

Laws, Yardsticks, Exaltations

Richard Rose – Columbus Ohio – October 23, 1974

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Life Stories

This is my first lecture here this semester; I generally try to introduce myself a little bit in the first talk, presuming that after that some of you will be back and not have to hear it again, but there aren't too many of you here from last year. I don't see too many old faces.

The reason for this introduction of course is to give you a better idea of where I come from, philosophically at least. I've had pretty much of a lifetime of experience in searching, and hardly any of the searching part had to do with Zen. But the language that I use today has to do with Zen.

I was born and raised a Catholic; in fact I was so devoted to the idea as a child that when I was 12 years of age they shipped me off to be a priest. I endured that for 5 years and at left at 17, not without some hesitations, because I didn't have any place else, anything that would be any better.

I couldn't say at that time that my search was for my self-definition. I thought I was searching for God and I thought I was following a path, a path that the authorities knew about, the authorities being my parents and contacts in school.

So there was quite a traumatic break that occurred when I was about 17 years old with this conventional form of religion. But I think my childish intuition told me there was something missing, and I didn't care for the particular brand of authority.

So I got into an objective search; I got to looking into scientific things, studying the mind and studying psychology. And of course in those days there wasn't much known. I don't think there's still much known in the line of psychology. It's just that we have more of a confusion of theories, more theories to go by.

¹ Url: <http://direct-mind.org/index.php5?title=1974-1023-Laws-Columbus>
For access send email to: editors@direct-mind.org

But regardless, I got into objective studies. I looked into spiritualism because – here was a challenge – it said that if you want to know what life after death is, talk to the dead; this is the most reasonable thing to do. And I found you could talk to the dead – and I searched the country over until I found a materializing medium that could materialize spirits – and incidentally it happened just near Columbus here, there's a town called Delaware, a spiritualist church by the name of White Lilly Chapel. And that's where I saw my first materialization.

They had a concrete floor and a concrete block wall structure; and through those concrete floors I watched spirits descend. Some of them exploded, some looked like they just went down an elevator. This was very interesting, and would have perhaps invited a whole life of attention and research. But the more I talked to these entities the less I was satisfied that they were ever going to convey any information anyway. They seemed not to know anything except what they were told; they echoed rather than answered questions, when you put questions to them.

I was kind of reminded by something in the Bible [Ecclesiastes 9:5] – “the dead know nothing.” Of course this is a sad commentary if this is where we all wind up, in a befuddled state in which we know nothing. If you're interested in that line of research, well, I was pretty well satisfied that they were not the spirits of the dead; they were spirits but they were not the spirits of the dead.

Now this is an old field of discovery. Others I think have discovered it. After I got into certain yogi schools – the experimental part of the Universal Brotherhood also dug into this and they came to the conclusion that these were what they called shells, astral shells revitalized by human energy. Regardless of what they were, they didn't provide the answer.

I got into yoga when I was around 20. I went through the gamut of a lot of things that people are going through today: meditation and the use of magic words, the concentration upon magic spots in the head, or listening for sound currents. All this stuff was in evidence then, but it wasn't sold on the open market like it is now. The outfits I joined didn't charge money; there was no charge for the information. Later it was commercialized, put on the open market.

I pursued a very diligent course between the ages of 21 and 28. I more or less threw my whole energy into it. And when I speak of my whole energy I'm not just talking about physical energy – I did everything I thought was advisable, and employed all the common denominators that were advised in the different religions and sects. Some of these common denominators were abstinence from meat – at that time there was no talk of a macrobiotic diet; I would have gotten into that if I had heard about it. But I was just doing everything at once. I was going to try everything: I didn't smoke, I didn't drink, I didn't even drink coffee – seven years – I was totally celibate So I tried everything simultaneously.

After seven years I began to think I was a fool. Nothing was happening. I had put all the energy and strength that I could against this wall of ignorance that I was trying to overcome; and all I witnessed was at the age of 28, an already balding person whose teeth were already starting to fall out, and not a bit wiser.

So from that period on until I was about 30² I floundered, first into one philosophy then another. I travelled, and looked up witch doctors and wise men and cults. But I didn't get outside the country. I never went to Asia, because – it wasn't that I didn't want to but we couldn't – there was one continuous war from the time I was 25 years of age. World War II developed into the Korean War, and in between our wars India was at war, so that you couldn't enter into India; Pakistan and India were fighting. Several times the idea occurred to me to go over there but there was always something – you knew you couldn't find anything if you had to cross battle lines.

And then I realized too that this business of travelling to foreign countries to find wisdom is an escape mechanism; while you're doing this you're not studying here; this becomes a pilgrimage to escape from heavy work. And a lot of people indulge in this; this is the famous – pilgrimages are all outward forms of interior laziness. They didn't do anything spiritually, they just made pilgrimages; they're still making pilgrimages to India. The truth has always been here and there have always been men who knew something – the only thing was that they were intangible; you couldn't get ahold of them.

So at the age of 30 [32 in original] without much warning I had an experience which answered my questions. Now maybe II should say it in more flowery terms than that – but there's no actual way to say it at all.

And after that, still after that, I met Zen teachers. In other words, the only people who talk this language, the only people who can verbalize it at all, were Zen people – not philosophers in the western school, not Christian mystics – although I maintain that Christian mysticism has produced its share of Enlightened people; it's just that they have a devotional language that's hard to follow. You have to put yourself in a devotional mood, and then when you do that you're immediately postulating by your mood the end result; in other words, using holiness as the end instead of holiness as the means.

So I made quite a study into Zen; I had tried to contact people before I met these Zen teachers – one of these was a fellow named [Alfred] Pulyan. But of course in those days people didn't care for spiritual growth; the only thing they cared about was – there was a tremendous surge after World War II back to the plants to make back the money they hadn't made during the war.

So the big thing was survival and money – no one was interested, and no one has been interested in this country except a very small minority. If any of you have read [Richard] Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* – Bucke says one in a million reach cosmic

² Rose says 32 in original, but later re-calculated the year of his enlightenment experience

consciousness. So how are you going to, if you have something to tell somebody, find that one in a million people whom you can help? It becomes quite a task.

