

**Osho**

## **From Robopathology to Enlightenment**

*Najrani said, 'if you say that you can "nearly understand", you are talking nonsense.'*

*A theologian who liked this phrase asked,  
'can you give us an equivalent of this in ordinary life?'*

*'Certainly,' said Najrani.  
'It is equivalent to saying that something is "almost a circle".'*

MAN is not yet man. He can be, but he is not. The potential is there but the potential has to be actualised. It is not yet a reality. By birth we are born only into an opportunity to grow. Birth itself is not life. And the person who thinks that by being born he has already become man is befooling himself.

That is the original sin. That is the only sin there is – to think that you are already that which you can be.

Life has to be discovered, created, realised. If you don't realise it you remain more or less a machine. That is one of the basic principles of Sufism: that man as he exists is a machine.

The machine has deceived itself into believing that it is conscious. Consciousness is a promise, but one has to explore it. It is a task. Consciousness is a possibility but you can miss it. Don't take it for granted. It is not yet a fact. You are a seed for it but you have to grow into it. A seed can remain a seed and may never become a tree, may never become capable of blooming, may never be able to release its fragrance to the world, may never be able to offer itself to the divine. That possibility also exists. And remember always that many miss; only a few arrive.

This creates an anxiety – that man is a promise, that man is an adventure, that man is not yet. It creates an anxiety in the wrong kind of person but it creates joy in the right kind of person.

Whom do I call the right kind of person and whom do I call the wrong kind? The coward is the wrong kind of person. In the coward it creates anxiety. At the very idea of going on an adventure, on a pilgrimage into the unknown, the coward shrinks. He stops breathing. His heart beats no more. He becomes stone deaf to this call, to this challenge. This challenge becomes an enemy. He becomes defensive against it.

And the courageous I call the right kind of person. To him this is not an anxiety, this is thrill, this is challenge, this is adventure. God has called him forth. He starts moving, he starts seeking and searching. If you seek, there is a possibility of finding if you don't seek, there is no possibility. If you start moving then one day or other you will reach the ocean, as every river does. But if you have become very, very much afraid of movement, of dynamism, of life, of change, then you become a small pond. By and by you die. You

become more and more dirty, dull, stale, stagnant. Then your whole life is ill. Then your whole life is a pathology. And many – the majority – live in a kind of pathology.

A modern thinker, Lewis Yablonsky, has coined the right word for this pathology – he calls it 'robopathology'. The man who suffers from it he calls a 'robopath'. 'Robo' means a machine, an automaton; one who lives a mechanical kind of life, a repetitive kind of life; one who has no adventure; one who simply goes on dragging himself. He fulfils the day-to-day demands but he never fulfils the eternal demand, the eternal challenge.

He will go to the office, to the factory, he will come home, he will look after the children and the wife, and he will do a thousand and one things – and do them very efficiently – but he will never be alive, you will not find aliveness in him. He will live as if he is already dead.

'Robopath' is a beautiful word. Sufis have always talked about this pathology. They have called it by many names. For example, they say that man is a machine. Gurdjieff introduced this sufi idea into the Western consciousness. Sufis say that man is asleep. Sufis say that man is dead. Sufis say that man is not yet. Sufis say that man only believes that he is but that belief is a kind of dream.

You may remember sometimes dreaming that you are awake. Yes, it happens in dreams. You can dream yourself awake, you can think you are awake – and when you dream in a dream that you are awake you feel as if you are awake. Only in the morning when you are really awake will you be able to compare notes. Then you will laugh at the ridiculousness of it. The dream deceived you.

Sufis say that people are not awake, they only believe they are awake. And their very belief is a hindrance to their awakening. If you already believe that you are awake then what is the need of doing anything about it? It is pointless. If a man feels he is healthy then what is the point of going to a physician? Then what is the point of taking any medicine or treatment? Then what is the point of having very, very painful surgery? He believes he is healthy already.

Cowards believe they are healthy because they are afraid of the medicine, of the physician, of the operation, of the surgery. They are afraid of everything, they simply exist in fear, they go on trembling deep inside. They are just protecting themselves. Their whole life is a long story of protection, defending. They don't have time to live and they don't have energy to grow.

This robopathology has to be understood. It is one of the fundamentals of Sufism.

A few things.... A robopath is a person whose pathology entails robot-like behaviour and existence. He is man only for the name's sake. He could have been a computer. He may be. A robopath is a human who functions insensitively, mechanically – in short, in a dead way. A robopath is an automaton. His existential state is not even inhuman, he is not human, certainly he is not even inhuman – because to be inhuman first you have to be human. His existential state can only be described as the Sufis describe it – they call it 'ahuman'. It has no human value, neither this way nor that. He is neither human nor inhuman, he is ahuman.

These are the characteristics of this disease. Ponder over them – because they are your characteristics, everybody's. Until you become enlightened these characteristics will follow you like a shadow. We can define enlightenment as getting out of robopathology, becoming consciousness for the first time, dropping the mechanical, no longer being identified with the mechanical, becoming a witness, awareness, awakenedness.

