

## Re-mind

There was a heightened sense of excitement felt in the buzz of conversation as members of 'Sputnik's Hub' gathered and waited in small groups eagerly anticipating the lecture from their teacher; as usual, Malcolm lingered by the door to welcome everyone to their 'Lunch 'n' Lecture', and Frank and Richard stood with him, chatting while they watched for The Mother's arrival.

"Vanessa not with you?" Malcolm glanced around the hall.

"She'll be here as soon as..." Richard responded, vaguely.

Frank looked at him, curiously, "Your daughter's not settled with the Nanny this morning?"

"Lily's fine," Richard mumbled; then he looked directly at each of his two friends, "Actually, Vanessa's been feeling nauseous...left her leaning over the toilet! But, as usual, she insisted I should leave her to it..."

"Ohh!" Frank grinned, "Congrats then?"

Richard looked sheepish, "Uh-huh!"

The three men exchanged warm hugs.

"Is it public news?" Malcolm whispered, excitedly, "Shall we make an announcement today?"

"No, no...not yet...let's concentrate on The Mother's lecture; hopefully, Vanessa will arrive in time to hear at least some of it... She said she'd creep in the back when she feels able..." He glanced apprehensively through the door, and was distracted when he spotted The Mother approaching; he beamed, "Looks like you're on, Malcolm!"

He and Frank went to their seats while Malcolm greeted The Mother: he kissed both her cheeks, and took her arm, guiding her around the chairs, frequently pausing while she chatted animatedly to almost everyone; she knew them all, and they knew that she remembered everything they'd shared with her – during healing sessions at her home, and in gatherings at Sputnik's Hub.

Her audience quickly became quiet as they found their places, and The Mother carefully seated herself in front of them; she looked healthy and strong even though her body was thin and her back slightly bowed with age; her white hair, stylishly cut, glistened in the sunlight.

She looked around the room with a warm smile, and then gazed thoughtfully towards the window as if she was communing with someone beyond sight; eventually her eyes connected with individuals in the room; she held their gaze warmly, and their expressions altered with rapt attentiveness.

As she raised her head, surveying the whole room, she suddenly frowned, "I'm sorry, it's not possible to see you all," she pursed her lips, "And I'm not inclined to stand throughout our talk! Could you perhaps shuffle chairs to make wider semi-circles...so that we can clearly see each other?" She gave Malcolm a grateful smile when he jumped up to direct their chair re-arrangement, "Thank you..." she scanned their faces, "That's much better!" She paused, "I'm glad to see you all! Thank you for coming."

*She took a deep breath and closed her eyes, "Let's begin, as usual, with the quietude of noticing..."*

*Immediately, they followed her lead: with closed eyes, they deepened their breathing and listened to her calm direction:*

*"Notice toes, soles of feet, heels and ankles; notice lower leg, calves and shins; focus your attention on your knees – gift them healing; notice upper leg, thighs, hips; breathe into the base of your spine, into your pelvic area, focus red around your base chakra...good.*

*Breathe deeply into the red, send your breath to the floor, to the area beneath your feet, deep into Earth Mother; she appreciates your gift, your love, your energy...*

*Notice your tummy; watch this part of your body rise and fall with each breath; rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall; notice how the area of your second chakra expands with this attention – your emotions enjoy having more space to extend and wriggle! Take a moment to adjust your seat... If you feel able, take sharp breaths inward so that you snap your tummy inward... That's right! Don't be embarrassed at the sound of your panting...!"*

*She paused for them to continue the exercise.*

*"That's very good! Now, notice the space above your tummy – your abdomen, your solar plexus; it has been uplifted by your rapid breaths; allow expansion here too: lift your chest, your breast; breathe deeply, lifting your middle...and out; in...and out; gift your attention to the centre of your body – imagine it as a shining shield, an armour plate of presentation to others. Breathe deeply, puff out your abdomen, upwards and outwards: shine your ego to the world... Present yourself, be Presented and Be Present!"*

*With eyes still closed, she smiled into the room, "That's wonderful! Your light is intensely bright!"*

*Take your time, now, to bring attention to your shoulders, uplifted by your attended centre; notice your arms, elbows and wrists... Allow your hands to rest by your side, palms upwards, and watch the effect upon your heart chakra: notice how, with each breath, colour emanates from the centre of your chest... Perhaps just one colour, changing in intensity... Perhaps a series of colours... Maybe the colours leave your heart like rays, pointing to an external target, or perhaps colour swirls around you and re-enters your back..."*