The Group

So after years of probing social parties and bull sessions and that sort of thing, I more or less just gave up. I thought, "What's the use?" And it was only about five years ago that I encountered some people by accident who wanted to hear it, and I gave a lecture at Pitt, the University of Pittsburgh. First I gave a lecture at the Theosophical Society in Pittsburgh and some people from the university came down, and wanted to hear it at the university.

The result is that all this has all happened as a chain reaction. A boy came over from the university at Kent and they formed a group in Kent; and from Kent, Bob Cergol came down here and went to work here and started a group here. Then a group formed in Cleveland.

We have an ashram in the country where people go for summer intensives, just to retreat if nothing else. There are no restrictions put upon them; it's just a retreat, to meditate if that's what they wish. But we do have a few things going.

Now, so much for that. If you have any more questions about me I'll answer them. As I said yesterday – I gave a lecture yesterday at Case Western University in Cleveland³ – I don't believe in any outward form of a philosophic or religious posture. I do not dress in a certain way; I don't shave my head, I'm naturally bald; the hair on my chin is mostly because of ingrown hairs I get in the winter time, it's not because I'm trying to impress somebody. So any stupid look on my face is not something from years of Zen wisdom, it's just a congenital characteristic.

Zen

Another thing I'd like to straighten out with you is this difference in the meaning of Zen. There are a lot of different interpretations of Zen. And why are we here? Why don't I just recommend that you pick up a book by [Hubert] Benoit or Huang Po or Suzuki or [Phillip] Kapleau, or go up and see Kapleau? – or go to a Zen tea ceremony or Zen archery, or lord knows what?

Well, basically the reason the word Zen was chosen – in the Pyramid Zen Society – these names were chosen because this system was made possible by a Zen teacher, a person who taught me the art of transmission. And this isn't taught in any Christian mystical school.

³ Zen, Spiritual Steps & Spiritual Systems. <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2006-02.htm#1>

Also, because Zen has a direct language to the mind; it doesn't beat around the bush with objective behavior patterns of psychology. And yet it's a pure psychological system; it's a system of perfect psychology, of going directly into the mind – first to your own mind and then into other people's minds, in transmission.

Now there are many Zen systems that do not do this. I was acquainted with Sokei-an and I'm acquainted with disciples of Sokei-an who got nothing from years of attending Sokei-an's meetings in New York City and on the west coast.

There was another fellow – well, I'm not going to go further into names – but there was a fellow who died just recently, and his was strictly meditation.

You can pick others – we ran into a book recently, Ramana Maharshi, I have a copy of that with me, I picked it up in a rummage sale. I was rather amazed that the man who speaks the most fluently and eloquently about enlightenment is a man who never uses the word enlightenment, and that's Ramana Maharshi. And he doesn't know anything about the word Zen I don't think; he doesn't care about it. He was a Hindu mystic. He calls it sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi⁴ – that's the highest experience the mind can reach, after the mind is destroyed.

But we have, after you're around let's say, you'll find that we have a decided choice of action here. You'll not see us doing keisaku;⁵ you'll not be sold prayer mats or robes. It doesn't matter what you wear; it's what's in your head, not what you're sitting on.

Meditation

And we don't hold to some easy method of meditation whereby you just sit. Phil here was up at a lodge – it's not a Zen lodge, it was another group of people and he met a fellow – I had met him previously but I didn't know the particular story about him – he said he had been doing meditation for 22 years. I think I have a whole forest of oak trees back home that have been doing the same thing for about a hundred years, and they've got about as far.

Meditation may bring you peace of mind but it will not bring you wisdom and it will not bring you the answer, unless you follow a specific type of irritational meditation, not visualizational meditation. Visualizational meditation brings you answers which you postulate beforehand; you ease your mind into a soothing condition of resignation, if nothing more than that

⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samadhi>

⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keisaku>

The Objective

The next thing is, what is the objective? What are we after? Well, if I told you, if I used the word “enlightenment” I’d have to define it. Consequently I can’t use the word enlightenment – because in order to define it I’d have to produce it, like an egg. And basically, the only thing that you can do – our objective is to retreat from error. This is the way the opposite is arrived at, not by postulating what truth is or what definition is or what God is, because with these things you always begin then with a lie to the self.

But by witnessing a manifest pile of garbage into which we immerse ourselves – and accept and believe and devote our time, energy, money and everything else to without any question – in contrast to that, we pick out the best garbage and reject the worst garbage until there’s nothing left but pure values – or purer values and purer values. And this is what we call the system of the reverse vector: that you continually retreat from untruth.

There’s no other path, believe me. If you’re going anyplace, you can’t postulate first and then expect to get there. You’ll get wherever you postulate; you can create it. People in Tibet have created tulpas⁶ – I don’t know if you’ve heard the word, but the monks in Tibet have a practice of creating a woman, a very beautiful woman, I assume to have intercourse. They don’t have to go down out of the mountain to find themselves a woman, they have this spirit that they’d have intercourse with, and it’s a real relationship. And if you want to check this out, check Alexandra David-Neal’s book, *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*. This is one source, and there are other sources that mention it.

It takes quite awhile to create one of these tulpas and it takes twice as long to get rid of them; because they become somewhat individualistic.

But this is how far you can go in the business of creation, if you wish. You can build yourself a heaven, or fantasies that someday will bust like a bubble and you’ll have to face facts. This is what most people do; most people build themselves bubble of fantasy and say, “Well now, here there’s 200 million people, or 20 million people that believe the same thing we do,” and they think by democratic vote they’ll enter some celestial region just because everybody believes it and votes on it. They say, “Yes, we agree.”

But these people, when they become ready to terminate this existence have this moment of doubt, which is the *first* step in Zen. Whereas the Zen authors, Zen masters said hundreds of years ago, “The first step is doubt.”