The first characteristic is sleep. You will find the robopath always asleep. He walks but he walks in sleep. He talks but he talks in sleep. He does many things, he has become perfectly efficient in doing the ordinary things of life. But watch yourself and watch people. You go on doing the same thing again and again. By and by there is no need to be alert about those things, you can simply do them. You need not be there.

When you first start learning to drive you have to be there for a few days. That's why it is so troublesome to learn anything – because to learn anything you will have to come out of your sleep a little bit at least. Otherwise how will you learn?

Robopaths are never interested in new things. Once they have learned a few things they go on moving in that vicious circle. Every morning is the same, every evening is the same. Every time they eat or they talk or they make love, it is the same. They are not needed there at all. They don't do anything through consciousness, they go on making empty gestures. That's why there is so much boredom in life. How can you remain thrilled by constantly repeating the old? This is the first characteristic – sleep.

The second characteristic is dreaming – part of sleep. A robopath continuously dreams – not only in the night, even in the day. He has day-dreams, reveries. Even while he is doing something, deep inside he is dreaming. You can find that any time. Close your eyes any time and look inside and you will find a dream unfolding. It is constantly there. It is like the stars – in the day they don't disappear, they only become invisible because the light of the sun is too bright. But the stars are there, the full sky is there as it is in the night – exactly as it is in the night. When the sun is gone you will see those stars appearing again. They have not gone anywhere, they were there just waiting for the sun to go.

In the night you start seeing dreams. Those dreams don't disappear in the day. Because you become involved in a thousand and one things in daily routine life, they go on lurking deep in the unconscious. You can find them any moment. Close your eyes, wait a single moment, and the dream is there. Sleep is constantly there. Your eyes are full of sleep and your mind is full of dreaming.

And the third characteristic is ritualism. A robopath remains in rituals, he never does anything through his heart. He will say 'hello' because he has to say it or because he has always been saying it. His 'hello' will not have any heart in it. He will kiss his wife but it will be just repeating an empty gesture. There is no kiss in his kiss. He will embrace somebody but only bones will touch and skin will touch – he will remain as far away as ever. He is not there. You can be certain about one thing – he is not there.

But robopaths are great ritualists. They depend on ritual. They do everything as it should be done.

A ritual is by its very nature uncreative. A ritualistic person is never spontaneous, he cannot afford to be spontaneous. If you want to be spontaneous you will have to be alert. Spontaneity has one necessary ingredient, and that is alertness. If you are not alert you cannot be spontaneous.

And of course, how can you be creative? You are repetitive, how can you be creative? Even great creators are rarely creative. Even great painters go on repeating their own painting, and great poets go on repeating the same poem again and again.

Only very rarely does a person sometimes create something – and those moments when creativity is there are moments of spiritual joy. That's why creativity brings so much joy. A creative person is a happy person; an uncreative person is a miserable person.

Many people come to me and they ask how to be happy, where to find happiness. They cannot find it unless they become creative. Happiness cannot happen to them, it happens only to creative souls. Create something. Become more spontaneous. Drop repetitions. Let every morning be a new morning and let every experience be a new experience. Don't think that all is old. Robopaths think there is nothing new under the sun – it is all the same so why bother?

Rather than living life a robopath creates a ritual. For example, if he prays he prays as a ritual. He has learned a certain prayer, he goes and repeats it. He goes to the church, he has learned a ritual. There may be a temple by the side of the church but he will not go to the temple. And the temple may be more silent. Or there may be a mosque and the mosque may be more silent. It is Sunday, all the Christians are in the church – if you really want to pray, the church is the last place. If you want to pray you should find a temple or a mosque where there will be silence and more of God. But a Christian cannot go there. He is not interested in prayer and he is not interested in God, he is only interested in a certain kind of ritual. That makes him feel that he is a Christian.

These ritualists create great problems in the world. They go on fighting, they go on debating whose ritual is the best. All rituals are just rituals; there is no question of there being a good ritual or a bad ritual. A ritual as such is bad, ugly. Spontaneity is good, ritualism is bad.

Just the other day I was reading a story.... Sedgewick, the eldest son of a respectable Boston family, walked into his father's study one evening and made a shocking announcement. He intended to live openly with his boyfriend on Beacon Hill.

'Damn it!' exclaimed the parent. 'Our family came here with the pilgrims and we have never had a scandal such as this.'

'I can't help it,' said Sedgewick, 'I love him.'

'But for God's sake!' shouted his father. 'He's a Catholic!'

Now that is the real problem. That is the scandal. That's what is heavy for the parent.

The ritualistic mind is always like that. It goes on missing the real problem. It never faces a real problem, it creates an unreal problem because it is easy to solve an unreal problem. Remember it. It gives you a good feeling that you have solved it.

That's why people love to solve puzzles, crossword puzzles, and things like that. Solving a crossword puzzle gives you a feeling that you are solving something. It is stupid. Nothing is solved by solving a crossword puzzle. Your life remains as unsolved and as complicated and confused as ever, but it gives you a feeling that at least you have been able to solve something. Otherwise there is no need. Life is such a great puzzle, if you want to solve it, solve it. Why create small, tiny, petty troubles and puzzles and then solve them? They give you a good feeling. They make you avoid life itself. Life is too big and dangerous. Solving a crossword puzzle has no danger in it. If you solve it, good. If you don't solve it, nothing is wrong in it.