*She opened her eyes and, for a few moments, watched their expressions; then she resumed the meditation with her eyelids gently resting, almost closed:*

*"Notice your spine; it is the strength of yin with yang: each vertebrae alternates black with white, affirming balance through your body.*

*Focus upon the place where spine greets your neck, and notice how your head appears like a beautiful flower blossoming out of the stem of your back...*

*Breathe into your head, allow petals to unfurl from the centre of your head, gently expanding and opening at your crown...*

*Now, take your attention inside your head; find the place inside the middle of your forehead...*

*Breathe...*

*Keep your attention here... for as long as feels comfortable..."*

*For a while she remained silent...*

*Eventually, opening her eyes, she seemed to rest in a dream-like state, observing the serene faces in front of her.*

*After a few minutes, she cleared her throat and spoke firmly, "Gently, gradually bring yourself back to full consciousness...and open your eyes."*

*They coughed and shuffled, and most of them were taken aback when Malcolm gently started to clap, but then they joined in the spontaneity, allowing their applause to ripple around the room. Malcolm stood up and rested his hand against his chest, "Dear Mother, sorry for causing the meditation to end in such a bizarre way...clapping seemed appropriate...I couldn't help it!"*

*She smiled and inclined her head, "It's good to touch places of appreciation – how else could we show it? ...Except with a hug...and there's too many of us for that!"*

*"Maybe later!" he grinned, and settled back on his chair.*

She waited for them to be still, and beamed, "I'm expecting today's talk to be a deluge of questions, with very few answers! But I know that our enquiry will inflate our minds, settle our emotions and expand our consciousness..."

Consciousness

Consciousness

Consciousness...

What is it?

How did it begin?

Where did it arise?

Why?

What is its purpose?

To help our contemplation, I'd like to read Wordsworth:

*'And I have felt*

*A presence that disturbs me with the joy*

*Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime*

*Of something far more deeply interfused,*

*Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,*

*And the round ocean and the living air,*

*And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:*

*A motion and a spirit, that impels*

*All thinking things, all objects of all thought,*

*And rolls through all things.'* [Tintern Abbey. 1798]

I have felt a *presence*...

In our gatherings here we've come to call this presence, *Spirit, Pure Consciousness, Soul*...

There's a moment in everyone's life when *The Presence* is felt: maybe when we come face to face with our mortality? When we approach death? When we see new life? When we experience birth? At some other incredible event? A 'eureka' moment? Appreciating nature's awe and wonder? In deepest meditation?

I'm sure everyone will have such a feeling - will have the experience of, '*It*', at some point in their life...

Is '*It*' stimulated by religion – religious belief and practices? Does '*It*' show itself through spirituality? Does '*It*' affect those not grounded in religion? Do those who've not found spirituality miss the discovery of '*It*'?

What about those who've never been open to contemplating the nature of Consciousness? Are they deprived from feeling 'It'?

Or, is mankind *meant* to have felt a *Presence*?

What are your thoughts?"

She paused for their murmured deliberation.

"...A *Presence*, *Spirit*, *Consciousness*... 'It'... There's no better word! It should be noted in capitals: *IT*!

What does it mean: to feel 'A *Presence*'...?

You've come to understand that being spiritually motivated eventually leads to a point where we know *IT within* ourselves.

And, some find a deeper sense of realisation: *knowing IT as self*...

*That's a huge awakening! A life-changing event!*

Perhaps *you* have experienced that moment - you've found *IT* within yourself? Indeed, it's likely that you will come to know *IT as* yourself, in this lifetime... After all, you've each embraced spirituality, you're part of this spiritually seeking group, so the possibility of reaching your goal is most likely...is inevitable?"

She gazed around the room, taking in their reactions, giving them time to digest her words.

Then she shifted on her chair; sitting up straight, she raised her voice, "Now more questions!

If you're a seeker, searching for *IT* within yourself, *where* and *how* might it be discovered?

At heart?

In your head...Through crown? Or at third eye?

Within the chakras?

Might *IT* be indiscriminate? All around you?

Can *IT* be grasped by contemplation?

Through emotion?

While at prayer?"

