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Years ago I talked to a student of Zen² – I was interested in contacting a Zen master – and I asked him who the most important man was that he ever met in his life. And he told me about this fellow in Connecticut, Alfred Pulyan.³ And Pulyan was the most able Zen teacher I ever encountered.

And I asked this same fellow what the most important book was that he had read in his life. (He talked very plain. In fact, he used quite a few four-letter words for adjectives in order to be emphatic.) And he named this book by JJ Van der Leeuw, *Conquest of Illusion*.⁴ In the beginning of this book the author wrote a dedication to Krishnamurti, and I was a little surprised. I heard quite a bit about Krishnamurti before that, but I had never read him. It's not a book of Theosophical principles or anything of that sort, but it was published by Quest Books.⁵

But the reason I was fascinated by the book was his use of the term *absolute*.⁶ I had a little experience out in Seattle, Washington – a big experience, actually – and I wanted to understand it. I had come away from that with the realization, not of having met a personal God, but of having met an absolute condition. And I used that word in my description of it. On my return from Seattle I wrote a little thing called “Three Books of the Absolute”;⁷ it's in the back of *The Albigen Papers*. And I used the word absolute because I felt, and I still feel, that the word God is misused. It's used by name-droppers.

¹ Url: <http://direct-mind.org/index.php5?title=1986-Theosophical-Society-Miami>

For access, please send an email to editors@direct-mind.org

² Late 1950s, a cab driver in Los Angeles. <http://www.selfdiscoveryportal.com/Conquest.htm>

³ <http://www.selfdiscoveryportal.com/Pulyan.htm>

⁴ Full text here: <http://selfdefinition.org/van-der-leeuw/conquest-of-illusion.htm>

⁵ Theosophical publishing house.

⁶ *Conquest of Illusion*, ch. 4, “The Relative and the Absolute”.

⁷ About 1947; text in pdf file: <http://www.richardrose.org/ThreeBooks.pdf>

It's used by charlatans and phonies the world over to draw people in, taking a rake-off from their sense of importance.

And then there are people who are very dedicated and sincere; and they also use the word, and they are right in their dedication and their sincerity – but it doesn't match the sincerity and the definitions of people who are diametrically opposed to their convictions. So when you utter the word you're liable to be offending. Or you're liable to have people think, "Oh, I know what he's talking about. He's talking about what I read in chapter and verse so-and-so." So I avoid the use, because at no time did I ever encounter anybody with a long beard and a very human personal appearance.

There's a difficulty in this type of talk because I don't intend to waste time, and at the same time I don't wish to offend. But if I'm too careful about offending, I will waste a lot of people's time. So I intend to be very direct; I'll answer your questions very honestly, even if it may hurt ten people sitting all around you.

I want to remind you of something also. When I was a kid I studied in a theological seminary. Back during the depression I went to work on a farm, for fifty cents a day, and the farmer was what I'd call a fundamentalist Christian. He was wanting to get some theological information off of me, and I felt I didn't want to give it to him for fifty cents a day. Because I was working about twelve hours a day and I was too tired to go home and get into theological discussions with him. He saw I wasn't going to talk too much, so he said, "Well, Richard, I'll tell you the conclusion I come to about religion. The old barn out there at the top of the hill has many paths going up to it, but the cattle, no matter which path they take, all wind up in the barn." And I thought, "That's pretty good." I never forgot it.

So what we have to do – and it's very difficult – you have to say your piece but at the same time you give great respect for every individual who has diligently sought for the truth about things. And if he's pausing momentarily in a state of belief, and maybe fanatical belief, rest assured that he's a much better person than he was before. So you only hope that what you're saying doesn't go over too harshly on him. But at the same time, I don't intend to be the savior for mankind, meaning I don't pretend that I've got all the answers for everybody. Because I definitely believe in plateaus. And if you live long enough you'll realize that people do have plateaus.

You can remember when you were ten years old, and you had a concept of yourself and society and the world, and you adjusted yourself accordingly, and you got away with it. You looked in the mirror and you said, "That's me." And when you were twenty years of age you considered the boy of ten as green, and all his contemporaries as green and immature, not worthy of loafing with – meaning that at the age of twenty you wouldn't have loafed with yourself at the age of ten, if you had met yourself simultaneously. And we go on through life that way, to where each decade we reject the person we were before.

Seminary

We do the same thing in our philosophic searching. I started off as a Catholic. And I'm not saying this to offend Catholics – I don't apologize – because I think if I hadn't been a Catholic I could have been worse [somebody laughs]. I could have been born into a family that had no religious background at all. I had a very devout mother, and I believe that she said a lot of prayers getting me into the seminary, and I had to use a lot of will power to get out. But nevertheless, I say that if it hadn't been for her, and her dedication to bringing me up with a clean nose, I surely wouldn't be here today. I'd be interested probably in making some money someplace or Lord knows what.

So I was raised as a Catholic, and studied to be a Catholic priest for a short period of time. And I got out – because there was no consistency there. Not only that, but there was hypocrisy among the people I was living with. That disturbed me.

Incidentally, if you've ever been up to Pittsburgh, the seminary where I studied wasn't too far above there, a little place called Herman. They were Franciscans. Today that seminary is empty. There were hundreds of kids there, between the grades of the first year of high school and four years of college. They had a whole groups of monks⁸ that worked on a big farm and raised all they ate. And now they are all gone. The place is totally empty and it's up for sale. Which is unfortunate in a way. But I think, to be quite honest with you, that they tried to force the game of enforced belief. You had to believe, and if you doubted they called you a Doubting Thomas and you were in danger of losing your soul.

I came to the conclusion at an early age that if I were created ignorant by a being who demanded that I be ultimately or totally intelligent, there was a little injustice there, and I couldn't see that anybody would do that. And if he were that sadistic, to create people ignorant and then say, "You've got to know me and believe me," then he or it was capable of playing games. And I saw that it was basically not a theological quirk as much as that people were misunderstanding. They were stuck to some pattern they had created or accepted.

