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(Talk of recent flooding in Asia)

RW Karma is individual, within you. It is nothing to do with outside events whatsoever, other than it may react to them, that is all.

P1 That is what I meant, there can be a reaction.

RW No, as if it means you have got to die, in a certain..., it is rubbish

P1 I thought maybe if a lot of people were putting out bad karma...

RW No, nothing to do with Karma at all. It is pure natural disaster

P1 People are quite lucky, or unlucky, in where they are born, in different countries

RW I would not say that necessarily

Generally speaking you are born in the place and within the social circumstances that may be necessary for your development, whether or not you develop at all makes no difference to that, to what is necessary for it, if you take advantage and use it you can work your way up a bit, but if you don't you stay with it.

All kinds of things, particularly natural disasters, earthquakes, floods and things, are pure natural disasters, nothing to do with Karma whatsoever. Nothing to do with Karma

If you are in the place of it the only karmic thing about it might be whether you accept that that is the way things are, or whether you find it is fearful and you get frightened, or anything like that, but it is nothing to do with the karmic aspect itself.

You might well say, to look at it another way, Nature looking after itself. The world is getting overpopulated, Nature will take care of it, either by war, or by natural forces, in this case floods. It could be volcanic eruptions, which has happened, all sorts, earthquakes, they are happening all the time, but, you notice Pakistan and China are both suffering from the same thing and they are densely populated. Is there something to be learned? Africa has a similar situation and there it is drought, starvation, again an increasing population cut down.

Nature will look after it I assure you, it won't stand for it for very long, an imbalance, it will balance it up.

<Break>

All part of the general Dukkha of the world. Observe it going on, observe it very closely, but make sure you don't get dirtied by it.

(Laughs)

Notice. See it is there, but make sure you don't get wet with it.

One of the most positive things, about the world, is to know what not to do, as much as what to do. It is a very good safety factor. So keep an eye on that...

(Laughs)

...and make sure you don't get contaminated.

It is a very remarkable thing, isn't it really, I suppose you could say materially, it is a very human factor, but the degree of ignorance is unbelievable.

In the sense that we keep pursuing things that give us more unhappiness rather than those things which give us more contentedness, and the contentedness is always there if we look underneath the things we want, or not want.

We are attached to things we like, or even to things we don't like, and if we let them both go we'll find we are already content. But we are not prepared to do that.

There is stupidity here, as much as anything, when you think about it. It does not take any effort at all just to be content. Yet we strive and strive and strive to make ourselves unhappy, on the pretence that we are going to be happy.

(Laughs)

P2 Is that because of a lack of clarity in one's thinking?

RW Exactly...

(Laughs)

...it is not realising the true nature of things is it?

RB Well spotted there P2

(Laughter)

P2 A moment of clarity

RW When you look at the depth of this ignorance, you realise what a brilliant man Gautama was, the Buddha, to realise that these three strings, greed, hatred and delusion, in other words, grasping, aversion and ignorance, ignorance of the fact that one or other of the other two drives us all the while, if not both. And ignorant of the fact that they are not ours anyway, we identify with it.

Curious isn't it? Deluded that I am not happy and therefore I must make myself happy.

When you get down to spontaneity, and no self effort, you find that you are already there. Simple little things can show you that 'I'm quite happy', why grab for something different.

P2 It is a question of attitude.

RW Well, we've been trained, and trained ourselves for so long, to chase after the myth that we continue to chase after something, even if the myth is not there.

When we stop chasing we find it was already there, we were running away from it, not towards it.

P2 Without a taste of that 'something' it is a big leap in the dark to abandon these things.

RW Yes it is, you are so used to and accustomed to the unpleasantnesses, as you might say, that you don't realise, you don't trust the pleasantness, put it that way.

P2 You need some taste of it.

RW The trouble is you see, you don't have to identify yourself there, whereas you do everywhere else, and it gives the delusion of me being separate, which is the problem.

It has got to to a point today, with a lot of people, that it is very difficult for them to just stop and slow down enough to see there might be something in being still.

Can't bear it, can't abide the thought of being still and quiet.

It is strange when you think about it, it is not a question of looking at other people, one realises one was there oneself at one time and it is only by chance that one came to change it.

The number of times one gets little glimpses but ignores them and passes on. Not realising those glimpses were a way out and you never took 'em, never realised they were opportunities to follow. Then somewhere you got a wider gap, at some point, by chance, and realised there was something.

P2 But what you recommend, Metta, introducing a kindly attitude...

RW Yes I do, but let's face it, it is a strange thing to have to say 'to introduce it' where that is your basic nature

P2 To try to encourage it, or to uncover it, or whatever...

RW The point about it is, I mean, depending on its nature, you are going along and you see a plant coming up through the ground, or a kitten, or a dog, or whatever it may be, and you heart opens out ...already there is Metta, there, spontaneously without a single thought taking place, so why do we have to seek it in order to come to it, its a joke isn't it?

(Laughs).

We are putting it into a sort of sandwich; Metta, rubbish, Metta.

(Laughs).

P2 Trying to introduce it does weaken the delusion and the greed.

RW It does, if you practise it, the point is to get people to practise it.

"No no no that won't work. If I show too much of that I will be stamped on.'

(Laughs)

Treated as a door mat.

It is not true.

Things to look at a little more carefully. You begin to see the value of things then.

<Break>

Conversation following news of P3, who ordained as a monk in Thailand.