People go on watching other people live. They go to a movie to see other people love; they go to see a dance, other people dancing; they go to see wrestling, other people wrestling. People have become spectators. It gives them a false feeling, as if they are part of the dance or part of the love affair that is going on. And they go on just watching, spectators, dead and dull. Their life is nil. And if you look into their life you will find them repeating the same motions again and again.

I have heard....

Rabbi Greenberg died and went to heaven. He saw only three people there reading by a dim light. One of them was reading 'Playboy', another 'Gallery' and the other 'Genesis'.

Then he decided to see what hell was like. He got to the Devil's domain and it turned out to be a big night club with every kind of music being played. There was an eight-piece Dixieland band, a thirty-piece swing band, and all the people were dancing.

Rabbi Greenberg went back into heaven and asked for an audience with God. 'I don't understand it, Lord,' he said. 'There are only three people here in heaven and they are all reading. Down in hell everybody is dancing and having a good time. Why can't we have that in heaven?'

The Lord said, 'I cannot hire a band for just three people.'

If your so-called saints are going to heaven, heaven is going to be a really dull kind of place. Avoid it. If by chance you enter it, escape from there! If your mahatmas are all going to heaven then it is better to choose hell. There you will find people who are a little more alive – dancing, singing, living. If you want to read 'Playboy' you can do it here; what is the point of going to heaven and reading 'Playboy'?

But that 'Playboy' is also significant – significant of the robopath. He is not interested in real women; real women are dangerous. He is interested in pornography. Even while making love to his woman he will be thinking of other women – actresses, playboy mates, unreal things, false things, plastic things. Even while making love to a real woman he avoids. People go on avoiding the real.

And the pornographers and the people who are obsessed with pornography are not different from the churchgoers. It is the same is there you will worship him. This is pornography, spiritual pornography. People worship the dead and avoid the alive – because with the alive you have to become alive, that is the problem. With the dead you are perfectly happy; you are also dead, there is a communion between the dead and the dead. With the alive you start feeling guilty, with the alive you start feeling you are missing, with the alive you start feeling jealous. With the alive you start feeling that you have to do something now – and you don't want to do it. You want to somehow kill time, pass time. People are passing time.

And people are very much interested in rituals. A real prayer is going inwards; a ritualistic prayer is just lip-service. To face a real Master is to face death and to face life – they are both together, always together. To worship a dead Master – a Jesus, a Buddha – requires nothing from you. You can bow down at the feet of an image and you remain the same. Bowing down at the feet of a real Master your ego has to be put aside. Your ego will create a thousand and one difficulties for you to bow down and surrender. That's why people become Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans – these are all rituals.

Robopaths live a life of formality. Even their so-called intimate and emotional behaviour is ritualistic and programmed. Their activities are all pre packaged. They never do anything on the spur of the moment. Coming home they think about what they are going to say to their wife. Going to the office they prepare what they are going to say to the boss. They are always rehearsing. It is always a rehearsal. They are always getting ready. And naturally, when you are too prepared, you miss the moment. You don't hear what is being said, you don't see what is present. You go on seeing things in the light of what you have prepared.

I was a teacher in a University for many years. I was surprised that students used to answer a question that had not been asked at all. Something had been asked but they had prepared something else, they were expecting something else. And they would answer whatsoever they had prepared.

It was not that they were doing it knowingly, no. Because their answer was ready, they would read the question in such a way that the answer fitted with it. They would interpret the question in such a way that it fitted with the answer. They could not afford to read the question as it was – that would be dangerous. It might not fit and they knew only a certain answer for which they were ready. They would immediately start writing the answer; they would not even bother to go into the question. Just a slight change in the question and their whole answer would be wrong, but they would not see that slight change.

And that's how it goes on in your whole life.

A robopath is very dogmatic. He is always pretending to be certain about everything. He cannot allow doubt. Doubt creates trembling. He believes, he never suspects – because if you doubt then you have to enquire. And who knows where your doubt will lead? That's why you see so many believers on the earth and no religion at all. So many believers? Everybody seems to be a believer – believing in his Christianity, in his Mohammedanism, in his Hinduism. Everybody is a believer.

And the world is so utterly irreligious – what is the matter? With so many believers the world should be blooming in religion. But this belief is not trust, not faith; it is pure dogmatism. It is just an effort to crush the doubt, it is just an effort to repress the doubt. If you talk to a robopath you have to be very alert; you must not touch his belief otherwise he gets mad. He is not getting mad at you. He simply becomes afraid – you are taking the ground from underneath his feet. He has been believing that he knows and now you are here to disturb him. People don't like being disturbed. It creates anxiety.

