

MIDDAY, SUNDAY 2nd MARCH 1947

Forman

Madame answered some of the questions that were asked last Sunday, and she has also made extracts from the Introduction of the First Lecture to read again, to help us memorize first principles before going any further.

Miss Bissing

The questions are from last week and the answers from this:-

Miss Beckham

I can only say that it is fairly clear to me that I feel that I have not got the being to understand these ideas any more than I do, and that only with coming here over a long period of time, and regularly, has any understanding in me grown at all.

Answer

Madame says she is very sorry that coming here hasn't helped Miss Beckham to understand chief point: that nothing can be achieved without effort. She still does not discriminate in herself whether she speaks or it speaks. Madame advises her to think first and to speak after.

Dr Beck

I found the re-hearing of the First Lecture very helpful, with the emphasis on trying to see what comes with new significance. And it does give a pointer to particular phases for work during the week.

Answer

Madame advises Dr Beck to control his imagination and emotions, not to trust them, and to try to reason more.

Miss Samacco

I would like to know how we are to think about the work going on?

Answer

Miss Samacco asks how to think ... as if it is possible to change her way of thinking at will. Madame asks what her question means, what does she want to know? Madame is interested to see what ideas attract people most in the System: because in order to be helped, people must first be seen.

Mrs Wolfe

I can't see how work can continue unless a sufficient number of us really come to the inside feeling of that we really want it ...

Answer

Madame does not understand why Mrs Wolfe is so altruistic? or why she thinks about work in connection with other people instead of in connection with herself? Because one can only help other people as much as one is able to help oneself. And Mrs Wolfe already should know who speaks in her, from where it came.

Mrs Varin

How can we learn to see ourselves more often?

Answer

Madame answers: By trying to remember yourself more ~~often~~ often.

Mrs Pinter I think man is as he is because he overestimates himself ...

Answer Madame is glad Mrs Pinter understands one of the chief points, that self-importance belongs to man as he is; and our System studies man from the point of view of his possible evolution. As it is said in the First Lecture:

"Our fundamental idea shall be that man as we know him is not a completed being; that nature develops him only up to a certain point and then leaves him, either to develop further, by his own efforts and devices, or to live and die such as he was born, or to degenerate and lose capacity for development."

"The evolution of man depends on his efforts and on his understanding of what he may get and what he must give for it."

Mrs Sutta When I look at people I think they have no direction but I think I have direction, and apparently this feeling is quite constant. Sometimes it is shocked out of me ...

Answer Madame liked Mrs Sutta's sincerity, but is sorry she still has not changed her point of view, and is lacking discrimination to see what is right and what is wrong, what could be allowed and what could not be allowed in oneself, that this is what keeps us in vicious circle.

Extracts from the Introduction and First Lecture read.

Norman Madame said that we could sit and talk for a while, if you have some questions to ask, and that she will answer some of them later herself.

(Pause)

Madame gave us this reading again so that we could memorize these first principles before going any further. And perhaps it is a good opportunity to ask questions that you may have now - before we do go any further.

(Pause)

Or perhaps if something wasn't clear in one of Madame's answers you could ask about that.

Mrs Segal Is it by taste that one learns to discriminate who it is that speaks in one?

Norman What do you call taste?

Mrs Segal Something that I can't logically arrive by.

Norman Is it something that you have in yourself or haven't got? Are you asking about something that you know about or -

Mrs Segal I am trying to find out how to discriminate between the various

people in me who speak and act. Somehow or other, I trust one of these people more than others - yet one doesn't know. Is it by the taste of this, the feel of this?

Forman           What would you call trustworthy, as opposed to untrustworthy?

Mrs Segal        The 'I' in me that wants to make effort I find more trustworthy than the rest of me.

Forman           Are there any more questions along this line, because it does seem to be an important thing to know - if one has to study oneself, how to do it.

Mr Barr          Is there anything in man which can say 'I' without lying?

Forman           I think it depends which man you are asking about.

Mrs Welch        I think the difficulty is to discriminate at the time. Afterwards one can say: that was the one that justifies, and that was the one that was lazy, that was the one that didn't like that, that was temporary. But right there - here it is in action now - stop! - there has to be someone else to say that. I think that is the one that is usually absent.