RW There is a lot to be said actually, whether you wear a robe or you don't, you can be equal in that respect, the point about it is, if you wear a robe you've got rules which prevent a lot of things happening and can inhibit your relationship with other people, particularly women. As a lay person, occasionally you can hug somebody, you can't as a bikkhu, now that hug can mean an awful lot to them in their terms of understand, I am not talking sexually at all, you know what I mean don't you, like you hug somebody who is in trouble. *(As a bikkhu)* You can't do that. As a lay person you can do far more than you ever could in the robe, just on that very basis alone you've got a contact, a physical contact, and that makes..., let's face it, touch can mean an awful lot, if it is just a hand on the shoulder, so, a bikkhu can't do that, he has not got that means of communication, only verbal. It makes a very big difference if you are trying to bring them along, coach them along in that fashion, those little things mean an awful lot. It doesn't mean you've got to be effusive in any way, of course.

As you appreciate, it makes a big difference, that is why I say, I think that when he comes back he will probably disrobe in order that he can do more, he'll realise that. It doesn't alter his status. What it will do for him though, is having been in the robe it will give him an authority he did not think he had. So he will still retain that authority, even without it *(the robe)* so that is a good thing isn't it.

All working out quite well I believe. All good experience for him.

<Break>

P4 I was going to ask you about Connie, how did she get started?

RW I will tell you how it all started.

Just after the Second World War ended, an American came to London to talk about food and diets, and of course he did a circuit, Manchester, Leeds, various towns, and he had quite a circuit and he'd come back once a month.

I think it was in the Holdsworth Hall, in Manchester, that he held his meetings, though I am not sure about that, and Connie, among others, went along.

Of course that was a very important subject back then, rationing was still extremely tight, you wouldn't believe how small it was. Anyway she attended the first meeting, and the second, and after the third one the same people were there and a group of them started talking together. In those days the Kardomah coffee shops were open until midnight and beyond so they would adjourn there and talk.

Anyway they formed a nice little group, about 10 of them in actual fact, and when the man went back to America after 12 months they thought about it and said we have got a nice rapport here, we'd like to keep it going, shall we study other little things to keep it

together, as you might say, so they did one or two other little things. I think about 18 months later somebody came up with a book on Buddhism which they started into and they (thought) this is something which needs pursuing and so they did. But of course it was a fairly large group to meet in one another's' houses, which they were endeavouring to do, and occasionally they held meetings in the public halls, to make it easier, and one or two other people joined in with them.

Now Cyril Bartlet was one of those men and he was an architect employed by the Government. He was one of those people who sat on committees about developments that or may not take place and cast judgements, that sort of thing, so he had to keep going down to London. So, in his visits to London, he came in contact with one or two members of the Buddhist Society.

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One or two people there became more interested, as they were here as a result of that; one was Reg Howse (*Reginald Charles Howes*), another was Richard Purfurst (*William August Purfurst, known later as Richard Randall*).

Reg Howse was an accountant, he worked in the city, and he found that what Cyril had to say about what they were discovering, in their own way of looking at it, more interesting than the Buddhist Society.

And Purfurst had been a photographer in journalism, and he'd flown with the Lancasters over the bombing raids, and photographed in that capacity, and which of course he got a lot of rheumatism.

Purfurst decided to come up here, and became part of the group actually. And there was at that time somebody he'd met in London, a Burmese monk (*Venerable U Thittila*) who was here prior to the war and got stuck here when the war started, he disrobed and became an ambulance driver until the end of the war and then took his robe again. U Thittila.

Now U Thittila's visa was up and he had to go home to Burma, now Richard Purfurst decided he would go with him, so the two went to Burma. Unfortunately, the Burmese government would not let him in (Purfurst), so Uthittila advised him to go on to Bangkok and see what you can do there, which he did, and he went to Wat Paknam (*Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen*) there, just outside Bangkok, and he found a pretty good teacher (*Venerable Chao Khun Bha vana kosol.*)

He was with him for about a year I think and he came back as a monk (*Kapilavad d ho*) and taught the original group meditation, and he went back and took one or two others with him, one was a Welshman who had joined the group by that time, Peter Morgan, he became Pan n a vad d ho, you may have heard of him, he's done a lot of translation, another was a black man who did not stay with it, he left. (*Venerable Vija vad d ho* (*George Blake*))

Anyway, when he went back he also took a tape recorder with him, it was tape in those days, and they had a tape recorder here. They would meditate, make notes and send them over to him, he would listen to them, make comments and send them back again. This was going on when I came

In the meantime, he had come back, at least once again, to make sure things were OK before he went back to Thailand, eventually he came back here.

Now Connie was born in this house, it was rented in those days, and when her father died, in 1956, she decided that now the house was here why not use it to meet in and not have to jump all over the place wherever a room was available, so they did and they were already meeting here when I came along.

When I came along, the end of 57, beginning of 58, I was welcomed in, in every way possible, and to a degree we confirmed one another: they, who had been taught the traditional way, and me who had my own particular way, and after a few weeks it was decided there was nothing they could really offer me, except that they would give me a free hand in whatever, which happened.

As time went on, the house needed repairs and the landlord was reluctant, so I suggested we buy the place, which we did, Connie arranged a loan, and I worked all the time there was, overtime, to get it paid off. So we bought the house in her name, and we did repairs ourselves, and so it went on.

Two years before she died, I came..., I had better tell you a little more about that.