She paused, vaguely connecting with their murmured responses, and waited while some shuffled, coughed and sipped from bottled water.

She continued, "*IT* will find expression somewhere... Perhaps an area, a place, a situation that is different for each of us?... It's not necessary to discuss the possibilities as a group... Maybe you'd like to share with a close friend, or in session with your healer? Or you may prefer to keep your experience to yourself..." she nodded, seemingly confirming the decision, "...I think so..."

She looked around with an engaging smile, "I'm sure we agree - we can accept and acknowledge - that there is *something, out there*," she waved her arm

around her head, "that intrigues, inspires, maybe helps us, perhaps keeps us going... *and, also in here,*" she rested her hand on her chest, closed her eyes, and for a moment breathed deeply with the stillness of the room.

She opened her eyes, and reached for the glass on the table by her side; she took her time sipping her water, and then carefully set the glass down, "Let's think about something else... A phenomenon that helps clarify our notion of *IT*...

...*Reincarnation.*

As members of 'Sputnik's Hub' - working with me, or other healers here - you will have been guided through metaphysical experiences that have affirmed your understanding and knowledge of reincarnation; so, you're familiar with the truth that a part of you exists - and goes on - beyond the 'death' of your body; you know it as your soul, your spirit... We should call it *your expression of IT.*

Now, let's ask ourselves:

Is *IT* only to be found in humans?

Maybe also in primates?

Where else in the natural world?

What about our pets?

How about 'less advanced' creatures?"

She leaned forward eagerly, "When you've visited me at home you've seen that I enjoy the activities of tropical fish in their tank in my living room! My original plan was to have a focus of peace and tranquillity - watching fish idly swimming. However, you'll probably have seen how calmness is not the norm in this tank! In fact, the fish express their well-developed characters and personalities in their relationships; the tank seems to be a microcosm of world behaviour.

For example: When it's feed time, one *male gourami,*" she grinned, "*has* to be first up to the surface for a nibble, and will viciously send the female down to the bottom of the tank, plainly showing her that she must wait until he's had his fill! Nevertheless, she's a *cunning mate...*"

They laughed.

"...she knows exactly how to wend her way, behind his back, to get to the food!

In another instance - when one fish shows signs of approaching death, others nuzzle the ailing body, trying to help the sick fish up from the gravel...

Just consider," she paused, thoughtfully, "These are behaviours of *tiny fish, in my tropical tank, yet they are demonstrating thoughts and feelings that are familiar to mankind...*

So...

Where is consciousness to be found?

Where does *IT* begin? Where does it end?

What are the boundaries? If any?

Does *IT* find expression through *plants*?... I think so: the evidence is suggested in laboratory experiments.

*Is there anything that is not sentient?*

Since cosmology tells us everything originated from, 'The Big Bang', how can there be any differentiation between that which expresses Consciousness, and that which does not?"

She took another sip of water and gazed thoughtfully into the distance, allowing an opportunity for her audience to think about what she'd said.

After a few moments, she scanned their faces with a smile, "Are you still with me?"

There were assenting murmurs as they shuffled on their chairs.

"Let's return to my original queries:

What is Consciousness?

What is *IT*?

Does *IT* have purpose?

Does Consciousness have intent?

What's it doing?

Why is it 'here'?...

Actually," she grimaced, "by posing such questions, there's a risk of making a 'sentient being' of *IT*...imputing desires and purpose upon *IT*... anthropomorphising *IT*, thinking of it as..."

"Our idea of God," Malcolm murmured.

"Ummm," she nodded thoughtfully, "What a mistake!..." she sighed, "...For the moment, let's detach from thoughts of God, and ask ourselves again:

If we decide that Consciousness, from the outset, had a purpose, and - having 'occurred' at the moment of Big Bang - waited to gradually unfold, to manifest, to reveal itself, to make itself known...

How is that possible?

Isn't such speculation creating desire...mind...emotion for *IT*?

Are we making human assumptions - that *IT* has will, an intent, a plan of unfolding?

Is it reasonable, or sensible, to assume that Pure Consciousness has such characteristics?

Really, we ought not to think of *IT* in terms of human capabilities...

Actually, we know better - we're wiser! We've learned, through past life exploration, that upon leaving the body we are spirit - *leaving emotions behind, letting go of thoughts and aspirations - existing solely,*" she grinned, "solely as our spirit self, our soul..."

