

SEX

SUNDAY, 28 JANUARY 1923

A talk given by George Gurdjieff at the Prieuré in France.

The human machine and its functions are very limited. If it is not spoilt, if it is normal and natural, its business and main function is the production of a physical substance, the male and female seed, the sperm. Breathing, eating, thinking, sleep and so on exist for the production of this physical substance, seed, sperm. It is very important not to connect this with its fruit, i.e., child, descendants.

If we take the human machine and consider the question of food as cause, then the effect of food will be the sperm. It is not the moment to speak in detail about cause and effect. We will at the moment confine ourselves to saying that if the question of food is important for a man, the question of sex is equally so. A rightly working machine is one which justifies its construction. It is possible to judge approximately of the right work of the machine by the quantity of sperm it produces. If sperm is not produced, this means that the machine is not in order. We are now speaking of the correct working of the machine. This also is indispensable for our aims and intentions and possible achievements, for they depend on whether the machine works rightly. Our aim is to have a sound machine and one of its main and indispensable parts is that of sex.

Consequently at the beginning of work on oneself, it is necessary to turn our attention to the question of sex as being one of the main problems. This is why I intend to tackle this problem without delay from the very beginning. Since it is a long business, we will speak about details later and will consider the question both theoretically and practically to establish with all possible exactitude the means for bringing the machine to its proper state.

In the meantime in every machine, if it is being fed, this matter (sperm) is produced. This particular matter is deposited and stored in a definite place in the organism and from time to time in a normal machine this place must be evacuated in order to be refilled. There are two ways of evacuating this place; it can be done either through sexual intercourse, or by transforming this matter into a different kind of matter by will power, using the possibilities given us. But

for this second method, for transforming this substance into another kind of substance, we have at present neither the power nor the possibility, for in order to be able to use this substance when we need energy or power, we must first acquire other qualities and powers. And in order to acquire the necessary possibilities we must correct the working of the machine to insure a normal process.

Again, owing to wrong upbringing, a wrong way of living and wrong circumstances, in the case of the majority the state of affairs in this respect is very distressing and needs serious examination. In order to be able to work normally on oneself one must not forget to do what is possible for this process to proceed normally. Since this is the way we are made, for the time being it is necessary from time to time to have normal sexual relations. That time depends on the person, so there are no rules about this. As far as such times are concerned is a question I shall leave to the judgment of our doctors who will explain things to each person. So for this purpose single men should from time to time go to Paris. I advise those of you who intend to work in earnest to look at this question seriously. Everyone must remember that this part of the machine can have a serious braking effect on the general work of the machine. Some people have not the material possibilities (money) for these trips, but since the Institute takes a serious view of the situation, those who intend to work productively will be given the necessary money.

At this point we must speak about one important question, about possible abnormal inner or outer relationships between members of the Institute, due to the abnormalities we have spoken about. In the Institute there are neither men nor women, there are only members of the Institute. It is a sacred duty of everyone to establish a whole-hearted blood brotherhood between members. Every woman of the Institute must be looked upon either as a sister or a mother. I say this because there are certain things which I have noticed. Now I warn you that starting from today, if even inwardly your attitude is not as to a mother or a sister, if I notice even a secret thought - and let no one doubt that we shall dig out what is within - then without any further conversation I shall be obliged to throw that person out of the Institute within the hour and everyone should do the same. This rule applies to everybody without exception, no matter who they are. I shall let bygones be bygones, but from this moment it will be our sacred duty. This question must be of equal importance with our whole aim. It must be so. If it cannot be, then nothing else can be.

All I have said can be condensed into two points: Sexual relations are to be considered indispensable and I shall provide a way out of the situation to everyone, whether rich or poor. And second - starting from today, begin to train

your machine to feel and be conscious of the sisterly and brotherly relationship between members of the Institute.

Now all the doctors should meet together to make themselves familiar with the details of this question and to establish the subjective times required by every man. Starting from tomorrow, we will begin to make out historiometric sheets and so will gradually find out what repairs are required in this matter, after which by degrees we shall come to the question of the repairs themselves.

~ "Gurdjieff's Early Talks 1914-1931"