I was working at the baths in the Caledonia Road Islington at the time. One very stormy night I went back to my digs in Finsbury Park and on the way picked up a paper and there was a little advert that said someone was talking about spiritual healing in a hall, up in Highgate, about 4 miles away, pouring down with rain, anyway I went, felt compelled to go. There were about a dozen people there listening to this man and I sat in the back, I was late obviously, and two rows down and two chairs in there was this chap taking notes, and I thought what the devil am I here for this is a load of nonsense. Anyway the man finished talking about half an hour after I got in, I was about ready to leave by then, to be quite honest, and this chappie got up and he gave him (*the speaker*) such a dressing down I had never even heard from a sergeant in the army, telling him never to go talking about thing he knew nothing about, and then he turned to me and looked at me and said 'I suppose you are the one I have come here to meet, are you? There is a coffee shop round the corner let's go and have a coffee. We were there till 2 o'clock in the morning.

He was the first man I was able to talk to who knew what I was talking about, he was one of the founder members, John Garrie (*John Garrie Roshi- author of The Way is Without Flaw 1998*), you may have met him at Samatha, it was a few years back that he visited there. (*The Manchester Centre For Buddhist Meditation in Chorlton*)

He in was in actual fact an actor and used to take parts, bit parts in films, you know, and he was out of work at the time I met him and he was working at the Ideal Homes Exhibition.

As a result of that meeting there was, after a few years, someone I was able to talk to, and he knew what I was talking about. We were in one another's pockets for a couple of months.

I was in Finsbury Park and he had a basement flat in Brixton, South London, in a house run by a Chinese lady, a 5 storied house, who let these flats and various rooms. I went there one night, as I had been doing habitually, and he said 'there is somebody upstairs I would like you to meet, a lady, she's come from Manchester and has been visiting

someone in Bournemouth and is breaking the journey, on her way home, here. She will be coming down in a minute.' So she did, it was Connie Waterton.

We stayed up all night actually, it was so interesting, and when she left I asked if I came to Manchester, because I realised the group was there, if I came to Manchester would she put me up for a few days until I found something, and she agreed. A couple of months later this happened of course, and she put me up and in a few days I had got a job and I was looking for somewhere and she said don't bother, why not stay here, you fit in in every way, so I did.

Now, sixteen years later, we got the house, we'd bought it, a few repairs, we were meeting here on a regular basis, in fact every day of the week. I had bought a little bubble car, and I was working in Charles Street where the BBC was, it is not there any more, and she was working at that time on Deansgate, she was the librarian for the Manchester Teacher's Library. I used to take her into my place and she'd walk, a very comfortable arrangement, and I would pick her up on the way home.

So it worked out very well until, sometime, the Council decided to redecorate the library, well that was alright, but they would not allow them to work at night or weekends, it had to be done in working hours, to keep costs down, so they tried to put a lot of dryers in the paint which meant fumes. Now Connie was the only woman working there who did not wear make up and she came out with a rash, so she went along to the doctor and he gave her anti-histamines, not realising at the time, because they were pretty new, that they gave you tunnel vision.

A couple of days later I take her in as usual and she is making her way back and she is crossing the road between vehicles and she is waiting and a tanker came along with something on the side and caught her and threw her to the ground. She couldn't see it, otherwise she would have stepped back. We didn't know it, it was later we discovered this tunnel vision thing, it wasn't know then.

I got a telephone call at work, she was in Salford Royal Hospital. So I went over there, she was on a trolley in the corridor, she was black down her whole side, bruised badly. She was unattended and needed help, she said take me home, so I did, I took her home and got the doctor out.

What we did not know was, as a result of that, she developed cancer of the bone, Osteomyelitis, and she became very ill, she never properly recovered from the shock of what had happened. For the last two years I nursed her, it was very very difficult.

She became bedridden. No help available, one had to keep working to keep money coming in as you might say, and keep the society going as well.

Until one day, going to the bathroom, she fell and damaged her hip, so we got her into Altrincham Hospital, and there, when they X-Rayed her they found there was absolutely nothing they could do about it, the bones were so far gone, eggshell thick you might say, there was no possibility of them joining up again.

The interesting thing was, she refused all painkillers, she wasn't in pain, obviously to her, and I know, I overheard the nurse speaking to a doctor about it, how she managed to cope with it she doesn't know because she never takes any of the medication for it. So she wasn't suffering it, that was a good thing.

But anyway, whilst she was in there she she called a solicitor in, made out a will and left the house to me, and she died within a fortnight.

I had let them know to phone when she was getting really bad, either here or at work, it came about at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, I was at work, they phoned to say her time was coming, it was getting that close, actually she died 12 hours later, I was with her at the time.

And I was quite happy with her going, she looked at me as bright, as bright as a button, she knew where she was going, she knew what it was all about, she wasn't a (*inaudible*), she won't come back. I was happy about that.

A couple of days later, the solicitor called on me to say I had been left the house, I didn't know, I didn't even know she had seen him. Anyway that is the way things were. Just shortly after that Charles Shaw came to me and told me about Chandawana (*Cambodian bhikkhu*) being stuck at the University, they, his funds, had dried up, they had the war in Cambodia, his family were cut off, everything, no communication whatever, our government would not finance him in any way. What do we do about it? So, I went to see Chandawana and decided he is a good case, so I brought him here.

And I told him, to a degree he was a bit frightened in many ways, lost, I told him he could stay here as long as he wished, and when he felt he was really ready for it I would send him anywhere in the world, which I would have done. It was quite a bit of a burden actually, financially, but it didn't really matter because it was the right thing to do anyway.

It so happened, it coincided, this, I was contemplating marriage myself. With Connie it was just a friendly relationship, there was nothing more than that, but here was something different. So it transpired the bhikkhu had been here about six months and I got married. So we brought a Vietnamese bhikkhu, who we knew, to come here and stay with him and I moved out.