People are very fixed in their ideas. Life goes on changing but their ideas never change. Just look.... You are still carrying the ideas that were given to you in your childhood – and that life is no longer there. Life has moved, the Ganges has flowed, much water has passed,

and you still go on believing in your childhood beliefs, childish, juvenile concepts. You carry them. That's why people don't grow.

A robopath is always past-oriented or future-oriented. He is never in the present. The past is good because you cannot do anything with the past. The past is finished and complete. The robopath feels very at ease with the past. The past is dead, things have happened, now there is no way to change and alter them.

With the past the robopath feels in tune, with the future he can desire and hope – but with the present he is very uneasy, with the present he is very restless. The present brings problems. The past is finished, there is no problem about it – it is settled. And with the future you can hope and you can settle according to the hopes in your mind. The future will not create any trouble for you. The future will not say that this is not possible. You can dream about it.

But the present is the most dangerous space to be. You want one thing and life gives something else. There is always a clash. You wanted somebody to welcome you and he didn't welcome you. If you had been hoping about the future there would have been no problem. The future cannot come and say no. The past is settled, you know it is settled. Everything has happened. It is no more relevant. The past can be classified easily, the future can be projected easily... the only problem arises with the present.

The present does not listen to you. It has its own being. That's why the robopath goes on avoiding the present. And the best way to avoid the present is either to remain past-oriented or to become future-oriented.

There are two kinds of robopaths – the older type remains with the past and the newer type remains with the future; the catholic remains with the past and the communist remains with the future. The so-called orthodox religious people think that the golden age was in the past – somewhere far away, pre-history; and the communists and the fascists think that the future is going to bring the utopia – somewhere far away are those golden peaks. But they are not very different. These are two aspects of the same robopathology. One thing is similar – both want to avoid the present. Nobody wants to deal with it, nobody is ready to encounter it.

And life happens only when you start encountering the present. You become aware. Your life starts being new when you respond to the present. And the response has to be completely pure of past and future.

The robopath lives out of the past. The present does not exist for him. There is nothing new. The response of the robopath is never adequate, cannot be. It is not a response to the present situation so how can it be adequate? It is always inadequate. He reacts on cue. He suffers a cultural lag. He is never contemporary.

Remember well, if one thousand people are sitting here, don't think they are all living in the same moment, don't think they are contemporary. A few may be still struggling in the caves ten thousand years back – cultural lag. Or a few may be dreaming of the future. Either you lag behind or you jump ahead – and both are wrong. The only way to be authentic and alive is to be here-now. This is the only moment and this is the only space.

Reality is here-now. All else is mind. Mind lives in the memory or in the imagination. The robopath lives memory, lives imagination, but never lives reality.

The robopath is a conformist. Conformity is a virtue for the robopath, the highest value. His whole idea is how to conform with people, how to become part of the mob and the crowd. And whatsoever value the crowd gives, he follows it. He is a follower, he is an imitator. He never asserts his individuality, he is never a rebel. He is orthodox in his very blood. He trusts the crowd, he does not trust his consciousness. He has none. When you have consciousness you trust your consciousness, then you are not a blind follower of the crowd. The crowd is the lowest consciousness. To follow the crowd simply means a blind man following other blind men who are far more blind than you are. An individual has some possibility of awakening, the crowd has none. Sometimes an individual has become awakened – a Buddha, a Krishna, a Christ, a Mohammed, a Mansoor – have you ever heard of a crowd becoming enlightened? It has not happened and it is not going to happen. The crowd has no soul. The crowd is absolutely dead.

Only individuals live, but the conformist puts his individuality below the crowd. The conformist has only one idea – how to convince people that he is living according to their ideas and ideals, how to have the good opinion of the people. The good opinion of others is his whole virtue, his whole morality.

'New or different behaviour is viewed by the robopath as strange and bizarre. Freaks are feared; originality is suspect. Tradition is truth. Obeying is his religion. To be part of the crowd is his goal. He wants to be anonymous in the crowd.'

He does not want the responsibility of being an individual – because to have responsibility you will have to have consciousness. It is very easy to drop all responsibilities when you become part of a crowd. A Mohammedan crowd burning a temple, or a Hindu crowd killing Mohammedans or a Catholic crowd murdering.... If you become part of the crowd you don't have any responsibility. You can always say, 'I am not responsible. Hindus were going there to destroy the mosque and I followed them because I am a Hindu. But I have no individual responsibility. I did not decide to do it. It was already happening. I was just there and I became part of it.'

And when so many people are burning the mosque or murdering people, you can always say, 'They are doing it. Even if I am not doing it, it is going to happen – so what. I can be with them.' And you don't feel any prick in your conscience.

Just think... can you do the same thing individually, all alone, on your own? You will think a thousand times before you decide to do such a stupid act as burning a mosque, or killing a person. But crowds are known to do any kind of thing. It has been one of the observations down the centuries that individuals only rarely go mad, crowds are always mad. For individuals madness is a rare phenomenon, it is accidental, but mobs – madness is the rule for mobs. The crimes that have been committed by the crowd are many; individuals have committed only a few crimes here and there.