But anyhow, I want to give you a little outline of what happened, because I think it's important that if we're ever going to meet each other in the future, you'll know more about me.

Authors

I used to read books by any esoteric author I could get, from Blavatsky on down. And the first thing I went into with each of these authors, was to try to find or know that author personally. Most of them were dead, so it would take quite a bit of doing, but one of the ways to do this is to read between the lines, meaning to read intuitively and get a view of

⁸ Capuchins.

that person's personality. It's just like going to a show and you see an actor acting. That is generally some part of his personality – he's just repeating the personality he uses during the day – but some of it is put on. So you'll have to tell the difference, and you have to be intuitive to tell that difference.

I read Paul Brunton^{9,10} for instance. I read Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*. And those two books, incidentally, overwhelm you so much with the information that I didn't know too much about Blavatsky. I had to read other books to find out about her. But with Brunton, as soon as I began reading him I became convinced that he was sincere. Not only that, but that he had found something; he was on the right track. Incidentally, Brunton came to the United States right before he died. And Art, did you meet him?

Art: No, I think Lou did.

R. Yes, because they took some pictures with him there in Columbus, Ohio. I didn't know he was there until he was gone, or I would have gone over there.

I think it's important to know the person. Because you can read books, and those books could be a tremendous, monumental fraud from one page to the other. And Brunton admitted that he wrote his first book as a reporter for hire for a publisher in England; that was *A Search in Secret Egypt*. They said, "Go out and get a story on the pyramids." Ouspensky did the same thing. He heard about sleeping all night in the pyramids and the magical things that happened. But they were paid reporters at the time and they got so much per chapter.

So it's important to get the person. Because what I have to give, if it's possible to give you anything, is an experience of mine and a method by which it happened – and if I'm a phony you're wasting your time. Consequently, you may get more by hearing me talk about myself face to face. You'll be able to get an impression, and you may be inclined to read the book or you may be inclined to save yourself the money. But I still believe that the most important thing is the person; because that way you'll know whether the message is any good.

Guidelines

I got out of the seminary when I was about seventeen years old. But I never stopped looking. I didn't go back to the church; I thought, "This is it; it's not going to work." But there was a lot of pressure too, because of my mother, particularly. My father was a bit of a free thinker, but my mother thought that the whole family was going to hell if I didn't stay in the seminary. So I had to run the risk of her going to hell.

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Brunton

¹⁰ Full texts here (scans): <http://selfdefinition.org/brunton/>

But I started looking into everything. There aren't many things that I haven't been in. And I even travelled to examine them, if they'd talk to me. I visited the Rosicrucians on the west coast; that was the Oceanside group.¹¹ And I found a few people, a few groups that I considered honest, and worthwhile spending money in – because they are honest, not because they know a whole lot. What they tell you is what they honestly believe. And of the Rosicrucians, I found that the Oceanside group was the most valid.

And when I got to be twenty-one years of age I set for myself a certain code that I went by, in this examination of groups. I was on the path of searching. And I decided that I would have nothing to do with any teacher or group that charged money. That truth is free, and a person who has something he wants to hand on should expend as much time and energy as the person who's out there searching in the sands. And when the two people get together, when people who are genuine searchers meet the person who's a genuine teacher, there's a tremendous joy. It's not a one-sided thing, of somebody saying, "Hey, you found me, so now write the check."

The other thing is, I don't go for dogma. I like to have everything ascertained. I mean I did then. If a person lays something down as a premise or a law, or something I have to believe, I want to know *why*. Another thing was, no regimentation or ritual. I had come to that in the church, where you start as a trooper and you wind up as a corporal and then a sergeant and so on, in the religious hierarchy. This keeps people glued to a purpose or a cause that somebody created maybe a thousand years ago, and lost track of why they created it. The people who are running things today may not know why the thing was created. I think if you examine any religion on the face of the earth, you'll see a bit of this. For instance there's something in the Bible about Peter and Barnabas – each went his own way because they didn't see eye to eye.¹²

Radha Soami

At one time I was initiated into two different Radha Soami sects.¹³ I don't know whether you're acquainted with them or not. The reason I looked into them: no charge; a claim of total knowledge, meaning a reach for total knowledge; and no particular addiction to any routine or ritual that you had to follow.

They had a guy¹⁴ who was in the lineage of Guru Gobind Singh;¹⁵ they were Sikhs. And the Sikhs as you know carry knives all the time, and they were warriors. They were the people who stood between the regular Hindus and the Mohammedans in what is now Pakistan. When the Mohammedans invaded India, they boiled in oil one of the Radha

¹¹ <http://www.rosicrucian.com/>

¹² Complicated story. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barnabas>

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

¹⁴ Charan Singh. See http://www.searchwithin.org/journal/tat_journal-08.html#9 Yoga: Hatha, Shabd, and Raja by Richard Rose

¹⁵ (1666-1708) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gobind_Singh

Soami teachers.¹⁶ So this Gobind Singh said, “Boys, it’s time to fight,” and they took up the sword and never put it down. Today they still carry that code, and each one of their names ends in Singh, which means “lion”.

But they’re very sincere and dedicated people. And I thought, “Well, I’ll look into it.” So I went there and there was no obligation. So I took the initiation. Incidentally, some of the things I found in their initiation, you’ll find in Blavatsky’s *Voice of the Silence*.¹⁷ In the initiation are the secret sounds given for the different planes you encounter after death. You’re supposed to hear these before you die so that you’ll recognize the different sounds as you pass through: the sound of the conch, the little bell¹⁸ and so on.^{19,20}

I had a tremendous admiration for them. The man who was the teacher came over here from India at his own expense. Some people from here went over there. And the man whom I met originally was from Chicago; he had made a few big dollars inventing things, I guess in industry. He was eighty years of age and he had time to travel. So he’d get on an airplane and come over to Pittsburgh and hold meetings.