And I maintain that the enemy of mankind is faith and the first step is doubt. The first serious step is doubt – even so far as to doubt what I’m telling you right now. Find out for yourself if necessary. If I can be of any help, Ok, but I don’t expect anyone to take what I say, without some justification – just blindly, and follow because maybe you thought I was honest or something. This would be an insufficient reaction in my estimation.

⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulpa>

The next thing I want to bring out is that enlightenment – again, we’re using the word loosely, without definition, you get a rough idea of what I mean – is not the property of any movement. It’s not the property of Zen – I just think Zen has a good system, that’s all. I’m quite sure that Ramana Maharshi was an enlightened man; John of the Cross may well have been an enlightened man – all we have is what we read in books, because these people are gone. But it is not peculiar to any point of the globe; it’s peculiar to your own Self. It lies within, there’s no need to look without, go tramping all over the world to find it.

There’s more than one formula, perhaps; there’s more than one path to the top of the hill. But some are more productive than others. I think some may be more direct, and this is the reason that I advise this. Because I consider that a lot of years of my youth were wasted: prowling around and hunting and being disillusioned by phonies, people who were huckstering stuff for money.

Now there are different ways that this is brought about, incidentally. Some reach it by evolution: some seem to have a spiritual evolution of sorts, as some say, they pick it up from previous incarnations. They work and the incarnations come, and succeeding incarnations bring them to higher states. There’s no proof of this; this is just a theory.

Some seem to have been brought about by accident. There’s a case if you’re interested in reading about it – in the October issue of the Readers Digest there’s a little article, “I died at 10:52 AM.”⁷ This man had a heart attack sitting beside his wife in an automobile, and he was pronounced dead for about ten or twenty minutes; he started to show signs of life and they put the machines on him.

And while he was unconscious he had an experience which he describes in this article. He doesn’t name it – but I recognized the experience; it was very similar to the one I had, and I’m quite sure that the man made a trip. And it may have been by accident but it might not have been; he didn’t give the history of his spiritual diggings – he may have led quite a life before that, of spiritual intensity. And from that intensity, when death did hit him, although it wasn’t permanent – but technically he was dead – he had a genuine experience, which in this case was an accident, from which he recovered.

Now some people maintain that there are more objective ways; some of them are using these Zen techniques, and there are various other techniques. But I maintain that there’s a very simple formula to follow, if you can put it in a formula, and that is: if you seek you shall find. And according to the laws of physics – which apply to spiritual laws as well – the laws of physics say that results are proportional to energy applied. And spiritual success is proportional to energy applied.

You can’t do it by going to church one hour a day in a half-hearted manner, one day a week. You have to put your whole self into it. You have to make up your mind that you’re

⁷ 1974 Solow, Victor D. I died at 10:52 A.M. *Readers Digest*, 105(630):178-182 (Oct).
Reproduced at <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2003-12.htm#5>

after it, that's all; you're not just going to play around with it or use it as conversation over a beer. And if you are dynamic you can come through – a desperate dynamic.

Now I discovered something when I was about 21 years of age. I hadn't really had an experience of any sort, but it dawned on me – as I told you, I started off with a faith search, expecting that by believing I would get somewhere. I was rather impatient; I didn't intend to put the next 50 or 60 years into believing something that I didn't have any assurance of. So I dropped it and went into objective searching.

[break in tape]

Intuition and Becoming

... and it was then that I realized that man would not find it by logic alone, and man would not find it by faith alone – because these things by themselves were inadequate. But if anything, the first thing you needed was a combination of the two, which I call intuition. That you have to somehow develop your intuition – because you're dealing in a subjective matter, an abstract subject, a subject of intangibles; and logic barely applies to the things that are tangible. Faith is a sort of feeling thing, without any reasonableness at all; there's no reason to faith – you just believe for the sake of believing.

So these two things are extremes and you have to find somewhere in between – a faith in yourself and a faith that is tempered. By faith I mean persistence and determination. This determination has to be rooted in some sort of faith that you're going to succeed, or you'll drop it. So you have to have a faith, but it has to be rooted in common sense. You have to have logic, but it has to be tempered with intuition and inspiration. Logic by itself is a vanity; faith by itself is a fanaticism.

The next thing I discovered was that you *don't* find anything on the wisdom path, that wisdom will never bring you anyplace. Science is a typical example of where wisdom takes you: that you can split the atom and you'll find out there's still something to be split. But you're not going to find pure essence by splitting matter. And the logical processes just produce more tangential fields of learning, rather than going directly to essence.

So I realized when I was 21 years of age that you had to *become*, you couldn't learn; you would never learn what the secret of the absolute is; you had to become it. And this came strictly as a form of intuition.

Now, of course that leaves you rather high and dry; because where do you find systems of becoming? There are systems of becoming in evidence – you have to kind of search around for them. And when I realized this – as I told you, I was born and raised in the Catholic church and one of the tenants of theology at that time was, "Don't try to understand God, because the finite mind will never perceive the infinite.

And a lot of people said, "That's good enough for me." And of course that sounds like a brick wall, and they're not going to try to go over that. We accept the knowledge that our mind is finite, and there's no sense in trying to get over the infinite field that we have to cover.

In other words, we are relative creatures and that which we expect to discover, we expect to be absolute; and the very knowledge that we're going to do this with the relative mind means that you're not going to do it. You're not going to take that relative mind with you.

After studying it awhile, this gives you a new perspective of the work ahead of you, that you have to *become*, you cannot learn. And the next step is to look around for systems that will help you become *less finite*. This is the secret: How do you become less finite?

And let's say for years the average person in that pursuit struggles and stumbles – and unfortunately gets into too many movements that are easy: little physical things like waving your arms around or dancing on one foot or chanting a certain thing. They pick an easy little what I call a gimmick and satisfy themselves with that for years. It goes well with pot.

Like I said, the philosophic paths of many people today are directly rooted in LSD. That's no criticism – without it they would never have had this interest, this ability to see new dimensions for the first time, and then get curious enough to want to explore those new dimensions. But by the same token, the destruction of many, I'd say a million at least, of those people, who got a glimpse and were forced then into being destroyed by virtue of not being able to handle what they had, or to see it and not become drowned in what they had.