Remember it, a robopath lives through the crowd so that he cannot be bothered by any responsibility. He can always say 'they'. He can drop his 'I' into the 'they'. He can lose himself in the crowd, become faceless, anonymous. Nobody can catch hold of him. But you are responsible.

The robopath lives in image involvement. He is always concerned about how his image is, what people are thinking about him – whether they think him good, saintly, this and that. He is not really worried about transforming his life. If people believe in stupid things he will follow them. You can go and see. If people believe that fasting is good, you will find a few stupid people fasting – because only through fasting will they become saints. If people believe that killing oneself is spiritual, you will find people killing themselves.

In Jainism suicide is permitted. If somebody wants to kill himself he is allowed to – and he becomes a great saint. Why? Because they say the world is just sin. The man who wants to get out of this world fast and soon is a great saint. Many people have committed suicide.

You can look into religious traditions and you will find a great Christian sect in Soviet Russia before the revolution. They used to cut off their genital organs. That was a religious thing. Thousands of people would do that. Women would cut off their breasts, and it was thought to be a great virtue.

There have been many sects whose members used to whip themselves – the idea was that one who whips himself every morning is a great saint. And he who was the greater was decided by how many times he whipped himself in a day. Stupid, neurotic things, but they have happened. They still go on happening.

I have heard....

A disciple died and went to purgatory. There he ran into his guru who was accompanied by a luscious young blonde.

'I'm happy for you, Master,' said the new arrival. 'At least you're getting a partial reward in this place while you expiate your sins.'

'She isn't my reward,' sighed the guru. 'I'm her punishment.'

Your so-called saints can only be used for that, for punishments. They are ugly people, destructive people, stupid people – either masochists or sadists, but in every way pathological. But their whole idea is how to have a good image in the eyes of others, that's all. If they think that a man standing on his head is a great saint, they will stand on their head. Through public opinion they live.

They live through the ideal, they live for the image they don't have any inner direction. 'They have no interior definition of their behaviour. It is decided by others. Public opinion is the ultimate deciding factor. Their behaviour is thus dominated by image or status requirements set by the surrounding society.'

Watch these characteristics in you and in others. Robopaths are idealists, they are never realists. They avoid reality. They have great ideas in their mind about how man should be. They never listen to the fact of how man is; 'should' is far more important for them than 'is'. And 'is' is real and 'should' is just imagination. They live in the 'ought' and they have impossible ideals in their minds which cannot be fulfilled, which are inhuman – but they try to fulfil them. And in that very effort they start becoming more and more hard, more and more dead.

A robopath is always a perfectionist. He is never satisfied. He will always be finding faults. He will try to be as faultless as possible and he will look always at others' faults. Now, if you want to be faultless you cannot be original. With the original comes the error. If you want to do something new you have to accept that sometimes you may commit mistakes. If

you want to be faultless you have to have a very small routine repeated so many times that it has become absolutely rigid and you can do it perfectly.

That's why many people live at the minimum, they cannot go to the maximum. With the minimum they can remain perfect but the maximum is a danger – error may enter in. People live a very limited kind of life. They choose a small life and life has to be multi-dimensional, only then is it rich.

A robopath is really poor. He may have as much wealth as one can have, but he is poor. His life is one-dimensional. He always lives to the minimum, close to the minimum. Do as few things as possible because then you remain more perfect. If you do many more things, naturally you can't be perfect.

A real man is rich. He commits many errors – of course, he never commits the same error twice – but he always goes on new adventures, seeking and searching for the new. He is ready to go astray. The perfectionist is not ready to go astray. He cannot learn because learning creates trouble – that's why you see that children can learn very much, grown-ups cannot. Grown-ups become perfectionists, they become robopaths. Children are still not trained for it; they are ready to learn.

And children learn fast. Psychologists have come to observe that a child learns as much in seven years as he will learn in the rest of his life. Fifty per cent of his whole life is learned by the age of seven. If you are going to live for seventy years more, you will learn only fifty per cent more. This seems to be a sheer wastage of life. But why is the child so ready to learn? He is ready to commit mistakes, he is not worried about his image. He can try. If he fails he is ready to fail. A person who is not ready to fail will never try.

A robopath is necessarily anti-joy, anti-life. Not only is he anti-joy, he is a joy-killer. If somebody else is celebrating he will look with eyes of condemnation. If somebody is singing and dancing he will look as if somebody is committing a sin, a grave sin. He cannot accept laughter. Laughter looks to him like a sacrilege. He wants everybody to be serious and have long faces. He wants everybody to be miserably serious. That is his idea of a grown-up man. This is not the grown-up man, this is really the pathological state, ill.

A real man has the capacity to laugh as much as the capacity to cry. The real man has the capacity to be happy and to be miserable. His misery also has a certain life. These robopaths are miserable but even their misery is dull and dead and mechanical. Even in their misery there is no throb.

Remember this, and avoid any ideas that make you anti-life.

Father Sullivan was terribly overworked and confided to a psychiatrist that he felt on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

'What you need,' said the doctor, 'is to break completely with your everyday life. Put on a business suit and spend an evening in – well – a topless nightclub.'