We understand that the soul has no concern about feelings, it does not possess desires and aspirations; it *returns to its original self, to simply Be.*

*Surely, that too is the sole characteristic of Pure Consciousness? IT is being, without thought and feeling."*

She noted their dazed expressions, and frowned, "How do you all feel? Do we need a break?"

"I think a break would disrupt our thought," Frank murmured; he looked vaguely at others around him, "...don't know if I speak for everyone?..." He paused, "No-one's moving!" He grinned, "We should continue!..."

I was wondering, Mother... Is it likely that spirit – *IT* – having been 'there' at 'the beginning', at some point in evolution divided itself, evolved, fragmented, and manifest as thought? And then matter, and emotion?"

"I don't know!" she laughed, "It's a reasonable theory! It's good that we're being so *mystical!*"

"I thought mystical meant being especially close to God," Gabby mused, "But, Pure Consciousness – the way you talk about *IT* - doesn't sound God-like, to me."

"That's a very good point," The Mother smiled, "We should clarify: a mystic is one who delves beyond the mind, past intellect, who yearns to probe insights into The Ultimate... That's what we're doing!"

However, perhaps our discussion brings up issues for you, because our exploration – with many unanswered questions – doesn't seem spiritual?"

They murmured their agreement.

"Yes! We're used to having talks here, at Sputnik's Hub, about the calm benefit of spirituality; about how mindfulness improves our life; how healing keeps us balanced... That's our philosophy! The original reason for 'Sputnik' gatherings! You're used to health-giving metaphysics!"

However, the plan of this lecture is to take you beyond spiritual comfort zones...to search the depth of *IT*."

"Isn't seeking 'depth' the fundamental purpose of meditation? The ultimate reason why we meditate?... Not simply to relax, reduce stress, or even to be mindful?"

The Mother nodded, "Please explain, Richard..."

He stood up, "Well, we understand that when we connect with 'spirit' - 'beyond the brain' as scientists say – there is no sense of emotion; that's what we're trying to achieve: our goal, through meditation, is to be sans emotion, and to let thought go...giving ourselves a break from the frenetic mind and heavy feelings; meditation puts us in touch with the beauty of being."

"Beauty of being," The Mother repeated as he sat down, "A lovely phrase! You're right: meditation gives us relief from thought and emotion, so we can be free, to be...Nothing... The irony is, when we reach moments of complete liberation from thoughts and feelings, we're likely to find ourself in touch with *higher senses...the majesty, the infinite wonder, the miracle and awesomeness...that is Pure Consciousness.*"

"That's when we call it, 'God'," Maria murmured, "...It's what God feels like - *wonder and...everything...*"

They sat in silence, until Malcolm spoke cautiously, "Is the 'desire to just be' an evolved experience? Beyond ecstasy and euphoria that we assume happens with spiritual seekers?"

The Mother nodded, "That deep desire comes with the realisation that we came from *Pure Consciousness*; *realisation* makes us inclined to go back, to return, to complete our journey, to find wholeness...to be in union.

In effect, we come to the conclusion that we're involved in the life experience - an adventure of thoughts and feelings - which leaves us unsatisfied, because human experiences do not really bring us the contentment of 'completion' ... So we long to return, to find unity, to Be in Union."

"That reminds me of the effect of intimacy," Richard blurted; then, realising he'd spoken aloud, he blushed with embarrassment, "Sorry, sorry...I didn't mean to..."

"I think you did," The Mother spoke gently, "...Couples who share spiritual searching and spiritual depth come together to express themselves sensuously *and* spiritually; sexual intimacy takes them through exploration...beyond emotion and ecstasy...to a 'returning'; it's a togetherness in union that feels like 'coming home'...they appreciate something beyond euphoria..."

"Spaced-out nothingness!"

She relaxed back into her chair, "Thank you for speaking of this... The meaningful lectures here at Sputnik's Hub - about the connection between sexuality and spirituality - are successful, and have been well-received," she met Nic's gaze, and he inclined his head in acknowledgment.

Maria interrupted the discussion, scurrying across the room to replenish The Mother's glass. Their teacher took a long drink, and then resumed her questioning:

"Does Consciousness have a role in leading us back to itself?" she raised her eyebrows in thought, "Such a notion would, as has been said, attach emotion and thought to *IT*, loading it with intention when, I think we've realised, it can have none:

*IT* has to be NO-THING,

*IT* is nothing,

*IT* is nothing...