So we had an enormous benefit and an enormous disappointment for some people in this. But regardless, this seemed to be a door that opened; the fact that there was another dimension, meaning that there were other planes, if you want to call them that; that there could be another world besides this so-called one that we hang onto with our medical materialism.⁸

Change of Being Systems

Now there are different ways, getting into this business of becoming – what do they advise you? – as I said, you have two systems: You have the mentally objective systems and mentally subjective systems; they always remain somewhat objective and somewhat subjective.

And I've got a chart here if any of you are interested in looking at it. [Jacob's Ladder chart?] It starts from the beginning in faith and logic and goes up. Inexorably it has to go

⁸ Term coined by William James; see *Varieties of Religious Experience*.

up. We have to search; people are curious and they have to be satisfied. There's nothing more miserable than for an intellectual mind to be denied the right to search. That curiosity will always gnaw at you once you've made a step; you have to keep looking for the second step.

But these change of being systems, once you become involved in them, again go back; and some of them advise you to do it with blind faith – in a guru for instance. Some of them encourage you to relinquish. Benoit even uses the term “let go”; don't struggle.

And there's another school of thought, and I find even in the seeds of both of these, the passivity and the aggressiveness – there are those who believe in being extremely passive and there are those who believe in storming the gates of heaven – that is, the active approach.

And I don't say you have to be passive or you have to be aggressive, but the particular path that I followed was aggressive; it became a fight with me, and that's the one I teach. So if you consider that objectionable, well then of course it's your choice of a path, that's all.

There are a number of things that I discovered along the way, in this business of looking into a method of becoming, and I made a note of them, I wrote a book about them; I put it down so that it could somehow help someone else.

If you're doing a simultaneous philosophic approach to it while doing say a meditational thing, then you'll encounter some of these laws. It becomes a science as well; you encounter laws as you go along in the search. And you'll encounter let's say guideposts along the trail, advisability: don't walk too close to the edge of the cliff; these things are dangerous and these things produce insanity. The fellow who's lucky enough to get to the edge of the cliff and see it warns other people.

Some of the laws I discovered, you're acquainted with. I avoid using oriental terms, because I think it can all be said in English. I use some, like I used the word *nirvikalpa samadhi* because this is a word that there's no English word for. The word enlightenment – a lot of people think it's the equivalent of being struck on the head with a hammer, or where the lights light up. I had a fellow tell me he was enlightened from taking LSD. He considered that the enlighten-ment which resulted from flashing lights or vibrating lights, or stuff that occurred inside his head – is enlightenment.

So the word is poorly used; it's almost as poorly used as the word God. So when you want to use something that has real meaning you have to start choosing other words, something that is more exact. And I find that the words kevala⁹ and sahaja samadhi are more exact than cosmic consciousness and the word enlightenment.

⁹ Kevala nirvikalpa samadhi

http://www.messagefrommasters.com/Enlightenment/Ramana_Samadhi.htm

The Laws

But here are some of the laws. One of them is the law of equilibrium, which the Hindus refer to as karma. But it's strictly the law of equilibrium: it says that if you strike the anvil with a hammer, the anvil will strike the hammer with equal force. If you strike your social environment, the social environment will return the blow. And it's set up automatically; there's nobody, not necessarily a guardian angel standing there saying I've got so many demerits, you've got so many bad things coming to you.

The law of proportional returns: This means that if you throw enough mud at the ceiling, some of it will stick. That's an old door-to-door salesman's adage: when they pound the doors, they say, "We find that if you pound fifty doors, out of every fifty doors we'll make one \$400 sale." So that's the way their livelihood is figured, that their results are proportional to energy applied.

That's the law of physics; the spiritual laws are pretty much the same as physical laws. Economic laws are pretty much the same as physical and spiritual laws, and vice versa. These things apply to both. So that if you put a lot of energy into the spiritual path, you'll have results; if you put haphazard attention to it you'll get a haphazard result.

Then there's the law of extra-proportional returns. This is where the idea of group work enters in. If it were not for extra-proportional returns as a result of group work, there would be no point in fooling around with other people. But we find that in the laws of business, economics and such, a man can build a house in say 90 days. But if he gets a helper and the two build one house first and then go and build the other fellow's house, they may build two houses in say 85 days, by virtue of them being able to hand each other heavy materials or lift heavy materials, or save a man a few hundred steps and that sort of thing.

So that law is in effect in the multiple workings with men, with manpower, whether it's on a spiritual level or whatnot. To give you an example, I belonged to a group that was started up in Akron thirty years ago; and there's only one or two members of the group still living. But one of the things we did when we were in our twenties – we had no particular path to follow, we had no teacher – we each went out and joined a separate cult, assuming almost that none of them are proven and none would take us anywhere; but these were things we had to explore to be sure.

So one went out and joined Subud,¹⁰ another went out and joined SRF.¹¹ I joined the Radha Soami sect,¹² and went as far as to be initiated into two Radha Soami sects, from which Kirpal Singh¹³ and Eckankar¹⁴ splintered, years ago.

¹⁰ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subud>

¹¹ Self Realization Fellowship (Yogananda).
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-Realization_Fellowship

¹² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radha_Soami

¹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirpal_Singh

¹⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eckankar>

And we came back to the center and reported, as the years went by, what we had found, and compared notes. And from this, the results of three, four, five, six men – we were able to reap the knowledge from six groups simultaneously – which we couldn't have done except in perhaps six lifetimes. Some of us were even into two groups at once – just to find out what they were doing. We even joined groups that were doing the same thing we were doing – the Universal Brotherhood¹⁵ was one of them.

With this, in the business of research alone, a group of people can do research much more quickly than the individuals, and you can cover a broader field and keep a broader perspective going all the time. So this is what is known as the law of extra-proportional returns; and that's the reason that I encourage people at these different colleges and universities to form groups and to function together.