So I had a great respect for them. But you know, when each one of those gurus died they had a fight. And they didn’t have enough respect for the common theme – that I considered of great value to them at least. They couldn’t get along. The gurus themselves were more or less sworn to poverty, but they sat upon a tremendously wealthy temple: the grounds, the ashram and so on. And in this country they had a corporation and there was maybe money in the bank. So there were people sitting around waiting for that fellow to die, and then they would pounce upon the center, form a schism, and then you had two or three. Some of you may have heard of Kirpal Singh – he’s one of the Radha Soami people that came to this country, and I thought he was pretty much on the level. And he taught some of the things they did.

Gurus

Most of the gurus when they come over here don’t go contrary to the immorality of the American youth.²¹ They just pat them on the back and say, “Go ahead. You just keep on chanting this mantra and you’ll go straight to payday. Do what you please. Just chant the mantra and don’t worry about anything else.” Well, I’ve never believed that. Consequently when these gurus show up, I don’t have to waste any time with them.

¹⁶ Bhai Dayal, 1675. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhai_Dayala#Martyrdom

¹⁷ 50 page PDF linked here: <http://selfdefinition.org/blavatsky/>

¹⁸ *Three Books of the Absolute*: “And within that House is heard the painful tolling of a tiny silver bell, and within that dome is felt the surge of mighty roaring tides that will not be stopped.”

¹⁹ Radha Soami; *Sounds of the Higher Regions*, PDF: <http://selfdefinition.org/radha-soami/>

²⁰ *Voice of the Silence*, page 6: “Thou hast to hear the inner God in seven manners. The first is like the nightingale’s sweet voice chanting a song of parting to its mate. The second comes as the sound of a silver cymbal of the Dhyanis, awakening the twinkling stars.” Etc.

²¹ Unlike the Radha-Soami, who advocate an abstentious lifestyle.

I don't want to rush you on this, but I do believe that you do not learn the truth. Nobody learns the truth; you have to become it. And to become it, you have to go through maybe certain privations, distortions, inhibitions or whatever. You can't just live like a pig – or worse than a pig, actually, being that the pigs and the animals have a certain code that they follow automatically. We don't. We're supposedly given our freedom to do as we please, while the animal runs according to a schedule. And so in many respects we get worse than animals. And then on top of that there is this pretense, that these people are going to be transformed into this maximum spiritual being, or join this spiritual heaven together.

Some of you may get an inkling that you'd like to look into this a little more deeply. We're not going to get too deep here in an hour. I'm used to talking all night long. I used to get around these universities and we'd go down to McDonald's hamburger joint and the second session would begin there. But you can only scratch the surface in an hour here. Later, some of us are going over to where I'm staying, and if anybody's interested in asking questions and we can't get to them here, you'll be welcome to come over. Because I feel that there will be a lot left to say.

I'll mention this briefly, that I did have an experience when I was thirty years of age, in Seattle Washington. And tonight I'm going to run through some more of the things I have encountered.

Lecture of questions ²²

I've got some questions I want to read here. I hope that the purpose of them will become clear as we go along. It starts out with:

What do you know for sure?

And I'll tell you one thing I know for sure: I can't see without glasses.

Does a man own a house, or does the house own him?

Does a man have power, or is he overpowered?

Does a man enjoy, or is he consumed?

Does a man really reason, or is it all a complex rationalization?

These are serious questions. You can think of some of your conclusions and say, "Well, I've logically figured them out." But a lot of the stuff we later realize that we rationalized. Like the fellow meets the woman of his choice, and logically he says, "Oh, everything points that this is it," Then a few years later in divorce court he realizes that it was all rationalization. Or maybe he blames someone for it.

²² See "Approach to Validity" http://www.searchwithin.org/journal/tat_journal-08.html#5

Or is he so programmed?

Can he help himself? Does a man have any logic, or is he just programmed? Is it possible he's programmed to go through this thing just like sheep going over the fence. They don't hesitate; they take the same steps as everybody else

Can a man learn? Or can he *become*, by his own efforts?

Why build anthills before knowing what an ant is?

Why do we build conceptual towers of Babel about human thinking, before we know what thought is?

How many people have given a thought about thought?

How can you dare define thought before knowing the source-cause of thought?

Or the essence of thought – what *is* the essence of thought?

When you describe bouncing, do you describe the striking object, or that which is struck?

That's saying a little bit about karma.

Can you stop thinking?

Can you start thinking?

We believe that we think – try stopping it. Try stopping it. Or say to yourself, "When I wake up tomorrow morning, I'm going to start thinking about calculus." Or about American history, or about going to work.

But we don't start thinking – it's started, before we can get fully conscious. The game has caught up with us before we can even stop it from closing in.

Is thought something we receive, or something projected?

When you read van der Leeuw you'll realize that he understood this years ago, that you see one thing and you project another. And somewhere in that book you'll find a little dot that looks like a star; and he said very possibly that that's all a human being could really look like, but we have projected the rest onto him.

Is thought a sort of somatic effluvium?

In other words, are we a coil that exudes electricity, which in turn is thought?

Do we think or are we forced to think?

Is "negative" thinking negative to man or negative to nature?

You hear a lot about this: "Oh, you're a negative thinker." In other words, a lot of the accusations of negative thinking are from people who are negative to nature, and they are accusing someone else of being negative to man, meaning they're negative to social mores or political thinking.

Does a tree create wind by waving its branches?

Can theological facts be established by voting?

There aren't a lot of people here, you know. But does that mean that the people here don't know as much as the people who go down to the big Woodstock affairs? Because there's more of them, are they right and we wrong by virtue of the normal curve of psychology, based on what the most people do?

Is Mary the mother of God, or is humanity the mother of God?

You hear both stories. Or is it neither?

Is God determined by victorious armies?

In World War II the Capuchins had priests on both sides, praying to kill the others.

Is virtue established by psychological edict?

The psychologists say that the virtue of yesterday is not virtue today.

By ecclesiastical vote?

Or by the requisites of our ultimate essence?

In other words, by what we consider that our ultimate essence is.

