefully on a future occasion could be offered (in)to the Consciousness of the master – questions generally related to the issue of giving the Divine a helping hand or not, absurd as it may seem and as it was, formulated this way.

. Regarding coming back to 'force' and keeping it, was it good to force? I had discovered a little trick in this respect: pushing the belly (muscles) outward. This yielded energy, presence, clarity (though also restlessness). Or should I first fathom my state of not being there, see what this state is and why it is there – to be able to let go of it in a way that is more natural?

Was 'my' weakness, emptiness, a flight, escape, a conditioning? Should I first face the emptiness, being devoid of energy?

Later I would rather call the trick or practice 'pushing down', but it was part of the same movement. It was one package: pushing down by the diaphragm whereupon the belly muscles are automatically tensed as well and pushed out. My confusion had to do with the fact that I didn't (fully) Recognize the Descending Force as Natural, as 'just' one of the Two Divine Directions, the Other Being the Female Ascending Force. I thought or assumed that when an impulse to push down came – or to 'pierce down', as I called it later as well – it was 'me' having the impulse, 'me' possibly following it, 'me' wanting to become more forceful or present on the Earthly Level. But the Male Descending Force was not a 'me'. I rather should have called it a 'me' if i resisted this Descending Force that had to make natural use of the diaphragm and belly muscles and if i unconsciously chose or kept choosing and being attached to one side, to the Female Ascending Force, Which Blew 'Man' easily Up if He didn't Fight in return (including in a physical way, with the muscles mentioned).

My starting point on earth was different from the one most people had. Going and Being Down was not familiar to me, so I thought that 'I' did it when 'I' finally allowed the Down-Going Force.

Also, having listened to Woman, I thought that the Down Side of the Coin was the right Side instead of it being one of the Two, which were however Both natural part of the Whole, the One. As always, the Female Force was deluding and Deluded to believe that one side was the right one, which was the 'place' or instance that Ego came into existence, although at the same time it was Ego who created the belief.

In fact, the reason 'I' – and I really cannot take this personal – was so attractive for many people, women in front, was because I was not only here down on earth in a human body but had a Heart that allowed, lived a much Wider perspective, that radiated Love for

them and in general. Yet, it was a great challenge to Allow the Male Descending Force to such a great extent and depth that this Heart was sort of ‘Squeezed’ into this Body, without losing its wider radiance, that the Body could Contain the Heart, instead of being a weak empty Heart-sac, to exaggerate a bit.

Indeed, the weakness, the empty balloon state was an escape if I would submit to settling in it, painful but easy as it was – if I would not let the balloon be naturally pumped up again and again before deflation would, also naturally, happen again, in turn. Well, in the end I was not the type of guy to settle anywhere, not in any side of any coin of duality. I was Destined to Be Free beyond the Two – and not for my own pleasure. My Freedom, My Free Heart, was ‘my’ Natural Gift to Woman and, then, also to My beloved (as She was part of That).

. Contact with people. I was (and had always been) troubled by the lack of contact in a conversation or meeting (when I was not wholly conscious of the situation, of the lack?) especially in my (intimate) relation this was eating me. It drained me – of force, of Life. It emptied me

It was a long way Down – that had not ended yet – to Realize and Accept that this being drained in contact with people was ‘normal’, that I didn’t do anything wrong. The more sensitive, conscious, a Body was, the easier it got drained of energy, of life-force, when meeting Unconsciousness in, through, via other people. Consciousness could not catch up fast enough with the ‘amount’ of Pain, of Unconsciousness – including of hidden attachment creating cramp that in turn was depleting me from energy – that was being passed on in the dark. Avoidance of the painful, too draining contacts was not wrong but it must be Seen anyway that in Divine Nature there was a Natural ‘Flow’ or transmission Happening from Pain to Painless, from Unconsciousness to Consciousness, from Cramp to Freedom. Even though one side can be called the needy side and the other the Needless, yet it can be said that the Two Sides ‘Need’ Each Other, or, rather, are Integral Part of a Holistic Constellation of Forces, Including the Two Sides.

The more Conscious ‘I’ became, the more Pain I had to, consciously, bear when meeting someone, anyone in principle – except when that person’ would naturally Bow for, Surrender to the ‘higher’ Consciousness (or, rather, a Consciousness more developed, expanded in all directions, including the ‘lower’ ones) manifesting through and as this Body (and, generally, through and as other more Conscious Bodies, too). Well, even in that case, Pain transmission could not be avoided, but in that sphere of surrender it was easier to deal with, generally speaking – if the pain was humbly, consciously delivered into my heart without hidden resistance, we could even get into the Bliss of Heart – and did not necessarily and as usual end up in the box of overdue maintenance that later, after the personal contact had finished, had to be ploughed through.