It also serves as a reminder. I call it Ignoramuses Anonymous. Instead of Alcoholics Anonymous pulling the guy out by his coattails all the time, we pull each other out by the coattails from lethargy, forgetfulness, slipping away, back into other forms of living, which we would ordinarily preclude, as being foolish before and after we do them.

So there are advantages to a group, or we wouldn't encourage it. In fact, there's a lot of extra work in it for me, and I prefer to deal with individuals, not with groups. But I see the value of it, so I encourage it.

The law of the paradox says that there's a paradox in immanence, that's in everything relative. Whenever you reach a decision you'll find out that the opposite may well be true; that good and bad are somehow different sides of the same coin. That which seems good in one instance is bad in another.

And all the way down through the spiritual path you'll see this paradox. I can't go into each detail, they're not in my head just now, but you'll find out that when you're doing something, strangely enough, you'll find that paradoxically something else sets in. And as soon as you start to define something, you'll find someone else with a similar definition for something entirely opposite.

This is what confuses you with a lot of the movements that are going around today. Because they'll say, "Oh, yes, we're for that too." And you say, "What are you for?" And they say, "Well, we're for the absolute," – one outfit says. But they have no definition of the absolute, naturally, they're just for it. And some of them will come up with a pretty good definition; they'll prove the definition – but no proof that they're following it.

The law of the ladder is basically the law of brotherhood also, which says that you have to help people on the rung below you, and you have to be helped by the man above you; and unless you follow this you will not be helped.

This is again the function of the group; in the group you find somebody to help and someone to help you. And then your progress goes smoothly. You can't just sit alone; no

¹⁵ Link needed. May be defunct.

man is spiritually an island; we're all related in our essence. No man is more important than anyone else. I am not any more important than you are. The only thing is that I have had experiences you have not had. But there are other people who have had them, so I am not unique.

The law of the ladder goes a little further than that, though. It says that it's not advisable to help people on too many rungs below you. It's hardly possible for you to be helped by people on the rung too far above you – because you don't understand them. You're lucky to understand the man above you. The man two rungs above you – you look at him and you say he's crazy, his postulations are so strange to you. Or you reject him by virtue of emotion. Like you're accepting certain levels of your life that sound good to you, that please what you want to hear.

For the hunter, heaven has to be a happy hunting ground; for the guy who's a hedonist it has to be full of beautiful women. So unless he hears that incorporated in his philosophy, he rejects it and he'll accept something similar to what he wants to hear. So this makes his level. If you have somebody too many rungs down, history says they crucify you. There are people who will just rise up and destroy someone who helps them, because they weren't ready.

The law of the vector – this is an engineering term which means that you must become; and you must not only become, you must become a vector – a vector aimed by a unique process. Again, the process is not postulating a direction and aiming, but aiming away from that which is erroneous. And incidentally, this vector gains momentum; if you follow this system you'll witness the momentum that you gain.

The law of change – everything seems to be, but everything is changing; the ionic patterns of the universe are changing.

The law of relativity – it's not Einstein's law of relativity or Ouspensky's understanding of relativity – but this law of relativity specifies that all definitions are related; that you cannot utter a word without incorporating in it all other meaning, so that all meaning is relative. And likewise, all human effort is relative, but it's very difficult to do anything without affecting the entire pattern of belief.

In other words, we exist in an aquarium of belief, and this belief exists only because everyone is related with the same belief; there is a relationship between us. And we cannot find our difference until we extricate ourselves from this aquarium of belief. I'm referring now of course to the fact that this world is an illusion.

The law of complexity – there was another law, I don't know whether it was named after some man, Burke¹⁶ or somebody. There was also the principle of cybernetics,¹⁷ that complexity breeds life: given so many components, robots seem to think, computers

¹⁶ "The objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity." -Edmund Burke, 1790

¹⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cybernetics>

seem to act, to shunt around errors and stuff,¹⁸ and almost show individual volition. The law of complexity shows that things become almost vital or alive by virtue of their complexity.

The law of faith – now we must also recognize that things can happen by faith, but they're not necessarily good things; as I said, you can create yourself a tulpa.

The law of the pyramid is basically the law of three. It's on the front of the book; the Pyramid Zen Society was named for that. Benoit uses a little pyramid form in his book: the two base points of the pyramid are positive-negative; the central point is what he calls the point of compensation, neutrality, so that all human endeavor is a relative world, consisting of pro, con and compromise.¹⁹

And in the law of the pyramid, this compromising point is also expressed in the Albigen System in the law of *betweenness* – that there's a whole science in this business of betweenness. It can be said very simply – I've heard fellows talk about "running between the raindrops" – this is saying it rather crudely but it's true: it is neither right nor left; it is neither good nor bad; it is neither here nor there. It is neither nothing nor everything. It is both, but it's neither.

Yardsticks²⁰

But anyhow – some little items – there are some things I've found that I can pass onto you, for what they're worth, you don't have to accept them. Again, they may help you a bit.

I have found, as I've been down this old trail, number one, that you have to find yardsticks; you can't just examine every cult, every movement that comes along. You have to find some way of gauging these things so that you can sift them and throw some out – I call it the most ridiculous: we keep the less ridiculous and throw out the most ridiculous, and by this path, that's the reverse vector.

So what do you throw out? What are the yardsticks? The ones, again, that are commercial. I refused from the time I was a boy ...

[break in tape]

The only things that these groups do is – I allow them to pay my gas money, they don't pay me anything else; and sometimes I don't get that because they don't have it. But they pay for posters, and this is to advertise their meetings or a little ad in the paper, or something of that sort, and that's the sum total expenditure of the group. And there is a strict accounting of that or I won't associate with the groups.

¹⁸ They shunt around errors in testing but in production they go directly to the bad code. – editor

¹⁹ Supreme Doctrine: A Recap of Benoit's Ideas. <http://www.selfdiscoveryportal.com/bzrecap.htm>

²⁰ For an alternative presentation see <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2006-01.htm#1>

So the first thing that I found was that money does not buy relief from untruth.