It so transpired that in that time we did a bit of searching and we found a niece of his who was in Paris, and we brought her over here to meet him, brought her over for a fortnight in actual fact, put her up, so he had some contact with a part of his family at least. She was in contact with refugees in America, and they made that contact, and eventually at the end of the year they financed him to go over to America to take over for them, so the two bhikkhus, they departed.

So he set up a monastery in Maryland, later he did a second one as well, a year or two later, he had a couple of them going, he did quite well.

Anyway around that time I gave this house to the society, because I knew Connie would have wanted that, so it has been ever since. Not mine.

So there is your story. She was very small in stature, but a giant in her ways. She was a Taurus, she had the most piercing eyes of anyone I've ever met, people were afraid of her when they first met her, she looked as though she looked right through you, but never in my life have I met anybody, male or female, with such a wonderful kind heart, absolute giving poured out of her. I've seen tears roll down her cheek when she has seen an old lady trying to find cheap food in a supermarket, and she looked at me and said you know what we can do about it, and we did, we got her a hamper. That was the sort of thing that pleased her.

She was a lovely person, and it was she, more so than anybody else, who suggested, and started the first summer schools in Buddhism. It was she also who organised, when Kapilavad d ho came back, the first meditation, proper meditation, weekends, in a hotel in Buxton, of all places, with other people there when they were walking mindfully up and down stairs and goodness knows what, and in silence,

(laughs)

...and she organised in actual fact the Sangha funds originally which brought about the buying of a house in Hampstead for the first bhikkhus, oh yes, it was she who did all this. She was the one who started it all, she was the one who virtually set Buddhism on the map. The London Society would never have..., in fact they were askance at what they were doing here. They were askance, they did not want to know, until they saw the summer school took off in the first and second year and then they took it over, and then they begin to change and they took up meditation.

P4 So, they had not been doing mediation?

RW No it was a study thing, a bit like the Theosophical Society. Christmas Humphries wanted to take over the Theosophical Society and they wouldn't let him, so he formed the Buddhist Society

P4 I remember him.

RW I'm not saying anything against him because he has done an awful lot, in that respect, with his books, which I think you will agree, if you read them, they have a very much Christian bias, which does not really matter because he introduced probably a quarter of a million people to Buddhism through those books.

P5 I remember those books years and years ago

RW Added to which, we found, over the years, two men came here who had been in Dartmoor (*prison*), both at different times and both sent down, to hard labour, by him. And after their trial he'd come down to their cells to talk to them for a couple of hours, so he really did care, and he left an impression on them, so when they came back home to Manchester, one was a barrow boy and wanted money to buy a barrow to start selling fruit on the streets of Manchester, and of course we helped him out, another wanted help in another way and we gave that too. But it was nice to know he had pushed them in that direction. He wasn't such a bad chap after all.

ST Was Alan Watts part of that as well?

RW Alan Watts was not part of this at all. He was on his own, as far I know none of our people ever met him.

The, what is the name, I forget, Evans-Wentz (*Walter Yeeling Evans-Wentz. anthropologist, writer, translator of Tibetan Buddhism*), translator, he came and spoke to them at one time. He was so used to speaking intellectually in London he did the same thing up here, and for what they told me, because I was not there it was before my time, he went on for 5 minutes and stopped in his tracks, he was in I think the Holdsworth Hall again, he was walking to and fro as he spoke and he stopped dead in his tracks and he looked and he said "I am not getting anywhere am I" and he started off on a totally different track altogether, and he held them in thrall. Afterwards, he said to

Cyril and Connie, since they had arranged the visit, "I am sorry about the way I started, I am so used to talking to intellectuals in London, I have never met an artisan group before, to me it is a wonderful change. Here we talk from the heart not the head."

It was good of him to notice, wasn't it? It shows something doesn't it?

P4 He had links with Jung didn't he?

RW Yes.

So there we have... that is what Connie was, she was a lovely person, and also she did a lot for me. We worked together, very closely, and we discussed various people who came to us, as to their needs, you might say.

We'd discuss these things with one another, the way we saw things, her from her side, mine from mine, male and female, it worked very well.

With my background I would incline to be rather harsh. She taught me love, that mellowed me and gave me a deeper insight, so I have got a lot to thank her for. Wonderful. She also gave me a home, which, I had never had a proper home in my life before. Believe it or not, from the day I was born until the day I got to here in Manchester I had never been in one place for longer than two years. Between the age of 5 and 11 years I had been to 17 different schools, the way we moved around. Parents both died young of course, so this was the first real home I had. I am grateful for that, very grateful and it is still that sort of attachment, I'll be quite honest about that.

So, we have one big family virtually, centred around the same place

P5 That is exactly how it feels.

RW I think you will agree, most people who come, they settle into the atmosphere, they feel as if they have been here all their lives. I think you will agree with that, and so it should be, because you have been, in spirit.

We are touching into something here, what the original people did is, what you might call, open a keyhole into the spiritual world, that is what this house represents. In modern terms they would call it a worm hole to another dimension, in modern terms. This is what it has become. And spiritually you are always connected to that, though you did not perhaps know it. This is where it helps, that is what makes the difference.

So it isn't necessarily me as things working through me, from this place. I can't take any credit for anything, just being here, that is all. What comes out is not mine.

This you see is what makes this place more unique, in that respect, I don't think it is other than what the Buddha knew, but not what he taught. The Buddha was a very wise man, a very clever man, brilliant, to be able to spot, assess, and see and describe, all those aspects of a person that brought them into all their troubles, and to show how to dispense with them. All he taught was what these were and how to get rid of them, to give that freedom, that clarity of mind, he never went beyond that.