What is sin? An offense against yourself? An offense against your fellow man?
Or an offense against God?

It's amazing that God could be capable of being sinned against.

Is an offense against God recognized by divine outcry, earthquake, or cosmic catastrophe?

This was believed at one time. You better sacrifice somebody because a volcano erupted.

Is it a sin to eat meat?

Are the animals our brothers?

Are they possessed of intelligence and soul?

Do animals sin when they eat other animals?

Or are such sinning animals pardoned for keeping ecology in balance?

We gave them a pardon.

Is it wrong to kill except for food?

Why do we not eat the people we kill?

Why not, after the battle's over, round them up?

What we're saying is that these great, massive rationalisms just don't match up when you compare one with the other.

Who is knowledgeable about good?

Our whole system, our whole civilization, depends upon good and bad. If you're good, okay, you'll be Mayor – we'll put you in jail later. If you're bad, well, kill him, get rid of him. And you have to have definitions for that stuff before you can pick up that fellow and throw him in jail or throw him out of society, for whatever he's done.

Is *good* that which we desire, or that which is in itself good?

What is this condition called "in itself good"?

I think you know what we mean by that.

Is evil the child of good, or is it a twin?

In other words, is this just a relative part of a unity? That the good and bad are two parts of a Unity, capital "U"?

If a man drives a horse through a plate glass window, should we prosecute the man or the horse?

The horse is the one that went through.

If a man robs to feed his children, should we prosecute the man or that which drove him, the children?

If a man rapes a girl, should we prosecute a) the man, b) the girl who tempted him, c) his ancestors, for his genetic inheritance or glandular inclinations, or d) the force that designed mankind?

Now don't get the idea that I'm in favor of rape. But these questions are necessary to give a little idea of the blame. One of the things I've said all my life is, "I'm too ignorant to commit a sin." I don't know what a sin is. I've lived according to a certain code, and I've lived within that code because I found it better for myself and my spiritual future. But I don't say that I condemn anybody – I don't know what a sin is.

What is our purpose?

We'd like to define ourself. What's our purpose on earth? Now somebody will open up the catechism on page so-and-so and say, "We're here to sing eternal praises," or to do this-or-that. But ultimately – that becomes a little shallow.

What is our apparent purpose?

I really would like for you to think about that one, and remind me to get back to it – what our apparent purpose is. I was raised on a farm.

Can we identify ourselves?

Are we that which we think we are?

We went through that before; the idea that a ten year old boy thinks he's something, and that's his total being. And then he finds out ten years later that wasn't his total being.

In other words, we project something onto ourselves; we look into the mirror and we project it. If you've still got hair you might part it, comb it, and say, "Oh, boy, this guy could cause a lot of trouble with the opposite sex. He's the tops." You go out with that foolish idea and maybe somebody will believe it. Well, by the same token, you'll also project with other people, and you project things they don't have. And in our identity with the human being, we're tangling, we're tripping over projections. We're tripping over something inside of us, twisting our vision and our senses and everything else to a certain aim.

Can we know about God if we can't tell a whore or a pimp from a saint?

I'm not talking about something far beyond that, the acme of all spirituality. If we're going to project upon people and find out later that we fooled ourselves, how are we going to know the truth if we ever saw it?

I'm going to tell you a little story. This little question was brought up in a holy-roller church back in West Virginia – that's the particular cul-de-sac I'm from. This preacher was saying to his congregation, "You people wouldn't know Jesus Christ if he came through the door." Of course, he was right, and they couldn't argue with him. But some kids outside were playing, and of course they thought religion was a big joke and they were continually playing pranks on the preacher. So one time they got up in a tree above this old cabin that the service was being held in, and they dropped a rock on the roof just as the preacher said that. So everybody immediately fell down on the floor and went to kneeling and praying and praising the Lord, because when that rock hit the roof it shook the whole building, and they thought God was conveying a message. It's amazing the effect that children could have on their theological beliefs.

He was saying it at every meeting, and the next time he did that the kids pushed open the church door and shoved a little donkey through it. The preacher said, "If Christ walked down that aisle you wouldn't know him." And when the donkey walked down the

aisle, they got up and said, "Praise the Lord, welcome Jesus." And they accepted the fact that he came in a disguised form to test them.

But this is true, we have preconceptions. On the television show the other day the man wanted me to define truth.²³ And I said, "It's like defining God; once we use that word I have to take your definition." I don't know how many were listening on that TV channel – there may be thousand people listening and you may have 999 different definitions; each person has a different idea. Consequently, you're going to harmonize with one of them and 998 will disagree with you and say you're wrong. To define the findings, if you really find something, you'd better use some other terms – because that word is taken. All young people grow up with it, with a certain ingrained meaning. And when you're looking for the truth you have to abolish beforehand all previous things which may be misconceptions.

It's alright to start out with tentative beliefs, because you have to do that to a certain degree. But if you start off with what they call statements of worth, with absolute convictions, you have already stopped. You're saying, "This is what it has to be or I won't proceed any further, because I will not let it conflict with what I already believe." And the reason is that you've got a big ball of wax built up, and if it comes apart, then maybe your personality will come apart too; because too much time was put in on it.

Who are we?

Now this seems like an idle question, but ...

What is the self? Is it the body?

To the behavioral psychologist, the self is the body; there's nothing else. What you see is what you get, as what's his name says. There's no soul; there's no spirit. Now what about the mind? Well, they say that's the somatic mind.

Is there a self beyond the mind?

Can you know the mind or the self adequately if you are unable to communicate that knowledge?

We all know that we think. But somebody could stand up and argue that you only react. There's still a better argument, and that is that you don't even react, that your reactions just bounce off you. You're just part of the machinery and the reaction pattern is going on. That's what it amounts to maybe If you believe in behaviorism; you're just a cog in a perpetual motion machine that keeps on moving.