That night, with some misgiving, the priest followed this advice. He sat in the darkest corner of the club until a passing waitress stopped at his table. 'Why, hello, Father!' she said.

'How... how did you know I was a priest?' asked the clergyman.

'Don't you recognise me, Father?' smiled the girl. 'I'm Sister Natalie. How's our shrink?'

The same psychoanalyst has sent them both. She says, 'How is our shrink?' One of the greatest problems before therapists is how to help people to become more life-loving, life-affirmative again – because when you affirm life you are relaxed, when you start enjoying life you start becoming alive. Again your feet have a dance and again your heart has a song; again things start happening.

People come to me – these anti-life people – they say, 'What kind of ashram is this? People dancing, singing, women and men holding hands – what kind of ashram is this?' Their problem I can understand. They may have gone to Vinoba's ashram or to Shivananda's ashram. Ashrams have existed in India for centuries – life-negative ashrams where only dull and dead people gather together, old, on the verge of death, tired, bored, finished, just somehow pulling themselves along, against life, against every kind of celebration. So they have a certain idea about an ashram – that an ashram has to look serious. They have a certain idea about an ashram – that an ashram has to look like a hospital.

This is not a hospital, this is not for full and dead people, this is not a cemetery, this is not a graveyard. This is a temple where we celebrate – and through celebration we grow tremendously – where we celebrate the very fact that God has given us birth; where we are grateful for these few utterly precious moments that God has given to us, for this *baraka*, for this *prasad*. What can we do except thank God through dance, through singing, through being more loving? God has showered so much love on us, what can we do in return? How can we pay the debt? We can shower this love on other human beings, on trees, on birds, on animals, on the world. Whatsoever God has given to us we have to give and share.

The robopath has no compassion. He is hard. He is hard on himself, he is hard on others. And sometimes when robopathology goes to its very extreme he not only lacks compassion, he becomes acompassionate. That value simply disappears. He is neither compassionate nor not compassionate – that value simply does not exist for him. He only does his role – properly, of course; he follows orders – blindly, of course. His great value is efficiency.

'The robopath's enactments are generally neither against other people nor for other people in terms of a sense of personal moral values or principles. He acts essentially in terms of what is the most expedient behaviour to further or confirm with his expected status or image in the social system.'

That's what the people who served Adolf Hitler said in the courts – that they were simply following orders, they were not responsible. Their only duty was to obey and they did their work as efficiently as possible. They were not concerned with what the work was.

The man who dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima was asked the next morning by a journalist how he felt. He said, 'There was nothing to feel. I dropped the bomb, I fulfilled my duty, then I ate my dinner and I went to sleep. And I had a perfect sleep.' Now what kind of man is this? One hundred thousand people have died by his bomb, by his act – one hundred thousand people and he could sleep the whole night perfectly well without even a nightmare disturbing him? What kind of man is he? And he could eat his dinner that night?

But try to understand. He is the perfect robopath. He says, 'I did my duty' – as you do your duty. You go to the office and you do your duty. You are a clerk and you have to issue an order for somebody to be crucified, sentenced to death – you don't feel anything. You simply type the order, you send it to the right person to sign, you come back home, you take your dinner, you love your wife, you talk to your children, you watch the TV, and you go to sleep. It is none of your concern.

The same were the answers of the German officials who followed such orders that it seems impossible that a human mind could do that, that a human being could do that. Burning thousands of Jews.... But they did it perfectly and they did it efficiently.

Just the other day I was saying in darshan....

An Indian died. He used to live in Germany. When he died he went to hell and the Devil asked him, 'What hell would you like to choose? You can have either – Indian or German – because you were born an Indian and you lived in Germany, so this alternative is possible. You can choose either.'

The Indian was surprised. He said, 'I never thought that there were different kinds of hell. But what is the difference? Are the punishments different?'

The Devil laughed. He said, 'No, the punishments are exactly the same. The same fire is waiting for you, and every torture.'

Then the Indian was even more puzzled. He said, 'Then what is the difference?'

And the Devil said, 'Of course, there is a difference. Things are done with German efficiency in the German hell, with German accuracy, precision, perfection. And, of course, an Indian hell is an Indian hell.'

The Indian jumped. He said, 'I want to go to the Indian hell – because sometimes the fire may not burn, sometimes the man who puts the fire on may not turn up.'

An Indian hell is going to be Indian, so if you have any choice choose the Indian.

The robopath has no compassion, he has no feeling, he has no heart. The robopath lives in constant hostility because he goes on repressing anger, hatred; he goes on repressing every kind of emotion. He goes on repressing all the negative kinds of emotions, then by and by a moment comes of such accumulated anger that he is simply angry – not at anyone in particular, he is just angry. He becomes antagonistic to everybody. and he has no reason, just antagonism. It seeps into his blood and bones, it becomes part of his marrow.

'People unable to act out their spontaneity and creativity develop repressed venomous pockets of hostility. They become hard, thick and dense.'

Never repress, otherwise you are on the way to becoming a robopath.

