

Richard Rose

Truth. Lies, Ultimate Reality

March 26, 1992 – University of Pittsburgh

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Tonight I'd like to begin by defining Zen, which in past talks I haven't bothered to do much. It's basically just a system, among others, of reaching a conviction that life exists after death – although I'm not saying that Zen advertises itself to do that. And I'm not going to dwell on the schools of Zen that are strictly yogic schools or exercises for the militia. They say that in Japan a lot of the people who wanted their sons to be officers in the army would first send them to a Zen school. I think that if a person's on a spiritual path, that's the last place he'd go – to a military school – and then try to apply Zen to that. I don't see how that would work.

I think my own direction came basically from a dissatisfaction. I was born and raised a Catholic, and in fact I studied to be a priest not too far from here.³ I took a little trip there not long ago with some of the boys who wanted to see the seminary – in Herman, Pennsylvania, near Butler – and the place was completely empty. Back then they had a student body of at least three hundred.

But this is found not in any religion, but by the determination of the individual – at least that's my belief. There may be other roads, other ways to get there. I've heard of cases where people would have a tremendous shock and their life would be changed tremendously.⁴

¹ Url: <http://direct-mind.org/index.php5?title=1992-0326-Truth-Lies-Ultimate-Reality-Pitt>

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² This is part 1 of 2. This lecture was followed a week later by a talk (same title but mostly different content) at Duquesne University, also in Pittsburgh: "1992-0402-Truth-Lies-Ultimate-Reality-Duquesne"

³ St. Fidelis in Herman, Pennsylvania. Ref: <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2003-12.htm> Also see p. 3 of talk in Miami, Florida: "1985-10-Theosophical-Society-Miami".

⁴ E.g., Paul Wood. <http://selfdefinition.org/christian/paul-wood-story.htm>

It's a search for the truth. You can't just go to church and become spiritual. You have to have a desire. We have words like *God* and we teach our children about God – in fact when I was a child I thought the priests were in touch with God. I thought that somewhere up on that altar they were whispering to the real Superself. I thought they were superhuman.

I'll never forget the time I ran into a boy I went to school with, and he was telling me how he had revered the nuns, and he said it kind of depressed him that he couldn't hold onto that. And I said, "I can tell you exactly what you thought, that in the nunneries there were no toilets." And he said, "You're absolutely right! As a child I didn't believe they had a toilet in the place."

Consequently, it takes a bit of common sense and determination, because you're surrounded by a system of lies everywhere you look. Religion is on the block wherever you go. And if you get the urge to become popular, and you want to, you can make money at it. I'd rather steal – not that I've done that – than to make money by telling a person something that might not do them any good, and which they couldn't prove, and maybe I couldn't prove either.

Zen

I'll dwell a bit on Zen: I studied with a fellow by the name of Pulyan;^{5, 6} I had already had my experience but I looked up this fellow. At that time he was in Connecticut, close to New York. He was a good man. He had no price. At the time, I had heard this word *transmission* and I realized that I couldn't transmit. So I went there and met the man, and stayed with him long enough until it entered my head. We can get into this in greater depth later on if you wish, that one of the things that happens to you – I don't know how many people it happens to – you get a very clear idea of the other person's head. And it doesn't take too long to get into harmony with it.

Incidentally, when I used to lecture here in Pittsburgh, I'd come up about once a week to the group meetings and we generally had 25 or 30 people. Also I have a place in the country, in West Virginia, so when school was out they'd come down and spend the summer with me – talking and reading and maybe just enjoying the summer. So that was the beginnings here. But of course the zeitgeist⁷ moves and changes, and what is acceptable or what people are curious about one year, they're not curious about the next. New things are set in place – and I noticed that the tide had changed.

I'll give you my idea of what caused the reception of Zen, and it's not very flattering. The majority of students who came to my talks in 1972 were taking LSD, marijuana, and maybe other drugs. No heavy stuff, and I don't think it hurt them too much, but if they kept their lungs full of marijuana, that might have bothered their brain over a period of time. Regardless, it did put their minds in a certain position – where the mind did not demand mathematical logic to prove the existence of God; they sensed that such was possible. They didn't have it but they

⁵ <http://www.selfdiscoveryportal.com/Pulyan.htm>

⁶ Also see: <http://the-wanderling.com/pulyan.html>

⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeitgeist>

sensed it. And by now some of them have hung around long enough to find that their time was spent valuably.

