## Part 4 Summary (Chapter II ends…)

**1. The task**

To live in such a way that in each moment, we see our conditioning as well as things as they are and to do what needs to be done in spite of any conditioning. To weaken existing conditioning by disuse and strengthen the inner intelligence strengthens by use. To use the awakened intelligence in meditation to discover our true nature.

**How:** An examined life is a life where we examine all things afresh, all the time, from moment to moment, and as they happen. The mind is naturally thinned out as we do not have to carry the weight of 'how things are' since we will be discovering them as we come upon them. This thinned mind turns on itself or its source naturally without struggle as the outer pegs of outer pull have been let go.

**Shift focus:** Why is it difficult to do what needs to be done in every situation as it happens? You cannot change how things are going to be anyway so what is the point in worrying about what cannot be changed? But, you can change how you respond as situations unfold and if you keep your focus on effort—you would give it the best response without carrying the unnecessary baggage of stress.

Why should things as they are affect me? Is there a better way to be and do that where one can still do what needs to be done but free of our reactions to it? Usually, our focus is on things outside and only turns inward for a few moments when we experience the lows of sorrow and highs of joy. It is possible to watch that in us which reacts to things as they are and see that these reactions are the play of habit and the self is quite distinct from them. If this is felt in the heart, one starts living an examined life where everything is examined afresh, not just the first time but from here out. Nothing changes outside but a fundamental transformation takes place within as waves of habit rise and finding no shore, splash on themselves. The mind becomes thin and the heart discovers its own innate peace in the thinness.

**2. In the heart first**

You would be quite surprised to realize how much easier the journey is if we have a good beginning and solid foundation. Struggle is often the sign of something wrong or something missing. Disturbing thought waves cease when we stop agitating them—the disturbance is our own agitation. The energy in consciousness has to be given a different channel that is non-

scattered and resembles the goal. The heart is the core of your sense of being and all change must start here first. When there is change of heart, change of mind comes without struggle and all disturbing thought waves in the mind quieten when we stop our agitation. Without our agitation, the heart discovers its natural peace and joy. Wherever this heart goes, its peace and joy goes with it and one's life reflects its peace and joy just like the sun reflects its light and warmth.

**3. Self-control next**

Self-control is difficult or a struggle at best, if there is no change of heart. Without change of heart, one tries to change the outer in the hopes of it bringing about inner change but this is a struggle at best.

There is an old saying, "Blossom where planted", I would add, "Blossom where planted *first*". Don't be in a hurry to uproot and change things externally. If the heart and mind do not change first, you will find yourself continuing to be pulled, going nowhere but getting frustrated. When inner vigilance is active and as natural as outer awareness, self-control becomes natural as you see 'what actually is' and are simultaneously aware of the inner notions. You learn to deal with what is and do what needs to be done without any pull of previous habit and find peace in your every action. With this natural self-control, one can live amongst all and everything without being affected by them.

**4. Then inquiry**

Knowledge of truth arises does not arise from a book or teaching but from one's inquiry or direct observation. This cannot happen in your practice only, it has to extend across your whole life. When you clearly see inner agitation and learn to function in spite of it, you weaken conditioning which loses its momentum by unbroken vigilance and disuse. When you do not participate in attempted agitation, the agitation weakens and stops. —*From such knowledge there follows tranquility in oneself; and then there arises the supreme peace that passeth understanding and the ending of all sorrow*.

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