Robopaths are self-righteous, they always feel holier than thou. Their whole effort is how to look holier than others, how to be at the top. Their ego is very subtle. These people become saints, monks, mahatmas, and all kinds of neuroses are born in them. These people become politicians, puritans, moralists. They are ready to throw the whole world into hell. These are the people who have invented hell.

And the last thing that a robopath is, is alienated. 'The robopath is alienated from self, from other selves, and from nature. He is alienated from self in the sense that his ego is only a function of ritualistic demands. It has no intrinsic self-definition.' He does not know who

he is, he knows only what others say about him. So he is alienated from himself. He has never encountered himself. He has never looked into his own being. He has always been looking into other people's eyes – looking for his image, for how he looks in other people's eyes. He has never come home. He is alienated from himself.

He is alienated from other selves because others don't exist for him as persons, others exist as things. His world is the world of 'I-it', it is not the world of 'I-thou'. He never calls anybody 'thou', he never falls in love, he never melts his ego into somebody else's being, he never comes close enough to overlap anybody. He remains aloof, distant. He remains higher than others.

And in small things – he will not smoke, he will not drink, he will not eat this and that – in these small things he will pose as a saint. Just by not smoking can you become a saint? So cheap? Just by not smoking? Just by not drinking can you become a saint? Just by becoming a vegetarian can you become a saint? I am not saying don't be vegetarians and I am not saying go on smoking and drinking – what I am saying is that these things don't make a saint. People who go on smoking and drinking and eating – anything whatsoever – with no compassion in their hearts, are just stupid people. Those who don't do such stupid things are intelligent people, but not saints. To smoke, to drink, may be a mistake against your body but it is not a sin.

But those robopaths will make it a sin because this makes it very, very easy to become saints. They can always say, 'I don't smoke, I don't drink, I don't eat meat, I don't do this and I don't do that,' and immediately they are on a higher pedestal.

And naturally, when you are not in tune with yourself and with other people, how can you be in tune with nature? These robopaths have been destroying nature. They are the enemies of ecology. They go on destroying nature. They have wiped almost half of nature off the earth. They are very destructive people. They are destructive of themselves, of others, of nature – how can they know God? How can they feel God? They have not even felt a rose flower, they have not even felt the cry of the cuckoo, they have not even felt the river passing by, they have not even felt a child smiling and they have not seen a woman's tears. They have not even felt their own existence.

This creates alienation. 'They are alienated from other people because their interaction is usually in terms of others as objects, not as human beings. They are role objects, like servants, bosses, employees, employers, doctors, patients etc.'

When a doctor comes to see a patient he is not interested in the patient as a person, just in his role as a patient. And the patient is not interested in the doctor as a person, just in his role as a doctor. The wife, the husband, the son, the father, the mother – they are all roles. People are not interested in each other's person, in each other's living reality.

This is the robopathology that man has lived up to now, and man can go on living in it.

You can jump out of it. That jump makes you religious. That jump brings you to understanding, that jump makes you wise, that jump makes you enlightened.

Now this small story.

*Najrani said, 'if you say that you can "nearly understand", you are talking nonsense.'*

*A theologian who liked this phrase asked,  
'can you give us an equivalent of this in ordinary life?'*

*'Certainly,' said Najrani.  
'It is equivalent to saying that something is "almost a circle".'*

There are people who think they can understand – maybe not perfectly but they can understand approximately. This is not possible. Understanding is not gradual, understanding is a sudden flash. Understanding is always total, it is never partial. It is not that you can have it in little chunks, in little bits and pieces. No, understanding is not accumulative. Understanding cannot be divided into parts. When it comes, it comes as a totality. Either it is or it is not. Either you are awake or you are asleep. Either you are enlightened or you are a robopath. From robopathology to enlightenment there is a quantum leap, a jump.

But the robopath believes that although he may not be as enlightened as Buddha, he is also a little bit enlightened. That belief helps him to go on sleeping. Yes, he may not be such a great meditator but he is doing a little bit of meditation. He may not have known God but he has had a few glimpses.

This is not possible. Najrani's statement is of tremendous importance. '*If you say that you can "nearly understand", you are talking nonsense.*' There is no way to have a "nearly understanding" state of mind. Nobody can know truth approximately. An approximate truth is still a lie. It is as if you are heating water – at ninety degrees it is still water, at ninety-five degrees it is still water, at ninety-nine degrees it is still water. You cannot say that it is less water now. It is still the same water – heated, but the same water. Then at a hundred degrees suddenly there is a jump. The water evaporates. It is a quantum leap, discontinuous. It is not that at first the water becomes a little bit of vapour and then a little bit more and then a little bit more, no. At one point it is still water, coming closer and closer to a hundred degrees. At ninety-nine point nine it is still water and then in a split second it is no longer water, it has become vapour. In fact, to say 'in a split second' is not right – it happens in no time. That moment is almost timeless. When I say 'timeless' I mean it exactly. No time passes, it is sudden. That is the meaning of a quantum leap. Either you understand or you don't.