The significance of no-thing - *a spiritual realisation* - beautifully brings us to our most used, effective, mantra:

WHO AM I

WHO AM I

WHO AM I..." she closed her eyes, repeating the mantra, leading them all to meditative stillness...

After a few minutes she opened her eyes, "Enough!" her voice was warmly assertive, "We really should have a break."

Maria hurried back to the kitchen: she'd enlisted a few of the group to help organise the dishes for their lunch buffet, so their meal was rapidly prepared.

They ate with enjoyment, though their conversation was sparse, seemingly thought-filled, or as some said, 'dazed and overwhelmed' by The Mothers thoughts.

After lunch they reorganised their chairs back to their semi-circle, and she returned to her chair in front of them.

"Thank you for lunch," she beamed at Maria, "We're satisfied! I hope the excellent food doesn't make us doze off!

I'd like to return to where we started:



What is Consciousness?  
Where did it come from? Why?  
Did it actually have intent? If so, why?

And now, I'd like to look at these questions the other way round:

Where did thoughts and feelings come from? Why?

Did thoughts and feelings emerge in order to 'explore' Consciousness? Are they tools for us to examine the nature of *IT*?

Might it be reciprocation: where mind and emotion draw upon Consciousness in order to evolve... Using *IT* for *inspiration*?" She grinned.

"If so, is it possible that, as mind and emotion develop - as mankind evolves - Consciousness expands?" ...

She frowned.

*"Does Consciousness, in fact, need to expand?*

*Can it expand?*

*Or is IT as 'it is' for all time?*

Here's a reasonable theory: 'The Big Bang' naturally unfolded the energy of itself; it reacted, through some form of evolution, into matter, mental activity and feeling... Mind and emotion continue to evolve through their relationship with matter...always with an *aspiration*...to be more, think more, feel more...

Can this be the adventure of our world? The journey of Pure Consciousness?"

She gazed around the room with a searching frown, "I'm not sure whether there's a point to these questions, or where they may lead; however, sometimes I have an image like that from a sci-fi movie - where a mysterious entity expands and expands...until eventually, having reached its utmost, it has to explode..."

If this is the possible future for Consciousness, then perhaps, at some point, there will be no more thinking and feeling, no more separation, because *IT* will have imploded...as cosmologists predict..."

She closed her eyes and breathed deeply, then, she stared at the floor and smiled to herself, "I wonder whether there's spiritual truth in the notion that thought and emotion have taken us so far from spirit, detached us so much from *IT*, made us think we're not *IT*, made us feel separate... And, that this process has allowed us to feel a sense of isolation. It's then caused us to ask these questions, to enquire, to think deeply, so that we may re-discover the truth of *IT*."

If that is so...no wonder we're inspired to meditate..."

Gabby tentatively raised her hand, "I always seem to be the one who asks awkward questions...I'm finding it hard to get this..."

"We like your awkward questioning," Malcolm butted in with a grin, "You ask what most of us dare not..."

The Mother folded her hands on her lap, "Yes, Gabby," her tone was sympathetic and comforting, "you and I know what needs to be said! Your thoughts are important for all of us."

Gabby looked relieved, then frowned with consternation, "I know I'm not supposed to talk about God..."

"Of course you may..."

"Well, I've learned not to imagine there's a super power watching me from the sky..."

They laughed.

She wrinkled her nose, "I don't mind if you laugh... If you can just tell me: who do we call upon? If spirit is just a none-thinking, none-feeling energy, why do we pray? Who helps us when we do? Who do we ask for support, and guidance?... Who loves us?" She finished, dejectedly.

"Your questions are very meaningful," The Mother spoke gently, "thank you for your courage in asking. There are two strands of response that should put your mind, and heart at ease:

First: we routinely seek help, guidance, support...and love, in a way that respects, honours and appreciates religious principles – in effect, *we pray to Higher Powers.*"

"What do you mean?"

"Higher Powers exist in another part of our world, as an additional 'layer' of created order: they are beings, such as Angels and Spirit Guides who act as assigned helpers, readily there for us whenever we ask; they are part of creation that addresses the desire for energetic 'balance'...of 'good' and 'bad'."