<Break>

We are all aware of that which is manifest, we are not aware of the becoming process, that is why we have to go back to the stillness, the emptiness, and as we come out of it

again, to see how it builds up into worlds, and by seeing that we know how not to do it, how to go back to where we belong, as spirit entities and not as physical ones.

<Break>

Now how do we know we are separate from this? By your own observation: shall we say I know I am me, I am in control of what I do and what I think. Suppose I tell you you are not. Would you believe that?

If you are in control why do you think thoughts you don't want to think? How do you know you are thinking thoughts you don't want to think? Is it something separate watching thinking going on? Ah now, if you are watching who is doing the thinking, or if you are thinking who is doing the watching? A fair question. So somewhere we have got to make a separation. So, if we say thinking is a process of the brain, which is the body, it is merely a process going on within the physical structure, therefore I am the watcher, in other words the consciousness that sees it, therefore I am not the body. Is that possible? This is the spirit side of it. So consciousness is spirit not physical.

Otherwise the body would know all these things without having to have organs of consciousness, sight, sound, taste, touch, because those are the things you really know, you don't really know a body.

Shut your eyes, and without any thought, what shape is your body?

Would you say spherical?

Setting aside all concepts and ideas, do you know the shape of your body? All you are aware of is a spherical area, is that true? All we have is awareness, so this is me, not the body. Tricky isn't it?

Now here we come to, what you say, the culmination point of the Buddha's teaching. We have dispensed with the conditions that hold us in thrall to the physical world, but now we are dealing with something we have always been aware of but didn't realise was not in the physical world, in other words, feelings. Feelings of your relationship with anybody, any animal, any plant, any thing, and they are very subtle feelings, they are precise, and they don't need understanding. In fact, some of the feelings, you could not understand, but this is spirit.

Now having reached this culmination point by having disposed of most of these problems, and we are beginning to see these areas, we now come to discover what is the nature of consciousness, and only by experience can we know.

Not, I am conscious of this or that, but, what is the nature of the consciousness within it. There we begin to find things, the real true nature of self. This is where we find there is no egoistic self, in fact this is where reversal takes place.

You see, all aspects of self, ego, are separate, dualistic, I think you will agree, and always to the benefit of me, regardless of...hopefully it won't hurt 'that'... but it won't matter as long as it is OK for 'this'.

'This' is the prime thing to be looked after, never mind anybody else.

Now when we reach this point of cessation of these conditions and we meet the natural..., nature of the consciousness it is the opposite, it is nurturing, giving out, giving, giving, giving. So here we lose duality, because in the giving you become that.

Does that make sense? And it is the only time you are ever really happy, and there is nobody there to give, it is just a flow.

Now you see, if you like to use God terms, God is love.

Consciousness is love in it's nurturing sense. So you see that is where it comes from. The basic nature of all this is to nurture.

This is where..., to recall something that went on earlier in the evening, about the gross ignorance in the so called human beings. So called human because they don't realise they are really something other than what they are. The gross ignorance, thick as two planks, thick as half a dozen planks, put it that way.

When you realise that in this basic nature, it comes about quite spontaneously from time to time, it might be a kitten, it might be a dog, or a plant, or a horse, whatever, and you feel, "ah..." That is your basic nature and you know this to be true. But why do we follow something out there, "if I get that I'll be happy." We are running away from the happiness. How could you be more ignorant than that?

All of a sudden you chase after something that may or may not give..., it may give a bit of elation here and there, but that will die and be the opposite. But it is already here, just waiting for you, to just be there. It does not require any effort at all, but let go of that and you have got it.

And this is the gross ignorance, you see how deep it really is, that you don't really know. And from time to time you experience it but merely dismiss it...

(laughs)

...it is so basically natural, that is the joke of it. It is a joke isn't it, a diabolical joke. But very simple.

P5 You are right Russel it is simple.

RW It is not easy to achieve, it is not easy to achieve, nobody said that. In fact I will say the opposite here, to make this realisation, in truth, to give you that freedom is probably the most difficult thing that anybody ever attempted in the whole world. It is relatively easy to put an argument home and make somebody believe it, but to get somebody to release themselves from all these arguments is the most difficult thing in the world.

To have a mind without thought. To know without thought.

The Buddha teaches us to be still, to be silent. Still means no thought. But to be wholly conscious of the stillness and the apparent emptiness, which is vast, is something very difficult.

Biblically seek ye the peace which lies beyond understanding, beyond understanding. In other words you go past it.

It is no good thinking your way to it, but begin to practice the experiencing of it, it is already there.

Incidentally, Connie was 16 years older than me

P5 I think one of the best things, bits of advice from the early days, Russel, when you said when you open the door, to do it as if the handle was egg shell, gently, and I have always remembered that and I have always applied it. And it is amazing from that, the seeds of that, understanding grew.

RW You realise that other things might have feelings, or at least assume they have. It is a good practice. Nobody else knows what you are doing. But it reflects back into you.

P5 That is it.

RW The world is a mirror. Everything manifest is a mirror. Whatever quality you put out to it will be reflected back to you.

This is what mindfulness is about, to be well aware of the condition that is in here, to make sure that what goes out there, is what you make this.

So if you want to live peacefully, give peace, if you want chaos, put chaos out there and you'll soon get it.

(Laughs)

If you are wise you learn to be very very gentle in almost everything you do because then you get that subtlety of feeling and it is the subtlety that matters rather than the obvious.