Selective diets are not necessary and above all not imperative. It doesn't matter what you eat, it's what you say that's really important with regards to the mouth.

Physical appearance means nothing spiritual; poses, vestments, hairstyle are more apt to distract from interior work. These become rationalizations: "Look how holy I am," – not "am I?"

Most chanting and much praying is auto-hypnotic. You can hypnotize yourself with it.

Meditation of the sort that brings tranquility is not going to answer critical unanswered questions; you're not going to be satisfied in the long run. You're going to, if nothing else, stand up in the coffin and try to take another look around.

A transcendental movement is at best only a utility if it is followed because it makes you feel good, because it helps your business, because it finds conjugal compatibility, or peace of mind. In other words, you're not supposed to have peace of mind; you're supposed to have a sword.

Concentrating on undefined chakras or undefined nerve centers are objective attempts to do something subjective. Same way with psychology: The majority of modern psychology uses objective means to try to demonstrate a subjective state of being. And because they hooked onto this – there are very few psychological authors who go beyond saying that you are your body, nothing else; that you are what you see and nothing else.

But we do have some that do not, like Benoit; Benoit was a psychoanalyst. And Victor Frankel, after following down through the footsteps of Freud and Adler and a few others, came up with this conviction that the purpose of man is *meaning*, not adjustment to environment; it doesn't matter a darn whether the environment accepts you or not.

The great strides that have been made in esoteric lines and in scientific lines as well, is made mostly by hermits, not by people who were voted the most popular man to succeed in the local ashram or desert.

The juggling of scriptures and numbers and symbols can be a waste of time that can go on for decades.

Worshipping a human is asinine. I'm talking about gurus; I'm talking about myself. In the long run our essences are equally absolute – I should have said "our essence is".

A system that has a few good points may be useless because of one bad point. This is something that you see a lot of; you'll see things that are very good points. To give you an example, a movement which advises moral living but it has its followers dancing or chanting as a way of truth. In other words, just some sheer nonsense, just to keep their minds occupied.

Of course, they maintain that this chanting and dancing keeps their minds off sex and keeps them moral creatures. But by making this chanting and dancing the whole thing, they're mostly just preoccupying part of their life .

Another religion may scorn the former religion just mentioned for its macrobiotic tendencies and for meaningless gestures, but this newfound system may demand all of your money. Or a system may not require more than ten percent of your funds but may require blind belief. Some Zen sects while claiming the highest Zen attainment specialize as I said in selling pads and robes and that sort of thing. And we wonder what relation this has to an absolute state of mind.

So in summation, I believe, as I said before, that the greatest enemy of mankind is not ignorance – we can't help our ignorance – but accepting authority that doesn't manifest quality. They have a lot of authorities running around today, and some of these authorities are even people who have written books – but they do not have the quality. Some of them will even admit it; for instance, Alan Watts tells you quite frankly in *The Way of Zen* that he knows nothing about enlightenment; he's just talking about it like a reporter.

Another enemy of mankind is the deification of pleasure as the answer to pressure. The belief that you're going to get somewhere spiritually by drifting and flowing into, flowing with – this is nonsense. You flow downhill. Everything that flows, flows downhill.

You get somewhere by *pressure*. And this whole system that we talk about is one of tension and pressure. And Victor Frankel mentions this too in his book on psychology. He was a prisoner in a German war camp and his whole family was wiped out. And he saw that man grows in stature in those extreme conditions – of course, he was forced into it – but every man can create similar conditions of tension and grow in stature. You do not grow in stature by drifting downhill.

We cannot barter away ultimate survival, concepts of ultimate survival, or work on ultimate survival by a psychological system which is only interested in daily compatibility, in daily survival. And this is where we're headed today, socially; our so-called sociological sciences are helping to push them in this direction.

Now, again, I'll read you something about the differences in cosmic consciousness. People think that every exaltation is the final one. If you're acquainted with Gurdjieff – Gurdjieff mentions four men, man number 1, 2, 3, 4: instinctive, emotional, intellectual and philosophical.

And you make transitions between them. You start off as an instinctive man; you go up that ladder to emotional man, then to intellectual man or scientific man, then to philosophic man. And between each again is the so-called law of betweenness, that somehow we get caught between. And in this between state we have an exaltation, a moment of ecstasy, a rapture or amazement.

And our exaltations are that which somehow – it's like a gumdrop that a kid would be given to get effort – the human mind is somehow gratified by its struggle. And possibly the growth – there's somehow an interior recognition that the person has grown, has reached a certain stage.

But anyhow, we get up to the stage between the intellectual and the philosophic, and there's an exaltation. I'm skipping over the other two because we're running out of time [these are discussed in the Q&A].

But in the level between the intellectual man and the philosophic man, this is what we call cosmic consciousness, and what Ramana Maharshi calls kevala nirvikalpa samadhi. And after you transcend the philosophic state you enter sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi, or what is referred to as enlightenment.

Now people say, "This is all the same; there are many exaltations and enlightenments, and I had one with drugs, or I had one with this or that." So this is to define them – and this is not mine, this is Ramana Maharshi's; many of you may be acquainted with him, I don't know.

[see chart below]

Number 1 - In sleep – we're taking sleep as a point of reference – in sleep the mind is alive. It has lost its conscious quality but it's alive. In kevala samadhi the mind is alive. In sahaja samadhi the mind is dead. In the final enlightenment the mind is dead. In all of this training that I have been talking to you about, in using the laws and driving and plugging and storming the gates of heaven – this fattens up a head and builds up a tremendous head that you cut off and throw away.

Number 2 – The mind in sleep is sunk in oblivion. In kevala samadhi the mind is sunk in light. This is the technicolor experience of Richard Bucke in Montreal, where the city lit up with rose-colored lights. Or the mystic sees – his jail cell is lit up with light, he reads a book by the light, and his mind then is in what they call the state of illumination. That's the reason that word is used, that a light is involved, almost a physical light, transforming the whole environment maybe for miles around – for you only. In sahaja samadhi the mind is resolved into the Self – it sounds kind of meaningless – the capital-S Self, not a relative self.