But now we're getting another change in the zeitgeist; I don't know what it is. There are things that come up – for instance, right before a war everybody goes crazy, and that's a bad time for holding a group of people together, looking for truth or anything else. And then as the war progresses, the spirituality comes back.⁸

But what I'm getting at is that the human mind is able to perceive things by instinct or intuition, that they can't get by logic. And to this day – I know that you survive death, this much I know – but exactly what the mechanics are in this next dimension, I can't give you the map. I can't give you an itinerary or an experience, except that I went there and made it back. And I don't think I "made it" back – I was thrown back. I fell, and when I woke up I was back in the room. This happened in Seattle, Washington.⁹

Search is necessary

But whatever helps a person find this, is good. This is more important than life. And you don't have to join a monastery and go through rituals or penances and that sort of thing. Penances I think after a while, the monks get proud of them; then the next step is they get masochistic. And that doesn't help.

If you're a man, you'll cross the threshold as a man, with a man's thinking. A woman will pick it up by intuition, and a lot quicker. But she will be slow to hold onto it, because she changes; her moods change every fourteen days.¹⁰ And this applies to anything the female is into. The male has the longer stretch of consciousness that he can apply, but of course he has his drives too, which can keep him from following the course. In other words, you've got to be able to put your whole self into it; you can't just say, "Well, I'm going to read a book or two, or I'm going to meet somebody."

I find that the older I get and the more I look into religions – including the one I was in – for some reason they have all degenerated; they're all slipping. And I think it's a shame, in a way, because the pursuit of truth, or the realization of truth, is more important than whether a church falls, or whether they build one. So these things had to happen.¹¹

But the real struggle goes on not so much in argument or preaching, but it goes on within yourself. You'll argue it within yourself, and you start realizing things. If you're a woman then you'll realize that you're subject to change; this is a step in the direction of honesty and simplicity. And the same with a man. If he realizes that he was born basically to be a rooster, and he enjoys playing the role of a rooster, he'll realize that he's playing an animal role – as

⁸ This talk was given one year after Gulf War 1.

⁹ In 1947. <http://www.richardroseteachings.com/about.html>

¹⁰ Rose: "A woman has 28 minds, one for every day of the month." Notes and Quotes, Part 3, Sexual Lifestyle, PDF. <http://selfdefinition.org/celebrity/quotes/richard-rose-notes-on-celebrity.htm>

¹¹ Churches fell.

every human being is. Every human being is an animal of sorts. And I think if you're enlightened someday and you come back, you'll rejoin the life of animal living; but of course at that time it won't matter so much.¹²

Maximum experience

I don't know how much you've read on Zen and I don't want to dwell too much on Zen. I don't know where it started, but there was Zen in China over a thousand years ago, from what I read of the history. It was called Ch'an in China. These are written accounts and there's no proof of these statements;¹³ we just know that there was Zen in Japan and China and many of the countries of Asia.

But I wanted to bring this out: We're getting into the subject of *enlightenment*; there are reports of this and it's not all fiction. Every religion has its enlightened people, every one. Now there's a word in Zen, *satori*, which is a Japanese word for the maximum experience – but I don't think this word spells it out. Because I used to read the accounts of people after they had an experience of what they called *satori*,¹⁴ and all I could pick up from it was "wow!" – you know, the unexpected has shown itself. There was some change in regard to their personality and that sort of thing, but the experience was very brief. And as I mentioned, I found out that the wealthy people in Japan who were preparing to send their children to military schools, always sent them to a Zen school first. And there used to be a bit of pride in the businessmen having studied in a Zen school. But one thing Zen does – it will make you think. A persistent attack on the human mind causes you to think.