²³ Public TV interview, WPBT in Miami. 11 minutes.
<http://direct-mind.org/index.php5?title=1985-1015-Public-TV-Interview-Miami>

Meaning and definitions

Now we get down to proof. When you try to communicate knowledge, proofs require a possible scientific procedure, which is a question of prediction, and the proof thereby following. And when you get into prediction, this requires meaning, words that have meaning. So we come to the next question:

What is meaning?

And you'll think, "Oh, that's understood; everybody knows what *meaning* is." But we don't – we accept the dictionary and the arguments in it. If you ever get on radio or TV be careful. Because they're using dictionary meanings, and sometimes less than dictionary meanings, to just confuse or try to confuse, or to put you on the spot. And when you get into esoteric philosophy, you cannot be hung tight onto the meanings in the dictionary.

For instance, take the word *reality* – I've checked this out in a few dictionaries. When I was in college there was a 1937-1938 edition of the Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. When my daughter was in college I picked up hers, and the definitions of words like *psyche* and the derivation of the word psychology differ – according to the voting power of whomever sits on the decision board, in the printing of the dictionary.

The word psychology comes from *psyche* and *logos*, both Greek words. Psyche was considered the soul or spirit, and logos is the science, or also the *word*. So psychology you would think would be the science of searching for the soul or the spirit, or at least the mind. But what is it? It's a behavioristic mish-mash; it's strictly studying reflexes of nerves.

Reality

Now for the word *reality*: We want to know "the answer", we don't want to know what Yogi So-and-so says. We're inclined to believe him more quickly than we do the guy next door – because for some reason he has a charismatic appearance; he looks different. But sometime we'll talk one-to-one and I'll tell you what I've learned about some of these very sacred personages. Because I've dug widely, into a lot of stuff, to find out what type of people these people are at home, not just when they're talking.

But regardless, this thing of reality is basically *that which is*. There's a meaning for that word that we have. All of you people here have a meaning for the word, which is very similar to mine: *that which is* – meaning "is", not "is supposed to be". But reality defined in the dictionary is, "things known in the objective sense". Meaning it's got to be a rock; the point of reference has to be this earth, which stands like a rock, and everything's got to relate to it.

We talked about medicine: medicine believes in the body and it goes back only as far as that body. I maintain that possibly some of the medical people should go back a little further than the day that you're born; they should go back as far as nine months previous to your birth. They very seldom ever get into that. How much of the stuff that happens to you every day is caused by something that happened in the months before you were born? How much of the blame are we supposed to take for things that happened five, six, seven months before we were born? ²⁴ In psychology today, in the analysis of human behavior, these things aren't noticed at all. It has to be objective. They don't want to hear it, if it's not something they can put into a test tube.

I'll give you a little preview: when you step beyond this life, this life is an illusion; this earth doesn't exist. And I'm up here talking – why? Why am I trying to put this point across? But this is what you discover. And after you discover it, when you go back and start reading what other people write, you find that others have discovered this too. Consequently, reality is *not* that which is objective. And of course, do you say it's subjective? – no, no. Subjective immediately becomes objective.²⁵

In other words, this is the reason that quite frequently people want to hear about the experience I had. Can you describe the totality of nothingness? But you've got to try, because people are given encouragement. They're given encouragement to look for the true reality if they've got some little inkling of a direction, or of something they might find. But you can see it's a monumental task.

Yet when you get there, you realize that what you found is a combination of totality and nothingness. And why is it necessary to say it this way? Why couldn't there be a better gradation? Well, it can't. To me, we live in the curse of relatively – by relativity I mean polarity: good and bad, black and white, high and low, here and there. But there are no such things beyond the human mind. The human mind is the only tunnel or channel through which you're going to find your Self. Your Self is not out there, up there. You find it inside, through your mind – and then that goes too.

When I was delivering Zen lectures – we talked mostly at colleges to young people – I used to mention this to the students: for a person to achieve anything of any worth, you have to fatten up your head. You have to build up your ego.²⁶ You have to read every book you can get, because that reading will stimulate further reading and further action. And in the action you become an actor. You become a doer instead of a reader. You become a man of knowledge instead of a man of belief.

²⁴ Rose attributed some of his personal characteristics to courage and persistence expressed by his mother, regarding the jailing of his father, while Rose was in the womb.

²⁵ An objective experience.

²⁶ *Meditation Papers*: “Another ego that should *not* be removed in the beginning is the desire to be whole, which might be a form of narcissism. Even though this is interpreted as pride, unless it is retained until the point of maturity and intuition is reached, most of the railroad tracks for our reversed vector will be removed.” *Monitor Papers*: “Thus we do not drop the Faith ego or delusion, until we have built a vector that will sustain our aim without such assurance.”

This is one thing that I maintain: to doubt is sacred; to believe is foolishness. So always check your principles, to see whether you're believing or whether you're actually doing, that you actually *are* something – what I call a *vector*.²⁷ You establish yourself as a vector. And this goes down through life. You hear things that are extremely paradoxical. And incidentally, the paradox is the great element in the search for Truth – which you discover as soon as you get off this routine that everyone follows in the line of religion or belief-systems.

Arguing

In other words, you find that they make absolute statements such as, “If you don't do this you're going to hell.” Somebody made this remark the other day on a radio station I was listening to. Evidently on this program they do a lot of calling each other names. But they were arguing about the Bible. And a Jewish woman called in and said, “I don't like what you're saying, because you're explaining it to Jews, for one thing, and I don't think that's making them any better off. And you say that we're not going to heaven unless we become Christians.

So then the guy in charge of the program attacked this fellow who was preaching fundamentalism. He said, “Now Steve, you're hedging. You really believe the Bible – and the Bible says that people who are exposed to the word of Christ and don't follow it are going to hell.” That if you're not exposed to the word of Christ, of course, then you can't hear what he's saying: you're deaf, dumb and blind – so you go to purgatory. But once you're exposed to it, presumably, you better believe or you're going to hell. And he says, “That means that all the Jews are going to hell, right? Don't be afraid to say it, that all the Jews are going to hell. C'mon, say it.”