Number 3 – We pass over sleep now, and this is just a description of kevala samadhi: It's like a bucket tied to a rope and left lying in the water in the bottom of a well; that's what the mind is, a bucket lying in the bottom of a well. Sahaja samadhi – it's like a river discharged into the ocean and its identity lost.

Number 4 – in kevala samadhi, the bucket still laying in the bottom of the well can be drawn out at any time with the rope. In sahaja samadhi – a river cannot be redirected from the ocean.

Chart is from *Spiritual Teachings of Ramana Maharshi*

Sleep	Kevala Nirvikalpa Samadhi	Sahaja Nirvikalpa Samadhi
1) Mind is alive;	Mind is alive;	Mind is dead;
2) mind is sunk in oblivion.	mind is sunk in light;	mind is resolved into the Self;
3) --	like a bucket with the rope, left lying in the water in a well;	like a river discharged into the ocean and its identity lost;
4) --	to be drawn out by the other end of the rope.	a river cannot be redirected from the ocean.

Now these are the distinct differences between the types of exaltations. And all of your Zen writings that talk about real, final enlightenment of man refer to this. Atman merging in the Brahman – that's one of the Hindu expressions for the same thing, and man entering no-mind – that means the same as losing the identity.

Q & A

So I'd like for you, if you've got any questions or if you'd like for me to explain anything that I can possibly explain, or at least take some time, I'll answer a few questions.

Q. Did you say you were enlightened?

R. No, I just said I had an experience.

Q. What was it?

R. Well, it is the equivalent of sahaja samadhi. The reason I'm hesitant to answer you is because, as I said before, there's not much to be gained by answering. Because I have no way of proving it to you, or even of a way of defining the words. So if we launch into a definition of words I can say, "Yes, my mind was like the river that entered the ocean." But there's no way of demonstrating it.

Q. inaudible

R. There's recognition of things that have happened. For instance, the first exaltation that you encounter in life may be seeing a flower in a meadow, which is strictly on an instinctive level; it's an instinctive person suddenly being – a sunrise coming up, or thunder at a certain time – this is an exaltation. You're lifted above the mundane, momentarily, and meaningfulness and meaninglessness simultaneously are thrust upon you, and you're caught between this. And that's the exaltation.

But you go on from that when the emotional man enters. And you may make Jesus Christ the emotional objective, or you may fall in love with a woman – it doesn't matter whether you fall in love with Christ or a woman, you will lose yourself in that person. And

when you lose yourself in that person, once more you're caught between: the vanity of the self still hanging in there a little bit, but the total – you know – and this results in what I call salvationism. This man is then saved; the woman saves him or Christ saves him. He is saved; he forgets his instinctive nature, puts it behind him, and sacrifices for his children. He's a changed being.

Salvation is generally connected most to – the people whom I knew who had salvation were saved from booze. A woman couldn't do it; it took Jesus Christ to do it. They had to reach for a greater objective, a more complete surrender than to a person, who might make them angry and they'd call it back and renege on the surrender. But with Jesus Christ there's no reneging, because there's no argument really.

So you go then to the intellectual stage, by virtue of realizing that you've been playing tricks on yourself with your emotions, and you realize that you've had an emotional life, that your religion has just been one big emotional experience. And you adjust yourself when you come back into studying, as I did, magic, numerology, astrology, anything that seemed to be tangible, spiritualism – some go into fundamentalism, trying to find the numerological value of the Bible or something, and find truth through letters and words.

And then one day *this* pops. I call it the algebraic eureka: when you study algebra and you can't make any sense out of it and all at once it pops and you say, "Ahhh." There doesn't seem to be any reason why it should pop at a given time, but just some day that pops and you know your algebra; from that time on it runs smoothly.

And this same thing – it could be explained as what I call the "Wow" experience, the eureka experience, or satori. This is as far as the word satori goes in my reading of all the experiences in books like Kapleau²¹ and in some of the more shallow books of keisaku Zen.

Then of course when you see the vanity of logic, and you see the vanity of intellectualism – you reach again. You reach beyond that, and you reach into philosophy, by the comparison of many symbols, the utilization of all your faith and all your background; all the computer goes to work and chucks everything in at once. And then your intuition applies itself at the same time, and you come out then finally with an evolution by way of frustration and despair. And this is kevala samadhi.

And the next one after that, though, has to be one without almost any conscious, objective conviction of any sort. You get to a point where – you keep on pushing while knowing nothing, doubting everything. You finally get to the point where you doubt everything: you doubt your ability to survive; you doubt the fact that you're living. When you become that intense, something again pops; you reach another state of betweenness which is final.

Q. In your system of Zen do you concentrate on a koan?

²¹ Three Pillars of Zen.

R. No, no. Your koans are happening to you every day – I don't need to give them to you. Everyone has plenty of them; all you have to do is watch them.

As Bob said, there are meetings here every Monday. And the system begins with observation and somehow getting the feel of what we're doing, by reading the book if you wish, or coming and asking questions.

And the next step is one of confrontation, because I believe in irritational meditation, not complacency. The second step is pretty much like a philosophic encounter group; we're not interested in what your psychological hang-ups are – although those clear up too, incidentally, as you go along; because it is a psychoanalytic system.

But it's basically a continual questioning of your philosophic motives and values: why you are you doing things; why you are taking dope, if you're taking dope; why you are trying to make a million bucks; or why you believe this as oppose to that; why you particularly favor a certain philosophy: Do you do it because you like it or because it's true? And we will continue attacking these so as to keep the head straight. And this is where the group functions.

Then we have, as he said, a rapport group. And we're using a direct system, presuming that you people have suffered and that you have also studied. And this rapport group builds up the ability to become one with another person's mind. That's the purpose of it. As he said, by "selective" we don't mean that we're the elite; it means that we have certain people who can have rapport and others who can't. Now that doesn't mean that those others can't have rapport in another group, so sometimes the groups are split up, so similar ones will get together and they'll learn to get into each others' heads.