And that is a simple enough thing to remember.

It means slowing down somewhat. Not allowing immediate response. Wait. Gentle. Does it really need a response? If it does take it gently, no need to be tough.

And also whatever you do give it your fully attention, undivided attention.

P5 For many years I have been into oriental things, Martial Arts, Zen. I remember a time when something like the Japanese Tea Ceremony I didn't understand. Now I understand.

RW You come to know rather than understand quite often.

Thought has its place, nobody is denying this, but it must not be allowed to overtake everything. There are times when we need to think about things, and if those times are not present then you don't have to think.

If you just stop thinking about them, they will still be there when you need them. But in between thoughts, as you might say, learn to experience what is there, because that is where living takes place, because in thought there is no living, that is delusion.

P5 Go back to that time when you got the glass of water, which (*inaudible*) is the glass of water. That is a good one.

RW It is a good one, yes.

It is good to play with little things like that, it gives you a different way of seeing things, appreciating them.

There is another one you can play with, wherever you are, look straight across the room opposite you, it doesn't matter what object you look at, but make a fixation of that object, and you see there is me and there is that. You know that is duality. But, without moving your head, or your eyes, take the attention off that object and gradually bring it round to the periphery, both sides at the same time, so that you can see the whole room in one go, then tell me where duality is, and where you are in relation to it. There is only the room, no me.

If they are both the same, your experience, which is the truth, and why?

There is a truth about it and the reason why. There is an untruth.

<Break>

P6 I have had a problem recently with one or two family who are close to me almost attacking the way I dress or the way I present myself. I just can't understand where that kind of thing comes from because I don't dress any differently than anybody else particularly, I have my own taste and all the rest of it, and I don't know anybody else who gets attacked for they way they..., it can be you haven't put a comb through your hair, you haven't put the right shoes on, and even if you adapt, I don't think it is that, it is something else.

RW It ain't what you wear it is the way that you wear it, it is totally individual to any individual.

P6 Well that is what I said, but I can't understand why I suffer from it.

RW You cannot see what somebody else can see, and you never will. Because mainly they are looking through their concepts. Do they see themselves as you see them?

(Laughs)

You have got to reverse the whole process, it is as simple as that, and they won't see it either.

P6 It happened to me many years ago, at work, I went through this phase of, even people I didn't know would be making derogatory comments, say about your shoes. Where did that come from? Why? What business is it of theirs, and actually they are normal polite people who would not do that kind of thing.

RW They are just observations that people make, nothing special about that.

P6 I wondered if there was something in me that was sensitive to criticism and it was pressing a button subconsciously in them.

RW You see, in a way, this is an ego thing. Ego is rather pleased about this, I am different...

(Laughs)

...because they see me as different.

I am a somebody.

(Laughs)

I have got confirmation. I am.

P6 But the ego actually isn't very happy about it.

RW *(Laughs)*

A little thing to consider about ego, nobody I know of would admit they have an ego. Egotist? Not me. They don't realise what ego really is. But that was not really the thing.

In its truest sense, I am, therefore, I am separate from this, or that. This is ego. It is not anything huge or anything like that.

Whatever you do... is trying to overcome... a very basic... innate... innate. area... of not knowing who you are.

Consequently, everything you do is on the basis, because of this, I am.

If I don't make much, I have got to make a bit more effort to know that I exist.

As you begin to get nice and contented there is some ...'ah I am dying. I have got to get something doing'.

Many people can't sit down for long, they have got to be getting up and doing, to be 'I am'.

This is the discomfort zone. So, on this basis, of unsatisfactoriness, we seek more unsatisfactoriness, because if we lose that we lose self.

Self only exists on the unsatisfactory, it cannot live on that which you might classify as satisfactory. It does not exist there because there is a union, and it wants to be separate, and prove it all the time.

But this is the basis, on not knowing what it really is, so, it is trying to prove something which it is not. In other words it does not realise that in a sense it is not a thing at all, it is a spirit.

That spirit covers everything, therefore it can't be separate, it can't take the aspect "I and...", whatever it sees is part of itself, the oneness, and to a degree, in the conditioned area it is frightened of that because it means 'I', as being separate, do not exist, therefore death. I am afraid of dying.

In truth it is quite the opposite, the dying always takes place because there is a separate one.

When (*there is*) the realisation 'I am deathless', death cannot take place, it does not need a body any more.

But that is its innate knowing, but we don't know, appreciate, because we are thinking our 'thought knowing' and it doesn't exist there, because it doesn't 'think' in the not knowing.

Once that realisation dawns it can't go back to the separation any more, realising that with bodies there will always be separation, but it is not the body. It is the consciousness that links everything together, as one.

In the same way, a rapport in a group is felt, and it is felt (*to be*) quite comfortable and whole, even though we see separate bodies. As long as we don't think separate we feel it, as one. Is that not true? That is the truth. They are as one, in spirit, only in physicality do we see separation, which is fragmentation.

So that, instead of a person feeling there is something missing, as a person they are the bit that is missing from the whole.

(Laughs)

Big joke really, isn't it.

The bit that is missing is the whole main body rather than the little bit.

Peculiar kind of joke isn't it?

That is why we've got everything..., the cart before the horse, I was going to say something else, I will say that.

The cart before the horse, in other words you might say the cart pushing the horse rather than the horse pulling the cart.

The intelligent being is the spirit, the ignorance is the physical being, and the physical one says 'I am intelligent'.

(Laughs)

The opposite to what it really is.

As spirit, it is a loving nurturing thing, as an entity in physicality, it is at war with everything.