Consciousness Met Unconsciousness in every human contact. Unconsciousness Was Pain. Pain was integral part of any human contact, whether or not the other side, joy, was prevailing in a certain moment. Some people, like me, were more aware of that inherent Pain

than others, although most people are somewhere aware of ‘discomfort’, unnaturalness, in human contacts, which may often be revealed in moments of silence.

I still had to Free ‘myself’, in all radicalness, from the semi-underground attachment to one side, to Contact. Lack of contact, separation, was an earthly fact. Surrender into the Earth, into Woman, meant Accepting the lack of (deeper) Contact and letting the undeniable painfulness of it burn in the Heart That Was Contact Itself – which was, of course, only possible if the Heart was Present as well, if both Contact and no (or little, or cramped) Contact were present. In Seeing Reality of the Two – Heart and heartless – Oneness was There, One was Blown (Transcended) Beyond the Fight, even though the inherently painful Fight itself would always rage on.

. What could Sri Sri say about having a paid job, officially providing my own subsistence? I felt this was not my task on earth – apart from the fact that, physically-energetically, I could work maximum just a few hours a week for a boss. My ‘energy’ wanted or needed to go somewhere else.

Admittedly, it was a bit silly to still ask for Sri Sri’s confirmation in this subject, certainly if not long before I had gone through and finished this struggle that had taken 10 years in total. And moreover, Sri Sri himself didn’t have a paid job either. He lived on the unemployment benefit of his Dutch wife. But, it is true, it was interesting anyway what Sri Sri had to say about the matter. He considered the spiritual world more Real and relevant than the ‘normal’ material world.

Well, this question hadn’t made it anyway to Sri Sri, and I could easily guess what his answer would be.

. In the depth of my being I felt I was a tantric. What was the best way to give shape to this, all the more in our desacralized society?

Not a bad question to a tantric yogi, it seemed. However, I quickly learned and it wasn’t difficult to see that the Eastern, in Sri Sri’s case Indian and Hindu based, way of Tantra was very different from the Western one. More important was that it was different from Me. ‘I’ was not so much interested in tantric practice in order to improve myself in any way, to develop, to grow – well, at least not as the main focus. Ultimately, I was into Union with Woman, into Understanding. How did Man and Woman Function? What Was Man, What Was Woman? Why couldn’t we Reach Each Other, or only partially, with (or after) difficulty?

But, it is true, I was open and even eager to and would do whatever Sri Sri would suggest me in respect of his probably better overview, in general and in particular of my spiritual development. I didn’t know so much yet, after all. I had only recently got I touch with spirituality. I mainly knew I was a man of ‘big things’, that is I had a Deep Force in ‘me’ Urging ‘me’ to Go to the Very Core of things. I wouldn’t settle in any sideway, any side

track. I wouldn't do practices for the rest of my life – unless it were True (which I intuitively Knew was not the case).

I was a tantric in the sense that I, with my One Heart, with my Deep Love for Woman, with my Bodily Involvement in life, was utterly suited and made for *the Process of Man and Woman*. I had just met Sri Sri for the first time and being so impressed with him, surrendering to his power, his Energy, to the great human being he radiated, it was not the time yet to See and Acknowledge that Sri Sri, tantric as he was, was not into the Process of Man and Woman, not really, if at all in any sense. The relationship with a woman – he made love to really many women, not just to his 'own' wife – was almost a mere (living) 'fact' for him as a tantric. It was not part of the Process of Development, of Discovering Truth and Surrendering more and more Deeply into it. As I saw, and unlike me, he didn't Feel, again and again and again, Whole-Heartedly and Whole-Bodily through things that happened in the relationship with his or another woman, in particular through the whole set of emotions involved, which was a fundamental part of Man's On-going Process of Entering the Earth, Woman's Domain. These happenings in relationships were something lovely or a nuisance to him but not part of 'the Path', not part of a Surrender of Man into Woman's world, to be Able to Free Her from Inside.

To put things sharply, male tantric in the past – and I guess still – rather *used* a woman in their practices for their own spiritual development. It was part of their path or lineage to do this as part of a certain protocol, made by one or more other masters who had lived (much) earlier. It was not about discovering Who Woman was, or how He functioned in relation to Her, or She to Him. It was not about Union of Man and Woman, but about extracting from Her some subtle female substance, nectar, essence that, apparently, He could not produce himself.

In my terms this was a form of (unnoticed) self-obsession, which can only be Overcome, Be Transcended, by Whole-Heartedly and Whole-Bodily Surrender into the Opposite Sex.