Because the whole art of transmission is accomplished by my getting in your head. In other words, when you're able to see my head, you'll experience my experience. So this is basically the part that can be said in a few words.

Q. Is zazen²² part of your system?

R. No – it is if you wish, we don't forbid. But I maintain that you can be painting a house or washing your dishes and you can be doing your zazen. If you read some of the authors on Zen you'll find this too. Of course, some of it's confusing; some will say, "When you hoe corn, hoe corn, don't meditate." But I believe that as you walk down the street there are literally thousands of mirrors being held up to you. You'll see something comical or ridiculous and you can't help but realize that that's a mirror of your own behavior in some way.

And as you see these things in other people – if you sit alone in a monastery you can't see these mirrors, and you can't take advantage of the experiences which will provoke an awakening – some real valuable experiences in yourself that way.

²² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zazen>

I do believe in quieting yourself down. We sit – in each of our rapport sessions we generally have a ten-minute period of quietness – to bring the head down, because you're out there. In other words, you strongly come to believe that the world is out there and that all the exigencies are out there: that you must work for that nickel for Kroger's and compete for that nickel for Kroger's and get that college education so that you'll get a bigger nickel for Kroger's, and so on.

So you're coming in off of this, and into a place where nothing much matters, so we bring the head down, in meditation. But zazen itself – I imagine that if zazen were practiced say eight hours a day as some of the ancient Zen people did – like Bodhidharma: he didn't go down to the pool hall for eight hours and then go back to the cave for a half hour. He stayed in the cave day and night. And he built up one tremendous power of irritation; he had to – that cave had to be hell. And out of that hell was produced discovery.

But you can't do it from just sitting down for five minutes. I know people who do that, and look at their toes for awhile or imagine the date they're going to have that night. You've got to be continually – I've written a special paper on meditation.²³ This paper instructs you on how to meditate without getting into dreamy visualization, or just dreaminess, and what the symptoms are to look for. Its retrogressive, not progressive.

For people who attend the group – for one thing, the advice to each person is different. I do not advise anyone the same, hardly. There are general applications; but for instance there are ways of raising your intuition. And these things will occupy your meditation as well. There's a complete balanced system for developing intuition.

Whenever you are travelling in what I call the desert without any railroad tracks – you have no trail to go by – you have to have some beacon light, something to guide you. Logic will not do it; your faith alone will not do it; but intuition will. It will take you through the abstract realms.

Any system that pretends to take you into becoming, has to have some mechanism for facilitating your skill in becoming – the necessary skill – and that skill involves intuition. You can't argue it out logically, this is the whole thing.

So once you hear it – it amounts to the business of closing doors. The human mind is like this room, and if they're pounding on a piano next door, or the sirens are singing outside that window, you're going to be distracted and your computer's not going to work – because all this stuff is continually going to be injecting itself into your problem. So the secret of course is closing doors.

This is one good part about meditation, that it's done to close doors. But sometimes the door of the room is closed, the door of the mind is closed, but inside of that head it indulges in everything instead of the problem. When I was doing business I could always come up with the best business formulas while I was meditating. The computer wanted

²³ Meditation.

to work on business; it didn't want to work on philosophy. So that's a door you've got to close. You've got to put your business outside.

And then we find that the physical door – you go into a room and you meditate, and your wife pounds on the door: “What are you doing in there?” This is symbolic, I mean, of nature calling. So you've got to find a place or a door that this noise can't come through. You've got to cut out all of the stuff that's going to feed in. In other words, you're going to say to the computer, “We've got all the data in there we need; we just want to digest it, re-associate it, coordinate it.”

And we don't want a bugle blowing into the computer all the time and let things go on, shouting what *it* wants. The whole art of developing intuition is one of shutting the doors, and that includes drugs and any excessive appetites. Sometimes it includes a particular diet if that helps.

I had one man join the group in Pittsburgh, his wife and he both joined. They were both schoolteachers, they were both macrobiotics. This fellow was a physical education major, teaching some sport in high school. He had been 170 pounds and went on this macrobiotic diet and was down to 130 or 140 I think it was. His wife was also down to about 90 pounds.

But F. was developing an intuition, and he needed this because he had been – what's the word that DeRopp²⁴ uses – viscerotonic or somatotonic? – he was all tied up in his body and he had been neglecting his head. He needed to be a little cerebrotoic. So this starvation of the body with the macrobiotic diet seemed to allow his head to think a little better, to take the emphasis off the body.

On the other hand his wife didn't need it. She had an illness and the macrobiotic diet had weakened her to a point where she was anemic, and could have died as a result of that when the condition flared up, because it required an operation and she was in a weakened state. Fortunately she had taken my advice to start eating liver and hamburgers a month before she suddenly needed the operation.

So for one person in that family the macrobiotic diet was doing wonders, and to the other person it was killing her.

So the same way – maybe a fellow drinks a quart of whiskey a day and you take it away from him; you at least let him have a shot a day. Another person, if he only needs a shot a day he can stop. Now of course if a guy needs a fifth of whiskey a day, naturally he's not going to do any spiritual work, but I'm just using this as an example on any of the appetites.

Q. What is that book you were quoting from?

²⁴ Master Game, 1968. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_S_de_Ropp

R. Ramana Maharshi. You may see it in a bookstore; I picked it up at a rummage sale. It's amazing; the best things you get sometimes very cheaply. The Spiritual Teachings of Ramana Maharshi, from Shambala.

There's a picture of him in here, and everything I read about him, I get the impression that he's a very wonderful man, a very enlightened man. And I never heard of him before – all these years I've been digging around, I never heard of him. But I don't care who he is – it's what he says that counts. I mean he might have been a dishwasher in Los Angeles, but the it's the things he says and the way he says it.

I think that the basic, real spiritual path exists in every major religion, but it's buried underneath the hucksters; the hucksters have managed to push it to the rear, saying, "It really isn't that simple; you've really got to pay in so many days of servitude, and go through this routine."

[chit-chat as meeting winds down]

end of tape