

THE INNER CORE OF OUR JOINT ACTION

– A talk by Fernando A. Garcia at the All-India Semi-Annual Get-Together held in Udgir (Maharashtra), India, July 17-19 2015.

Dear friends, please follow this reflection along with me.

From where do we get the energy and the motivation for our joint action? How do we manage to sustain our joint action in the long term?

To begin with, and generally speaking, the energy and the motivation for our joint action may come from what we think and what we feel about the joint action.

Our thoughts may give us a certain degree of energy and motivation for our joint action. For instance, ideologies, beliefs, stands, etc. They may be either right or wrong, true or false, constructive or destructive, etc.

Our feelings may also give us a certain degree of energy and motivation for our joint action. For instance, love, compassion, solidarity, but equally hatred, discrimination, revenge, etc.

We may turn what we think and feel into a reference and a driving force for our lives. However, what we think and feel may be quite variable and shaky, being as it is exposed to failure.

The most common case of failure happens whenever the thoughts and feelings we cherish fail to deliver what we expected from them.

This depends on variable, changing circumstances, many a times beyond our control.

And the most important failure takes place due to our attaching our thoughts and feelings to the external things we value.

But those external things depend on changing factors that cannot be governed by us. Sometimes we pursue them possessively as an end.

Such is the most usual source of our energy and motivation for action.

Today we value one external thing and tomorrow another, and thus things have been throughout our lives.

However, problems also arise when we keep on attaching value to the same external things, even though we or the circumstances have changed.

Therefore, we may get into trouble either by changing what we think and feel, while attaching value to the external things that fail to live up to our expectations, or by resisting change by getting stuck on valuing the same external things in spite of changing circumstances, whether these are personal or environmental.

How do we come out of this fix, of this paradox? How can we make our thoughts and feelings steady, free from disillusion? How can we make our action steady and free from failure?

This is achieved by learning to attach a higher value not to external things, but to an internal experience that grows or diminishes according to the internal attitude or perspective with which we live whatever we live, with which we do whatever we do.

An internal attitude that always keeps on trying to fly over and beyond the abyss of contradiction, of suffering within ourselves and others.

An internal attitude that should not be based on certain things to obtain, to do, to achieve; but on a certain way of establishing a relationship with them. That should not be based on certain thoughts, feelings and actions, but on the way we relate to them.

This internal liberating attitude is made explicit, among others, in *The Principles of the Valid Action*.

An internal attitude that is always connecting what we do and how we live, with a transcendent Meaning, a Meaning that transcends particular actions, particular individuals, and any thing in particular.

This way of living, is certainly a form of spirituality.

Each one will establish this connection in his or her own way, according to his or her own beliefs.

It is from that perspective that our best and greater energy and motivation will be derived, to be applied to our thoughts, feelings and actions.

Hence, what we may think, feel and do, will know no failures, because they will not be rooted in valuing external things, will not be driven by pursuing external success. They will be grounded in an inner spiritual life in which there may only be advancement, learning, a growth of happiness and freedom within ourselves and in those around us.

And if there are mistakes, these will be mistaken steps while dancing the right dance, and not the wrong one; these will be mistakes in the tactics but not in the strategy to face life.

Indeed, a spiritual perspective of our lives will place the “we” above the “I”, the “us” above the “me”, and “giving” above “receiving”.

And our lives will actually be organised around this vision. It will not be just lip service only meant for show-off and to be implemented in our spare time, but the actual direction, shape and content of our daily lives.

This spirituality will permeate with true life and meaning everything we do. And everything we do, whether hitting or missing the mark will be a source of inspiration for an unlimited future, free from exhaustion and failure.

It is up to each one of us to establish that link between daily matters and a transcendent Meaning, so as to give that connection an effective application within our joint greater project.

As a consequence, it is important to organise our daily lives as much as possible around supporting the joint matters of a large human group, whichever this may be.

That larger human group should be guided by the highest goals and values. For us, it may be the Humanist Movement, Silo’s Message, or the School... and ultimately, humanity.

A human group with a great diversity of individuals that work and contribute in different ways, and according to their own possibilities, towards the highest joint objective.

Such human group may be the mirror on which we see, test and improve ourselves. While working and contributing towards the whole, the limitations and conflicts we

perceive in any human group are in no way unrelated to our own personal limitations and conflicts. Seeing the glass half empty or half full constitutes the reality that we build. And this speaks more about us than about things themselves.

And our relation with that human group should be one of unselfish “giving” without a possessive attitude, and without the expectation of “receiving” in a trade-like return for our action. For we understand that the progress of the whole enables and fosters the progress of every individual within it.

All this is not achieved just on the basis of a greater or lesser value that we may attach to that human group, but on the liberating attitude with which we relate to it and its joint matters.

This means that we will keep ourselves safe regarding the conflicts brought about by depending on attaching external value, when that human group does not always rise to our possessive or consumerist expectations, when we notice faults and shortcomings in it. That is to say, what some usually suffer from when a possessive and consumerist self is the greatest reference for everything they do.

Because spirituality itself, or else, liberation from suffering should not be sought, or rather, cannot be achieved by disguising and glorifying one more way of enlarging and embellishing our own selves.

The only true spiritual development is that which goes beyond, flies above one’s self, and is aimed at making others happy and free.

We will keep ourselves free from failure, dismay and contradiction in the measure that the gap narrows between our individual meaning and a universal transcendent Meaning.

For this, we need all the wisdom, kindness and inner strength we may derive from a higher source, which for some of us arrives through our Inner Guide.

All this that I am telling you is not just something intellectual or theoretical, but a personal testimony of life I share with you.

This is the Intent with which I live my days, with their provisional successes and failures. Mind you, this is not an arrival point, but a path I am travelling in a continuous journey of learning and development.

This is the spirit with which I come to India, to participate along with you all – my fellow travellers of the path – in this new gathering that brings us together.

Within my heart, I am very much grateful to my Inner Guide and to you all for the manifold good happenings that India and you have brought into my life.

May you all have plenty of Peace, Force and Joy!

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