So when we look at the nature here, look for its opposite and you will find it within yourself and there you are getting to the spirit.

That which is manifest is a reflection in opposition to that which really is.

P7 Russel, you say that ignorance is physical...

RW It is part of duality in the physical sense, yes. If it were not so we would not be stuck with it, would we?

P7 I am still very ignorant in many fields, an ignoramus, I..., I..., the christian would probably say it is grace, that revelation.

RW Yes, a good idea,

P7 I tend to look at, ..., I have had several insights, one of which saved my life and I was ignorant of the facts through delusion, illusion. Now some people with my illness, alcoholism, never have that insight, but they are more intelligent than me. Who decides, what decides, who should receive this and who should not.

RW I think you will find if you really delve into it, perhaps at a later date you may see it for yourself, that when you compare yourself with your compatriots, or anybody else for that matter, I think you will find there is a 'bent' in a particular direction which they haven't got. Would you agree with that?

P7 Yes

RW And that 'bent' is not for physicality at all, it is something of a different nature and you are not wholly aware what it is, but you feel there is something there which you have got to discover. Would you agree with that?

Now this indicates that previous lives have been working in that direction, and what you have today, it may well be the very thing that drove you to alcohol...

P7 Yes

RW I know, put it this way, I can only describe myself in this respect: early on there was something I knew I ought to know. I did not know what it was, I didn't know how to look for it and it was very frustrating.

And the more one searched the more frustrating it became. It could easily have gone to alcohol, but it didn't, fortunately. War came along, it put it in another direction, it had to be put off. Anyway, as a result of certain experiences during that time it settled in another way.

But this kind of thing, as I say, could lead into the alcoholism, and once you get into it of course it is one of those things that is insidious and takes you over.

But underlying it you still have that urge to find that something else.

Now because of these previous lives which have brought you into this one, because when you were between death and birth there was a reassessment in consciousness as to what was required in your birth and it put you into this area where you are now.

Because there was a compulsion to follow this unknown thing, you didn't know what it was, it drove you to frustration, the bottle, it helps shall we say to take the pressure off, and you get stuck with it.

But, in your case since it was so powerful, as far as you had been in previous life times, it even broke through that and drove you to the realisation that this is not the way to go, and you found the way out of it. Do you not agree?

P7 Yes.

RW So previous innate memory, because nobody remembers what it is they have got to do when they get born again, because they are now in the physical thought world, not the conscious thought one, when it is powerful enough it penetrates through and guides you without knowing why, and that is what it has done. So you might well say all it needs to do now is to let it happen, you have done all the hard graft. Just leave it all behind and allow yourself to gradually open out and see more clearly.

You don't have to work too hard at it, just quietly dwell on the nature of this or that, on the nature thereof, not thought understanding.

'Oh I see, oh I see', in the sense of gut feeling rather than thought aspects, and gradually you begin to feel more in that respect, 'oh I know', but you couldn't necessarily tell yourself, or anybody else, but you still know. So we are living in a dualistic world now, the world of thoughts, ideas, physicality, and one of these gut sort of feelings, 'oh yes' I feel more at home with this than I do with that, and that is the way it will go, so you don't have to do very much at all, just ponder things as they arise and let them see, the nature, and that is all you need to do. You don't need to do anything else and gradually you will find it will open itself up. The more you push it the more you push it away.

Don't try pursuing anything deliberately, as it arises just observe it, quietly contemplate it until it gives up what it has, or maybe leave it again for another day, as the case may be, but be patient and gradually it will all be revealed to you, rather than you seek it out.

You have done the work necessary for this to happen, just allow yourself to ponder things, quietly, gently, more relaxed, and I guarantee it will come about.

P7 Is it time to coast ?

RW You have climbed the mountain, you are coming down the side now, you are freewheeling. Allow yourself to freewheel and enjoy the scenery as you go. See, you haven't got any great effort to make at all, if you do you are pushing it aside, that is tense.

Open, relax, let it happen and you find it comes.

P7 Carl Jung was mentioned earlier, and it was Carl Jung who said about the alcoholic and the spiritual life, 'alcohol itself is spiritless'.

RW Well you tend to mix the two up from time to time

P7 We had a spiritual thirst

RW Exactly

P7 I didn't know that.

RW But, it was being fulfilled in the wrong way.

P7 I treated my illness with alcohol

RW That's right, but what you will find now is that it will get even easier as you go along, is that you are beginning to recognise the nurturing spirit within rather than the one on the outside, and gradually as you allow it to, it will bring more and more to you.

It is within you coming out, not outside you coming in.

P7 There are very small insights and they come..

RW You wont get a glorious awakening just like that, it will be ordinary everyday, 'oh I didn't realise it was like that'.

P7 You can be occupied doing something else, when they come

RW That's right

P7 And I have not seen them for twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years.

RW Gradually I am sure you will find this is graduallyawakening and gradually taking place and you will be much more contented with it, and as you get more contented, less this aspect of the outer one, the physical one, will begin to diminish.

And truthfully it is the only cure, it is the only cure.

P7 It is the healing involved with the spiritual path, the meditation.

RW The quiet dropping into the silent stillness is all that is required, and as things arise just quietly contemplate as the case may be and leave it at that

I think you will find it will all come through quite easily without a great deal of problem.

But just be patient and don't have any expectations because there wont be any huge awakening, it will be everyday, ordinary. Realise, 'oh I see, yes I see.' It will all be perfectly ordinary.

It is very comforting, because if you did have a huge thing it might be too much for you to handle

P7 It would probably blow your mind..