Well, I listened to this for awhile. And then somebody butted in and said, “You know what I don't like about this, is that Adolph Hitler had a chance to be saved, he was supposedly of the Christian faith, so he's going to hell. He's in hell. And down there also is Mahatma Gandhi, who didn't accept Christianity, so he's in hell too. Now we're all going to have to go down there in hell with Adolph Hitler and I don't think you should impose that.” And here the arguing got down to a point where this one preacher was going to force people into an association in hell, regulated by Christian principles. So – I wonder how far people will go in their exploration of the facts.

Bible translations

Of course the Bible was translated, supposedly from Aramaic. I met a man one time who went through a lot of these translations, and these were some of the things he came up

²⁷ *Albigen Papers*, ch. 7: “Law of the Reversed Vector”. *Transmission Papers*: “This is the magnificent exercise of reversing the downward vector.”

with. The words weren't all translated correctly. First it was translated into Greek, and from there it was translated into Latin – that was in the days of the early Christian church. And the sects in the early church found certain things that they thought would be better if they either omitted or changed – because their doctrine at the time had changed, according to different conferences they had at Constantinople²⁸ and later in Rome.²⁹ So we don't know for sure exactly what happened, but we do know that these words changed.

For instance, there are two words in Hebrew for *hell* in the Bible. One of them is *sheol*³⁰ and the other is *gehenna*.³¹ One is the grave and the other is the city dump; supposedly that's the meaning of those words. Okay, you go back to the Bible and you translate it: "If a man calls his neighbor a fool, he shall be in danger of hellfire."³² Now will he be in danger of hellfire, or will he be in danger of being thrown out of town and have to live with the lepers on the city dump? It seems more reasonable that the translation would have been the city dump, more than going to hell forever just for calling your neighbor a fool.

The word *angel* in the Bible was translated from the Greek word *angelos*, which means messenger.³³ And if you go back into the Old Testament and you pick out where it says angel, you'll find that the two angels who visited Lot were messengers.³⁴ Because they ate bread with him, and the men outside the house wanted to have sexual intercourse with them, and they tried to. And if the angels had wings, they would have seen they were supernatural creatures, and even if they didn't have wings, if they were divine creatures they surely would have shown it.

Lot had to go out and say, "Hey, boys, take my daughters." (You'll have to read this yourself; this is how I remember it.) And they said, "Send these men out so we can have them." And Lot said, "No. If that's your mood, take my daughters." And they said, "No, no, we don't want your daughters." So these messengers said, "Never mind, we'll fix the situation." And they went out and hit the town with a laser ray or something, and that was the end of Sodom. That's where Lot's wife supposedly turned into a pillar of salt. Presumably they had some power to exert, and it was strictly a scientific power they had at the time. But one thing for sure, whether they were divine creatures or not, they were capable of eating bread; they were capable, supposedly, according to all appearances, of the men outside thinking they could have intercourse with them.

Consequently, getting back to this conversation on the radio, evidently the people who are so stoutly defending their religion and denouncing each others' religion – never

²⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Council_of_Nicaea

²⁹ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East-West_Schism

³⁰ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheol>

³¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gehenna>

³² Mathew 5:22.

³³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angel>

³⁴ Genesis 19:1.

bothered to go into the real fundamentalism, which is the translation of the Bible. Take the Hebrew and the Greek and translate it – and then argue it.

Okay, do we have time for some questions?

Q and A begins

Q. I'm more than a little interested in what happened to you in Seattle, Washington. Would you tell us?

R. Well, let's get some other questions, because that might be the last one of the night.

Joseph Chilton-Pearce

Q. I haven't had an opportunity to talk to too many people about this, but I think that what most human beings do, or probably all, is to process life based on what we know – not considering that what we know is really nothing that we know, but what we believe.

R. Right, right.

Q. So what I do is try to un-process life, and by un-processing life it gets down to what I actually know. I've been working on this for awhile now, and I think that's how you get to the foundation of what's happening.

R. Did you ever read Joseph Chilton-Pearce?³⁵ He's got a couple books out, one of them is *The Crack in the Cosmic Egg*. Chilton-Pearce's wife was dying of cancer, and it occurred to him that the reason she was dying was because of a *paradigm*. In other words, we agree to it, somewhere along the line. I said earlier that this world is an illusion, but it's a very well-constructed illusion, down to every ion and proton and electron there is. So if it's an illusion, it's an extremely well organized illusion. And it's just like everything else – we've got to live with it before we transcend it – so don't try to get too far outside of it. Because everybody believes it.

And the best analogy I could give you is, they say that faith will move mountains. I believe this is true, but it will only move mountains if there are no people on the other side of that mountain who refuse to accept it. In other words, you can't get enough people. You might be able to get enough people to believe that a man is going to have an ulcer on his leg healed, and the ulcer will become healed. But to get a healing session where everybody's going to sit down and force an amputated leg to be replaced – I have no historical evidence of that ever happening.

So this is the limit – we have to go along with this paradigm. The only thing is, what you can do is not get involved too deeply. You may wake up some day and be surprised –

³⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Chilton_Pearce

especially if you're on your way to the electric chair – it will happen real quick, and you'll say, "I've been kidding myself."

Apparent purpose

Q. Would you care to go over your understanding of why we are here?

R. [laughs] You are a rascal.

Q. You asked for it.

R. I have said this before – I'm talking about the *apparent reason* – we don't know the real reason. If we all knew the real reason we're here, we'd get at it right away; you wouldn't need me up here telling you, or trying to tell you about what approximately it might be.

But the apparent reason – going back to what I asked – what are we, basically? We're animals. We're basically animals, with divine pretenses. Okay, so we'll start with facts; let's say the old behavioristic fact that these are bodies in front of me.

I was giving a lecture in Pittsburgh and I went around the room one by one and said, "What are you here for?" And a lot of them said they didn't know. But I came to one lady who said, very naively, "Oh, I'm just here to help God." And I said, "What the hell makes you think he needs your help?" So just who are these conceited egotists, to think that they're that important?