Now let's get the requirements. We wonder what type of person would be enlightened, or could be enlightened. How can you tell an enlightened man from one who is not? This is very difficult. The only way you can tell is to talk to him, and then you might get a perception. But what happens when a person pursues this matter until the egg cracks, or the head comes up with a decision – along that road you develop a type of advanced consciousness, and it doesn't leave you. This is one of the marks. And I don't know that you could tell that by appearances; you have to be around them awhile.

One thing is, that certain things happen around a person who is enlightened. People can get healed, for instance. I never wanted to be a healer, because I saw so many of them who were phonies. But I do know that there's a better aptitude, when a person has reached this stage, for seeing what's wrong with the other person. Another mind faculty develops. But it doesn't happen overnight, it comes slowly. I was able to do this. I don't go out hunting for it, but if

¹² Paracelsus: "Man is a twofold being, having a divine and an animal nature. If he feels, and thinks, and acts as divine beings should act, he is a true man; if he feels and acts like an animal, he is then an animal, and the equal of those animals whose mental characteristics are manifested in him."
<http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-06-magic-and-sorcery.htm>

¹³ A wealth of information was published in later years.

¹⁴ E.g., Philip Kapleau, *Three Pillars of Zen*. No pdf, but audiobook here: <http://selfdefinition.org/zen/>

something comes up in front of me, then I'll do it. I have seen the effects, things that would change – with no cause.

Magic

When I first encountered this, it took me back to the days as a child when I was in an orphanage.¹⁵ We lived on a farm in Ohio and my mother put us in a Catholic orphanage in West Virginia so we would be sure to make it to school. One day it was snowing outside, and of course we'd like to go out in the compound and romp in the snow. It wasn't very heavy, the snow was just starting to come down. A little fellow, I'll never forget him, walked up and pressed his nose against the pane of glass and said, "Snow, snow, go away, come again some other day." And I walked up to him and said, "What on earth are you doing? We want it to snow." And he says, "Yes, but if it thinks we don't want it to snow, it will make it snow."

Do you catch the point? That the child, who couldn't have been over eight years old, saw a certain opposition somewhere; that when you wanted to do things, blocks were thrown up in front of you. So his idea was to oppose the opposition.¹⁶ Let's say if snow were vindictive, and we wanted it to snow, then we'd say for snow to go away. I never forgot that, because in later years I found out that this is the basis of magic. Real magic doesn't happen by logically deciding things, but by waiting for things to happen.¹⁷

Pulyan

How can you tell an enlightened man? Pulyan was sixty years of age when I met him,^{18, 19} and he could have passed as any New Yorker; he talked very much like one and he used four letter words whenever he was talking. If he attacked you, it was with vulgarity. And it caused me to hesitate for awhile to even have his friendship. I didn't care for his friendship; I didn't care for the vulgarity. But I realized later that he had no interest in trying to please; he wasn't running a confidence game, and he didn't care. The truth was the truth. There are things that people do, so the first thing is to admit what people do. Not that he was blatant, but he just used more than what I thought he should have. And still I don't see the point of it; you don't have to be spiritual, you don't have to be educated, all you have to do is read the paper and you'll realize that this is one of the worst wildernesses you'd ever want to fall into. Especially as viewed by a child – if he could see it as you see it, he wouldn't want to grow older, perhaps.

¹⁵ Photo at age 5. St. Alphonsus Orphanage. <http://www.richardroseteachings.com/about.html>

¹⁶ Negating the negative is similar to Rose's recommended path of reversing the error.

¹⁷ See Eliphas Levi, *Paradoxes of the Highest Science*, VII, "The Will Accomplishes Everything Which It Does Not Desire." <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/eliphas-levi/paradoxes/levi-paradoxes-7.htm>

¹⁸ Alfred Pulyan (1896-1966) <http://www.ancientfaces.com/research/person/9563355/alfred-pulyan-profile-and-genealogy>

¹⁹ Rose and Pulyan first corresponded in August, 1960.

Direct-mind experience

I wrote a book called *The Direct-Mind Experience*, and gave some lectures on it.²⁰ Our method – the method of finding anything – is not by algebraic symbols, adding up all sorts of mathematical formulas and statistics. Finding something, knowing something for real, is just going directly to it. When you do this with any philosophy, it comes much more quickly.