RW It has been said, some of the old enlightened people long ago said, it creeps up like a thief in the night.

(Laughs)

It is like that, almost as if it is coming out of an emptiness, 'oh I see'.

The big joke about it is, I 'm sure, because you have had one or two little insights, that when you had them, "how is it that I never saw it before?" It is so simple, is it not true?

It has been there all the time and I never saw it. I could kick myself for not seeing it.

P7 I think it is possibly a deep seated self centred ego that has got me

RW This is it exactly, because you are looking for something other than what it is, and when it arrives it is completely fulfilling in this moment of seeing, "ah why couldn't I have seen that before ?"

In a sense it is like walking down the street for many many years and never realising there are cracks in the pavement. Never saw it before...

(Laughs)

...what was there, but you never saw. (

Laughs)

Too busy looking for other things.

It is very much a slow down, don't push too much, go slower and you will see more. Go too fast and you miss things. The trouble is the world is speeding up and we get caught up in it. Slow down, begin to see more.

P7 The problem I now have in life is, I work with alcoholics, and they ask me why have I received this and they have not and I don't have an answer.

RW You will not be able to tell them one that is suitable to them because they would not understand the fact that most of the work you have done has been in previous lives and it is coming to fruition now. They also have done the same but not coming the same way and they have got stuck where they are.

P7 I don't think they will appreciate that.

RW It is best to say I am lucky the way I see things, that's all, but I wouldn't try to show people that sort of thing because they will regard you as being round the twist...

(Laughs)

...which to their mind you are.

P7 The problem I have, the people who ask me this, over time I have to attend their funerals.

RW This in actual fact is a mark of spirituality, humour. If somebody is too straight laced, they have got no spirituality, when they begin to get a sense of humour they are light hearted.

P7 Retain your sense of humour at all costs.

RW That is right. When you begin to laugh, and at yourself from time to time, you are well on the way.

P2 But no jokes at funerals. *(General laughter)*

RW That's right. This in fact for many years bothered me, religion, I was brought up in the Church of England, as a boy, such as it was, and it was always straight laced. It is supposed to be a joyful thing, well why weren't these people enjoying themselves?

I look around today and they are still not enjoying themselves now, they are too straight laced.

If you are buoyant and light hearted this is what it is all about, this is the joyfulness...

(Laughs)

...not being straight laced, "got to be this" or "that," it is not the same thing at all, it is concepts not the reality. Reality is experience, and when you think about it, when you are straight laced you are tense. When you are tense, mentally, physically or emotionally, you can't learn. You cannot learn no matter how hard you try. But when you are open and light hearted how much can you pick up and absorb? You can get almost everything can't you?

So, the light hearted buoyancy is what we require to allow these things to arise from within, and some from without, you have got a sort of door that is ever open, this way or that way, it makes no difference, "oh yes it is all fine" it is all balanced.

This is where you should go, but you can't do it when you are deliberate, you just close the doors to any kind of learning.

Just be open and enjoy.

It is a very simple way of looking at it, but it is true, absolutely true, if you are getting tense, relax, relax, because I'm not going to get anywhere getting tensed up.

The whole world is doing this, that is why it is in trouble.

P8 Did you have a kind of transformation after you hit rock bottom ? (to P7)

P7 It wasn't a transformation, I was in an alcohol treatment centre, 38 years of age, I was searching for something, I did not know what, and the alcohol treated my illness. I was irritable restless discontented, but give me a bottle of brandy and I was fine.

I was in a treatment unit and, it is denial, people I knew, my wife , my kids, you have a drink problem, but no, denial.

There was a perfectly good smoke room, downstairs, we weren't allowed to smoke in our rooms, and I was smoking in my bedroom, nonsense, anti authority, trying to activate the smoke alarm so we could evacuate the building, this is a 38 year old child I am talking about, and it came, "gosh you are an alcoholic", and I walked to the bathroom on a cushion of air, by the time I returned it had gone, that lightness and well being, something I had denied for 23 years

RW That is a heavy weight

P7 And I admitted it and surrendered

RW And the weight goes off your shoulders, and you can stand up, the truth will set you free

P7 I knew nothing about alcoholism, I have not had a drink now for 23 years, and not likely to.

RW You are pursuing something totally different now which keeps you much more healthy

P8 A good friend of mine had a similar experience, lost everything through his drinking, drank his whole life away, lived in a bedsit down the road, believed he was going to commit suicide, but didn't want to, because he believed in life after death, so he knew it was not really an escape, so he saw an ad for the AA and he started going to the meetings, and after about a week he tried that thing where you give away your illness, you can't deal with it so you give it away to a higher power, and all of a sudden he felt

this massive burden lifted from him, he felt free and he has never had a drink since then, he underwent some quite profound transformation, I know, and now he is involved in spirituality and meditation.

P7 Interesting.

RW It must be realised you can't have spirituality in thought alone, it has got to be in experience.

Think about it all you like it wont change a thing. But when you begin to realise through feeling then it will change everything.

Thought is not necessarily honest in itself, and it is not really constructive, it is destructive because it takes you away from the honest.

As you get more used to the experiencing way of life you get more contented as you go along, and it grows more and more and more as you go with it and from this you gain more confidence and in that confidence of course, after awhile it becomes almost like concrete as you might say

P7 I was always pursuing happiness

RW It is a delusion

P7 It can't be maintained, I think I am looking for contentment

RW That is right. Contentedness is the utmost of happiness, free of unhappiness

P7 You cannot buy it

RW It is a pity you can't

(Laughs)

Come easy, I'll have 2, 3 tonnes of happiness please