So be clear about it. Understanding is indivisible; it is not possible to divide it; you cannot have little or more of it. Preparation for it is gradual but the happening is a sudden happening, like lightning. One moment all was dark, another moment all is light – like that. Understanding has no continuity with non-understanding, it is discontinuous.

That's why I say to you that by accumulating knowledge you will not become wise. Knowledge can be accumulated; you can be less of a knower or more of a knower. You can go on accumulating knowledge; you can become more and more of a knower. But wisdom is non-accumulative. It is radical. It is a revolution. It is an explosion – from the known into the unknown, from the visible into the invisible, from the material into the spiritual, from

the temporary into the non-temporal, from time into eternity, from robopathology into enlightenment. It is a hundred-and-eighty-degree turn without taking any time – because time brings degrees, gradualness.

The moment of enlightenment is a timeless moment – we should not even call it a moment because it is not. But we have to because of linguistic limitations.

Knowledge is one thing, understanding is totally another. Understanding is as free of knowledge as ignorance is – it is more similar to ignorance than knowledge. It is as empty as ignorance. But in ignorance there is a hankering for knowledge; in enlightenment there is no hankering any more – that is the only difference. The ignorant person will become knowledgeable sooner or later, because there is a hankering. He wants to have knowledge. He suffers because of his ignorance. He feels hurt that he does not know. He wants to know.

The man of enlightenment has come to know that there is no way to know, that the mystery is absolute, that the desire to know is meaningless. Nothing can be known. Not a thing is ever known. In that moment he becomes innocent. Ignorance is there no more because ignorance can only be there if you hanker for knowledge. Only the desire for knowledge creates the idea of ignorance. When the desire for knowledge has disappeared, ignorance has disappeared too – one is absolutely empty of both ignorance and knowledge. One is in utter silence, awe. All has stopped, all has disappeared, and for the first time there is consciousness, total consciousness.

That total consciousness is what Najrani means by under-standing. That's why he says you cannot have approximate understanding.

*A theologian who liked this phrase asked...*

Theologians are people who are always hankering for more knowledge. He said:

*'Can you give us an equivalent of this in ordinary life?'*

*'Certainly,' said Najrani. 'It is equivalent to saying that something is "almost a circle".'*

A circle is either a circle or is not a circle. You cannot have a half-circle. A half-circle is not a circle at all. The arc is only a curve, it is not circle. A circle is a circle only when it is complete. The very idea of a circle has completion intrinsic to it. Only a complete circle is a circle and only absolute understanding is understanding.

That's why there is no way to compare Buddha, Mohammed, Mansoor, Christ, Lao Tzu, Zarathustra – there is no way. You cannot compare; they are all circles and all are complete. You cannot say that Buddha is more of a circle than Zarathustra, or Zarathustra is more of a circle than Lao Tzu. You cannot use the words 'more' and 'less' as far as enlightenment is concerned. Enlightenment is never more or less.

People come to me sometimes and they ask who is more enlightened – Buddha or Mahavira? They are asking an absolutely stupid question. Nobody is more enlightened. One

is enlightened when more and less have disappeared. One is enlightened when all comparisons have disappeared. One is enlightened when one has disappeared.

How can two absences be more or less? When I am not in the room and when you are not in the room, can my absence be more than your absence? When I am not in the room, the room is as much empty as when you are not in the room. It can't be that when I am not in the room it is more empty and when you are not in the room it is less empty. Absences cannot be more or less.

Egos can be more or less; egolessness cannot be more OR less. Remember it. It is a tremendously important statement.

Understanding is lightning. You can prepare for it, but while you are preparing you remain ignorant. You go on remaining ignorant to the very last moment. And then suddenly all has disappeared. And it happens without any process, without any time passing by. It is utterly timeless.

So the last thing.... Remember, there have been two schools all over the world: one school teaches gradual growth, another school teaches sudden enlightenment. And both are right – because those who teach gradual growth are talking only about preparation, heating the water; and those who are talking about sudden enlightenment are talking about the last thing – when the water has come to a hundred degrees.

Both are right and there is no conflict and there is no need to create any conflict. They are absolutely right and both are right and both are right together. One's emphasis is on the preparation – it is true because what is the point of talking about sudden enlightenment if you are not prepared? If you are cold, below zero degrees, what is the point of talking about evaporation?

First get heated, become at least warm, start moving towards the hundred-degree point. Those who talk about gradual growth simply mean that preparation will have to be gradual.

And those who talk about sudden enlightenment are talking about the ultimate thing. They say, 'Why talk about the gradual growth? That's okay. That is accepted, taken for granted. The real thing to talk about is the ultimate – when it happens it happens in a total way. It simply wipes you out completely. You disappear, and then there is understanding.'

Najrani said this to the theologian because theologians are the people who belong to the world of knowledge, are the people who always think of accumulation, of having more knowledge, of having more virtue, of having more this and that – their minds are always greedy. They think in terms of degrees. Mind functions in terms of degrees, and understanding is a state of no-mind.

I talked long to you about robopathology for a certain reason – because that is where you are. And unless you get out of your robopathology you will never know that benediction called understanding, enlightenment, nirvana.

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