"I keep wondering why bad things happen," Gabby interrupted, "especially when you speak about everything emerging from one thing, one event; if that's the case, why isn't everything good?"

"Yes, horrible things happen – we say they're 'bad' or 'evil', and the opposite of such things we say is, 'goodness'..."

In terms of the Grand plan of Creation, it's probably helpful to think of evil as - that which has lost sight of its intrinsic light..." The Mother hesitated and pursed her lips, "I don't mean to be flippant about life tragedies... However, it can help to see unpleasant things as part of life's balance, helping us reach out, seek, and hold on to what is light, what is good... I know this is not easy; indeed, the presence of evil and suffering is difficult to explain and come to terms with..."

I think Angels and Spirit Guides – beings that have their place in the creative order – have a mission to bring us through the bad, helping us deal with evil, teaching us how to see Light, how to be Love."

"Do you think Spirit Guides know who we are?"

"Indeed, yes!" she smiled fondly, "It's possible to sustain a warm, loving relationship with a personal Spirit Guide."

"What about Jesus?" Malcolm interrupted, "You often talk of amazing, unusual communication with Him."

"That's true! 'Ascended Masters' understand what it means to work through our life challenges."

"But you won't talk with us about God!"

"That's not quite true," The Mother spoke warmly, "I'm always keen to have discussions about the nature of God – as we're doing today..."

"I mean..."

"I understand your frustration! It's troubling to talk with a spiritual teacher who is reluctant to use the word, 'God'!

I'm unwilling to speak of 'God' until I'm sure we're together in our understanding: that 'God' is a word for 'The Presence' - everything that we've been trying to make sense of, today... Pure Consciousness... Consciousness that is in all things; that *is* all things... Do you see?"

Gabby nodded.

"Actually," The Mother continued, enthusiastically, "I *do* like to use the word, God: in moments of wonder, spiritual ecstasy, celebration, thanksgiving, it's immensely exhilarating to say, 'Oh, God, I love... Dear God, I love you'...

Much better than saying, 'Pure Consciousness, I love,' or 'Dear *IT*, I love you'."

They laughed.

"Also, in times of desperate need, when we have to plead for help, it's more effective to ask, "Dear Angels, please help us," rather than, "Oh God!"

"Because Angels and Guides are there for us!"

"Exactly! You know..." she leaned forward, earnestly, "I encourage you all to nurture the communication between yourself and the Angelic Realm: talk to Angels – in the same way that some of you have talked to 'God'; ask Angels for their help; thank them when you have a sense that you're supported; speak to them frequently, and be prepared for the way they respond..."

"How do they reply?"

"In most amazing ways! For example, after you've been dwelling on a problem, and you've asked for help, you'll probably notice how an answer comes most clearly to you in lyrics of a song, or via a bill-board advertisement...maybe someone will speak to you in a way that you intuitively know is a response: a person's word suddenly carries greater meaning..."

"Does this communication work for you, Mother?"

"It certainly does!" she smiled, and gazed at the floor, seemingly lost in nostalgia, then she looked up, brightly, "The second point I wanted to make in response to Gabby's query about prayer, is this:

Being spiritual is not like being religious. Finding our spirituality means that prayer changes: it's not an outward exhortation, from a helpless self, but an inner affirmation of 'Who We Are', an inward breath of empowerment, knowing, at heart, that our Self *is* 'All That Is'.

We are strong, wise and capable because *IT is who we are...*

So, prayer is an inner assertion to our self: 'I can do this; I am aligned with the flow of the universe; I'm energised with Love'..."

"It's prayer with meditation - meditative prayer," Maria murmured.

"It is. And, as we breathe with a prayerful affirmation, together with a request for Angelic guidance, we learn to let our human self go, so that each part of us – body, mind, feelings – flows *with* Consciousness.

Then, our prayerfulness is imminently calming, stopping us behaving in a frenetic scabble in an attempt to escape from fear."

"I'm concerned about losing feeling for God," Gabby frowned, "I'm sure it must be good to be rid of the anxiety of doing the right thing for God, but I *like* the emotion...my love of God. 'Pure Consciousness' sounds cold and unfeeling."

The Mother nodded; she scanned the doubtful expressions of those who shared Gabby's feelings: "I completely agree: we need to *feel the love of 'God'*, and have moments of *worshipping the glory of 'God'*..."