For me there is something wrong that comes into this always and I don't know just what it is. In trying to discriminate. I haven't been able to find out what it is. Sometimes it is a falseness. Sometimes it is - it may be the difficulty of trying to be sincere, but something else always enters in to colour it. I always feel somewhere - well, I don't really honestly trust that.

Forman           Yes. But what conclusion comes from that, and what is it you want to ask about?

Mrs Welch        I think I want to find that 'I' that is a standard - that I can say of that, that's it, that's the one I want, that's the one I will listen to. Even if it is right for a moment, something spoils it very quickly.

Forman           Well, what do you call right for a moment - surely a lot depends on that.

Mrs Welch        I think that if one sees sort of clearly and honestly, then immediately it gets mixed - your impression on other people, or how did it sound, or something. In other words, when something tries to be straight and honest and sincere, it is impinged on by a lot else that immediately says: Oh, don't you think I am clever! or if it isn't that, it is that someone contradicts you and immediately you are annoyed. But it changes in the very saying, or loses its sincerity before you can hear it. It is like something good surrounded by a lot of devils, a lot of me's.

Forman           But what is this something good you talk about, because if one can recognize that -

Mrs Welch        I don't know. I connect it with wish to be. And if you were to ask me exactly what I mean by that I would find it difficult to

say. But it is connected with another level - not where we are now, where I am now.

Forman Have any other people observations of this kind about which they would like to ask?

Mrs Pinter I have observed in myself that negative emotions originate entirely in self-identification. When we identify whatever happens with this, with the body or thing that we know as 'I', that is, the physical 'I'. Is that a right observation?

Forman I am not quite sure that I understand what you mean.

Mrs Pinter Well, because we still believe in this state and when we have negative emotions they are always identified with this thing. And if we can eliminate what we know as 'I' or what we identify ourselves with - "I, Myra Pinter" - we will eliminate negative emotion, if we can stand outside of this thing.

Forman What do you mean exactly by standing outside of this thing? Can you make that more clear?

Mrs Pinter Well, one can stand outside. There seems to be two definite things. This, which is not real, and something else. And when the something else speaks or sees, I seem to feel that there is a change of - I don't quite like to use the word, but one might use 'vibrations'. It seems to be a different tension. Something is different than when this speaks. Or if you feel things physically, or the other part of you feels, there is a distinct difference in therapidity. Is that clear?

Forman Yes, I think that is clear. Perhaps Madame will answer that question.

Mrs Pinter I have always believed that I felt that difference, even when I was quite a small child.

Mr Pinter Mr Forman, is self-observation a step in the right direction for development of consciousness.

Forman From the lecture, clearly yes. But the question is how to start that.

Mr Pinter Well I find that I need certain conditions to be able to - at least (? to observe myself) and realize that I do. And if I am physically or mentally tired, it is very difficult for me to do it. There are just flashes or moments when it seems as if I could turn on a certain amount of self-observation, but it doesn't last long. It may be very short. They seem longer than they may be, these periods of time, but I think to be able to do it.

Forman You remember Madame's answer to one of these last questions. How to observe oneself more? Madame said: Try to remember oneself more.

Mr Pinter But during these moments it seems to me as if I were standing

outside myself and I see more or less what I do or how I do things, as it were. It seems to me I have the impression or it seems to me as if certain mechanical things were done by someone else. (pause)

And this is the only way I can avoid or I can try to control or eliminate negative emotions.

Forman Is there anything else anyone would like to ask?

Mr Segal What would you say capacity to make effort depends on? Would it be energy, or what?

Forman What do you think?

Mr Segal To me it seems a combination of energy and something unknown. I don't know. It is interesting that at one moment you make effort and another moment you forget all about attempting to make effort. You seem to have no control in that direction.

Forman Do you think that would happen to a business man who was about to put through an important deal to make half a million dollars?

Mr Segal May be not. Well, is it aim, then?

Forman Do you think you could reformulate your question?

Mr Segal What would enable us to make more effort? Or, why can't we make effort more often?

Forman Well, any more that you would like to ask, or shall we go?

Miss Rego What does it mean to try to remember yourself in order to observe yourself? Does it mean to try and draw yourself back and say what am I here for? Or what do I want?

Forman What is it you want to know? Are you asking about the connection between self-observation and self-remembering, or are you asking what self-remembering is?

Miss Rego Well, I really want to know what self-remembering is and what its connection is with studying yourself.

Forman Well, perhaps Madame may answer that question.

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