What are we, basically? Do you want to find the truth? You start with basics: a naked body. The biggest lie, one of the first lies we tell, is that we go out and get clothes and we put them on. Now I'm not a nudist and I'd never be a nudist, because I figure those are prurient shops – possibly, but I'm not going to run the risk of finding out. But regardless, we should face the fact that we're an animal. And when you pull your clothes off you'll see the apparatus there. The big point in life is the same thing as the seed of corn that grows in the ground. When that corn grain grows and the silk on the tassel is fresh, the pollination occurs; then the kernels becomes ripened and the leaves start to dry. And the same thing with the human being. When the pollination starts, the hair falls off of the head and the leaves start to dry. That's your purpose on earth.

Okay – when you accept that, then you're an honest person and you can do more. You can say, "Hey, I would like to see if I can't keep this thing going. Because according to the schedules in the old animal kingdom, the corn falls to the ground and rots, and so do we." So we start examining the potential for possibly surviving this death, that follows everybody. And this is the origination of all religions – basically, trying to survive death.

But if we go into it with some other pretense beforehand, that we are innately divine – and a lot of people tell you this, that they're innately divine – then I don't know what they're talking about. All I know is that they're going to start off with some doctrine or

some book that will take up thirty or forty years of their time, and if they're lucky enough not to get run over by a Mack truck, they're going to scream before they die – that they have missed the boat. Or that they could have found a better approach, perhaps. But they sure have wasted a lot of time.

Man number 1, 2, 3, 4 ³⁶

But basically we're an instinctive man. Gurdjieff wrote this up pretty well.³⁷ He classified man in seven categories – I could only find five, so I'll give you them; I don't know what he meant by six and seven. The first man is an instinctive man; he lives to live, he goes out and he fights, he's a warrior, he hunts and he kills and he feeds his family. He protects the kids and he's a good man. But he has sex for the sake of his body, he doesn't know anything else, and he lives for what he can grab. And of course, if he isn't exposed to somebody who's got theological ideas, he'll die as that.

But somewhere along the line, he meets a woman and he falls in love. I'm speaking of a man, but if you feel you have to bring in both, you can bring them in yourself. The woman is the same way; the woman is also instinctive. And you can draw good parallels between the hen and the rooster, the cow and the bull, and the woman and the man. We see these things in human life. So when that man falls in love with the woman, invariably, he forgets himself. And he puts himself secondary to his children – if he's a man. Now if he's low-order dog he can walk away and leave them and not think a thing about it; he remains on the instinctive plane.

Now the things that that man does for his wife – and he'll sacrifice his life for her; if somebody bothers his family, if he's a man he'll give his life for them. But this raises him above the instinctive man. He's not thinking about his pleasure anymore. He may be indulging in the necessary sex to reproduce, but he has made that institution sacred. Or if he falls in love with Jesus, or if she falls in love with Jesus – they're removed from their physical self, and there's an elevation, an automatic elevation. They have become something better; they're no longer just an animal, a naked animal. And so this of course becomes what people consider the top, the acme in life; they've reached the point where they're working unselfishly for other people.

Okay, but there's another step after so many years of this. I have talked to ministers, who had been in love with Jesus, and then one day they say, "Hey, something's wrong here." And they'd change and they'd go into something else. At first they wouldn't know where to go. When a person gives up whatever he feels is inadequate, he doesn't know where to go. So you start looking. Sometimes it's the cabbala; the fundamentalists will go into the cabbala and they'll study Hebrew and see what they can find out. Or they'll study astrology, numerology, God knows what.

³⁶ On Man Number 1 – 4 also see Pathfinder by Richard Rose in TAT Journal issue 14:: http://www.searchwithin.org/journal/tat_journal-14.html#1

³⁷ P.D. Ouspensky, *In Search of The Miraculous*. Full text: <http://selfdefinition.org/gurdjieff/>

They're trying to apply logic now. This is what Gurdjieff calls the emotional man – man number two – but now through logic he'll try to analyze the scriptures instead of just reading them. And they labor with that until they have what I call the eureka experience.³⁸ In Japan it's called the satori experience³⁹ and in algebra it's called the realization of what "x" means. These are all eureka experiences. There's an illumination – the power of the intellect comes over a man, and he realizes he's capable of doing tremendous things with that intellect. He's capable of solving tremendous mathematical problems, building battleships or rocket ships or whatever.

And that exaltation will last awhile, until he has applied it diligently over a long period of time, and he finds that there are holes in it – that it's no longer the answer.⁴⁰ And if he spends twenty years in that and he's got twenty more years left, then he may get into a philosophic search. And again he doesn't know where to go; the path is a vast expanse of confusion. I used to call it "looking under every rock"; you go back to the drawing board and start looking under every rock. And sometimes you discover something.

Samadhi

And there's an exaltation or experience that comes out of that, which is called *cosmic consciousness*. He becomes one with the evenness and the constancy of the creation which he sees: the cosmos, the physical world – where everything becomes beautiful. He wants to write poetry, and he realizes that whatever is out there, it's in good hands.

That incidentally in Hindu terminology is known as kevala nirvikalpa samadhi. And then there's a stage beyond that, of course, which is sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi. Ramana Maharshi describes this more aptly than anybody else I ever read.⁴¹ Kevala samadhi is cosmic consciousness; you lower the bucket into the well, and when you draw it back up it's the same old bucket. But down in that well is the experience, the well of experience.

In sahaja samadhi, the drop of water falls into the river, and it enters the ocean, and you never see it again.⁴² That's symbolic of the personality, and death.

³⁸ Marking the transition from emotional to intellectual man. Rose also calls this the "wow!" experience. Other than by reference to examples in literature (Kapleau's *Three Pillars of Zen*) Rose doesn't give a concrete illustration of what is actually realized (what facts are observed) in the "eureka" experience other than the discovery of intellectual capacity. I.e., he doesn't state the philosophic equivalent of "how to solve for x" in algebra.