However, as you become used to contemplating the *Energy of The All* as 'God', and as you meditate with *Pure Consciousness as each breath*, your feelings of *unconditional love and inexplicable awe* will come through; and, because it is an empowering spiritual experience, you will also feel *liberated*..."

The Mother's eyes met Gabby's, "Liberated... A feeling that you don't have to fear making wrong decisions; you no longer have to keep thinking about what is right; and you don't have to wait for 'good' things to happen; you know you are one with 'God' and you find peace in understanding that all is in Divine Order..."

Liberation is being in the flow of Consciousness, aligned with God..." the corners of her eyes crinkled with her loving smile, "Your soul knows how!"

She stood up, stretched out her arms and held her palms upwards, "*Please try this, Gabby - all of you - in quiet moments, gaze at the sky, and with each breath think the word, MIRACLE...*"

*IT, Consciousness, Spirit, is a miracle;*

*IT is THE miracle.*

*Allow your mystical thought to take you to a state of realisation: where every breath, every function of the body, every atom of everything, each thought, every feeling is THE MIRACLE.*

*You'll probably find more questions: What's behind The Miracle? What keeps it going? What's the blueprint? What's the engine? What's the program forever running in the background of everything?*

*MIRACLE...*

*Breathing with this word, with the thought of this word, initiates your power that takes you to The Love, into the 'Love of God'...*

*'And I have felt a Presence...'*

*Actually, 'felt' is an inappropriate word:*

*IT is beyond feeling;*

*IT is beyond euphoria, beyond ecstasy.*

*IT is BLISS..."*

*She paused, "Let's be clear about the meaning of Bliss: Bliss means Union, Union with IT;*

*Union – without emotion, feeling or thought; there's no sense of happiness or joy, or any ecstatic feeling, because all emotion dissolves as soon as one finds Unity."*

*She grinned, "Elementary school science affirms what it means to dissolve in Union:*

*When salt water is heated to evaporation, it leaves salt; when water is re-introduced, salt dissolves into it...*

*Spirit is like salt in brine: invisible, all pervading...*

*Perhaps the action of IT in the world is to evaporate out and dissolve back?"*

The Mother seemed suddenly fatigued by the exertion of delivering an intense message; she returned to her chair and settled back, "Bliss...

*Finding Bliss through meditation is a significant spiritual discovery:*

*Bliss affirms that IT is distinct from emotion and thought;*

*IT cannot be found in intellectual depth, nor through philosophy;*

*IT does not depend upon meditative ecstasy, nor religious fervour...*

*However, these human ventures are all avenues, leading the way."*

*Her eyes narrowed, "Know that a spiritual teacher cannot find IT for you;*

*I cannot find IT with you...*

*IT is something to be found by yourself, when you are ready...*

*It comes with yearning;*

*Then a paradox becomes apparent: since you came from IT, it's impossible not to be in Union, because you already are IT, you've always been an expression of IT!"*

She rested her elbows on the arms of her chair and joined her hands together at the tips of her fingers, "Meditation is crucial! Please, never stop meditating! Make it the only goal of your day!

*Meditation brings Truth of IT.*

*Meditation returns us to the awareness of Consciousness.*

*Meditation brings health to mind and body*

*Because*

*Meditation 'RE-MINDS'!*

*An interesting word:*

*Re-Mind*

*Re-Mind your mind:*

*Like a computer re-boot!*

*When thoughts get complicated and out of control*

*Re-mind your mind*

*Re-mind it to Bliss*

*Re-mind the mind*

*To Union*

*To knowing Consciousness...*

*Breathe..."*

Her listeners knew that The Mother had seamlessly entered into focussed meditation, leading to the lecture's completion; they closed their eyes and concentrated on their breathing, noticing each breath, being comfortable in the silence of the room...

Richard's mind drifted, he lost meditative focus and became mesmerised by a torrent of thoughts: he knew Vanessa had been right to insist that he attended, although her absence meant that he'd frequently been distracted - glancing down at

the empty chair beside him and over his shoulder at the door; he squirmed at his earlier faux pas of blurting about sexuality, what had he been thinking?

He'd eventually relaxed after concluding there would be no alert message from Vanessa, but he'd realised, sadly, that she would not make the meeting at all...

He folded his arms and stretched out his legs...meditation was impossible...