³⁹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satori> The accepted definition of *satori* (or *kensho*) is "seeing into one's nature", that is, the discovery of awareness (the fact of awareness), rather than the purely intellectual awakening that Rose describes. Satori in the accepted sense would mark a transition from the intellectual man to what Rose calls the philosophic man, although Rose states that cosmic consciousness marks this transition. Possibly these are parallel routes.

⁴⁰ Again, the discovery of awareness (satori) does not produce dissatisfaction over time, unlike dissatisfaction with the intellect.

⁴¹ See chart: <http://www.albigen.com/uarelove/sahaja.aspx>

⁴² As a drop.

Isis Unveiled

Q. You mentioned the book *Isis Unveiled*, then you brushed it off. What about it?

R. There's an enormous about it.

Q. Yes, I know. Do you want to touch on it a little bit?

R. Oh my God, where would I start? It's an encyclopedia of knowledge. We have a book service and we carry it. I don't find that it's dogmatic. All books get criticized. The more you say, the more you leave things out, the more you get criticized. So there's a lot said in there, and I don't know that it's wise to discuss it.

Q. If you wanted to leave a message to the President, something that he could take away that would be useful to him, what would you say?

R. Ohhhh – burn your house, shoot your wife, and sink the ship. [laughs]

Reincarnation

Q. I'm very curious, with all of the research you have done throughout your life, all the reading and everything else, are you a believer in reincarnation?

R. No, I'm not. I'm not a disbeliever either. I was asked that on one of the shows. I'm not a disbeliever. In fact I had a dream of a place one time – generally you forget a dream but this one haunted me. And maybe twenty years later I had children and I took the family for a drive. There was an old Rose farm, owned by people by the name of Rose, on Ten Mile Creek, in Pennsylvania.⁴³ And I went because there was some hint that it might have been a distant relative. And when I went there I saw the place that was in the dream. And I don't say that there's any proof of reincarnation. But as soon as I walked up there I said to my wife, "This is it. Right here is where the two old buildings stood." There was a road that went up along Ten Mile Creek.

But I'll tell you, one of the reasons that I avoid even trying to answer the question is that I feel that too many people would use reincarnation as a delaying technique. If you're guaranteed that you're going to come back, even in a suffering form, people will say, "Oh, well, I'll eventually get around to this." I had a fellow write to me, a Rosicrucian, and he said, "Oh Rose, take it easy. You've got plenty of lives ahead of you." But let's deal with facts. What do we know for sure? We know today, not tomorrow.

But I'd say as far as the theories are concerned, as far as the *justice* is concerned, the Christian system doesn't have any justice in it – of course, if we gauge justice according

⁴³ South of Pittsburgh.

human standards. You know, God might like to eat us – maybe we're just being fattened up for a meal, a few million to a bite.

Reality

Q. You said the world is an illusion, but if you walked up and hit me, you'd have a hard time convincing me it wasn't real.

R. Well, it isn't too hard to see it. Because sooner or later in life, if you haven't already had one, you'll have a dream that is stronger than life. And you'll have to reconnoiter to see which is which. The reality of that dream will be so great that you will doubt that you're going to wake up, in daily life. So it's possible for the human mind to conceive of something more real than this objective existence.

I had a brother who got killed in the war; in fact he was killed off the coast of Florida here. And about a year later he started to show up. He'd show up at night and I'd say, "Why do you come at night? Why don't you come and talk to me in the daytime." And he reassured me that where he was, it was the same as where he had been – with the family. And I could accept that reality he lived in to such an extent that I had to get rid of him, because otherwise I would have joined him. That's the way the human mind works. This was day after day after day. And I said, "Hey, I love you, but I've got to play on this spot a little longer."

Q. Why is it that some dreams are more real? There's more color, more light, the people's voices are prettier, and everything is better, more alive.

R. Well, I don't think you're talking about everybody. Some people have nightmares.

Q. Or the reverse.

R. Yeah, they're glad they wake up. In fact, this objective life – this planet or play and the beings all around them – is basically a point of reference for them. And it's a good place to come in a nightmare, to get back here, to get back to *this* nightmare.

Q. Mr. Rose will be speaking at the Florida Society for Psychical Research⁴⁴ on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. in Hollywood. And Saturday night we're having a Round Table meeting,⁴⁵ which is already announced.

R. Art has the phone number and if any of you people want to get together, it's not that difficult. I'll be here through this week and I'm not going to be that busy. I'm not enamored with the town enough to be hitting the high spots. And of course tonight we're going to get together.

⁴⁴ Sunday is Nov. 3, 1985 – missing tape, if the event took place..

⁴⁵ Saturday is Nov. 2, 1985. So the date for this talk is less than a week before that.

See: <http://direct-mind.org/index.php5?title=1985-1102-What-Do-You-Know-For-Sure-Miami>

Q. I'd like to get your view on what you think lies ahead of us, from this plane on. You have this very large overview. What is ahead for humanity?

R. Well, number one, I believe that all people are immortal – automatically immortal. But I do not believe that we go to the same place.

Q. What do you mean by our being immortal?

R. Well, I believe that the awareness doesn't terminate. But you can't expect to advance into a dimension that you're mentally not prepared for, that you haven't vaccinated yourself to beforehand. If the mind with certain convictions and limitations lands in a certain place, it would consider it either oblivion or hell, or something of that sort.

And I base this upon a lot of evidence coming up today, solid physical evidence, in books by people who have explored life after death in the hospitals, the deathbed experiences: Raymond Moody,⁴⁶ Elisabeth Kübler-Ross,⁴⁷ Karlis Osis,⁴⁸ and Erlendur Haraldsson.⁴⁹ Amazing accounts. But they point to certain things; that there are different experiences after death. They come in clusters: there are clusters of people who meet their relatives; there are clusters of people who don't meet their relatives.

[end]

[see footnotes below]

⁴⁶ *Life After Life*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_Moody

⁴⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elisabeth_Kubler-Ross

⁴⁸ Karlis Osis, *At the Hour of Death*.

⁴⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erlendur_Haraldsson