He was ideally seated at the back of the room to notice each individual; he knew them all – as patients, friends, colleagues on a spiritual journey; he'd shared their pain, suffering and heartbreak as well as their healing triumphs and their joys...

During the lecture, he'd watched their reaction to The Mother - how they responded to her understanding and compassion...

He saw how she'd effectively, lovingly, brought them together as spiritual companions for what, for some, was becoming a mystical awakening; she treated them as her own, as if she truly was their 'mother', and at that moment he felt he shared her love – as if the community was 'his'...

He glanced again at the empty chair by his side, and thought about Vanessa in the early stage of another pregnancy; he loved her more than he could possibly say; he was always thrilled at the expression of their mutual passion - he grinned to himself - almost every day! He stroked his chin, thoughtfully: he assumed they were unusual in their frequent intimacy, and he felt excited at the thought of another baby...he knew he could now look forward to the possibility of having a son with whom he could have a healthy relationship...

He sighed, and slowly pushed his fingers through his hair; with Vanessa's help, as well as that of the family, Nic, and The Mother, he'd been successfully guided through a great deal of healing, so that he no longer feared a dynasty of abuse.

He thought about how meditation and healing had made his relationships secure, and how he'd learned the deep meaning of intimacy: to express love of himself through his sensuousness with Vanessa, to show his love of her with passionate depth, and together to explore just what The Mother had been talking about – *Union with The All...*

He was suddenly startled out of his reverie when he became aware that The Mother was speaking directly to him; he sat up straight and coughed with embarrassment, "Sorry...sorry I was lost in thought..."

The Mother's gaze was softly penetrating, "Indeed, yes! We've all missed Vanessa today! In fact, she and I have seemed like 'ships in the night' missing each other in our gatherings!" she smiled at him affectionately, "Richard, will you sing for us?"

He blinked in wide-eyed surprise, "Are you sure?"

She nodded with the affirming murmurs around the room, "We all love the sound of your voice; I'm sure you know the song that means so much to us; the lyrics will bring our talk to a satisfactory conclusion."

He stood up and walked to the front; he seemed to tower over The Mother as they hugged, and grasping hold of her hand, he took the opportunity to speak for the whole group: "We're all profoundly grateful to have you as our spiritual teacher," he

gazed at her, lovingly, "Thank you for your guidance, your support, your wisdom, your love. We love you, so very much..."

He let go of her hand, studied the floor, and then stared resolutely ahead; he took a deep breath, rested his hand against his chest, and began to sing:

*'There are many ways of being in this circle we call life  
A wise man seeks an answer, burns his candle through the night  
Is a jewel just a pebble that found a way to shine?  
Is a hero's blood more righteous than a hobo's sip of wine?  
Did I speak to you one morning on some distant world away?  
Did you save me from an arrow? Did you lay me in a grave?  
Were we brothers on a journey? Did you teach me how to run?  
Were we broken by the waters? Did I lie you in the sun?  
I dreamed you were a prophet in a meadow  
I dreamed I was a mountain in the wind  
I dreamed you knelt and touched me with a flower  
I awoke with this: a flower in my hand  
I know that love is seeing all the Infinite in One  
In the brotherhood of creatures; who the father, who the son?  
The vision of your goodness will sustain me through the cold  
Take my hand now to remember when you find yourself alone  
You're never alone  
And the spirit fills the darkness of the heavens  
It fills the endless yearning of the soul  
It lives within a star too far to dream of  
It lives within each part and is the whole  
It's the fire and the wings to fly us home.'* [Denver]

The audience sat in silence for a while, and some settled back into meditative breathing; eventually they all emerged from contemplation, taking their time to stretch, and then moved to stand and chat.

Malcolm walked to the front to shake Richard's hand and embrace The Mother; then he made his way with her through the small groups, waiting and watching while she acknowledged everyone, before getting ready to accompany her home.

Not long after they'd left, Vanessa arrived at Sputnik's Hub looking pale and a little flustered.

Richard immediately left his conversational group to reach her, "Sweetie! You're looking better," he held her in a tight hug, and spoke softly, "How do you feel?"

She kissed him, "Ok...well, almost!"

He kept his arms around her, "The lecture was special...but I kept thinking about you..."

“And I, you...” she released herself from his arms, “Just met The Mother...we exchanged a few words; I’ve a real sense of what she had to say...” She gazed into his eyes, “...felt I was here with you all the time!”