I think too, with the additive methods there's a chance in that being addictive. I know that there have been millions of people who went to church – as I did when I was a kid – I looked up at the preacher and thought he was a saint. But I've been reading in the paper recently where about six of those saints have been sent to prison for teaching the altar boys things they shouldn't have been teaching them. So you can't deify a person just because he wears a robe, or because he's been educated for twelve years in a profession.²¹

Incidentally, I remember when I was in college I got into a discussion about chemistry with one of the teachers – I majored in chemistry for awhile – and he said, "College is like a library; you go there to find out where the information is." Perhaps you get one book and it will tell you about another book. You go down to the library and look up the word you're following, and that's your means of communication, and ultimately your means of education. The only things the teacher's there for is to make sure that you get reminded every so often of the direction you're supposed to be taking.²²

Now on this direct-mind experience, I've got to tell you a very common story for you to get the picture of it. One time I got sick. I think I was sick of my wife at the time, but I don't know; I got deathly sick and I didn't want to shoot her, so I just held it within me. And I'd go down the street to a beer joint just to sit and get away from the house. They talked me into a nickel poker game, then a fifty-cent poker game, and a dollar poker game, and I lost and lost, until I lost a couple thousand dollars.²³ And later I thought, "I know what's happening, they're reading me." So I decided, "I'm going back and I'm going to call every bet unless I'm beat showing," that is, if they've got the cards turned up that beat me. And I went back and called their hands, and I got three times my amount of money back.

And what I attribute that to was, number one, that before, I had cared, I was tense. This time I knew the laws of averages, that I was going to get certain cards if I stayed in there long enough, and I was going to make them pay to see them. And it worked out. But also I'll tell you one of the things I did: I would need a card, or two cards – you can draw three cards in most poker

²⁰ The book is mostly a collection of transcribed lectures, plus a 30-page essay, "Notes on Betweenness". Published in 1985. <http://tatfoundation.org/direct.htm>

²¹ Paracelsus: "He who is dressed up like a clergyman is therefore not necessarily a spiritual person, although he may have been ordained by the Church. To be ordained by man does not imply the possession of spiritual power, because such a power can only be given by the spirit." (chapter 6) <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-06-magic-and-sorcery.htm>

²² Paracelsus: "What others may teach you may be good enough to assist you in your search for knowledge, but you should be able to think for yourself and not cling to the coat-tail of any authority, no matter how big-sounding the title of the latter. may be." (chapter 7 as above).

²³ The minimum wage in 1960 was \$1 per hour; times 40 hrs/week times 50 weeks/year is \$2,000.

games – and if a man was dealing I'd say, "Give me a king." And he turned it up and it would be a king. And I'd say, "Give me another king," and there would be another king. Now when this happens, what do you think? Do you get happy? Do you get greedy? No. You don't care. You don't care whether the king comes up, and you don't care if you ever win again. You never care – and you keep winning.

One time I came to the radio station up here to talk about my lectures at Pitt.²⁴ I was talking about this, which I call the direct-mind experience, and the woman interviewing me said, "I can't understand it." I said, "Did you ever play poker or throw dice?" And she says, "I know what you mean." I said, "Did you ever notice that the people who throw dice keep calling for the numbers they want, and invariably they don't get them?" They felt that by calling and screaming for their particular card or dice, that something would hear them. But when I played cards, I didn't try to win, and at the end of the game, which would be at one o'clock in the morning, we would go across the river into Ohio and I'd buy them all a steak dinner.

Of course, it was their own money; I had won it from them. But I didn't want their money. I only wanted to get back the couple thousand I had lost at the beginning. And I never cared much to play cards. I don't believe in employing it. But there are states of mind that I believe affect material;²⁵ and the only way you can prove it is to try it, and try it by not trying.

The next thing is healing, and you've got to go about it in the same way. Don't advertize yourself as a healer. But if somebody close to you is in trouble, do whatever you're told inside to do. Another thing that happened to me – I don't know where it came from – you have the ability to change certain things, and we also have the ability to cause. There are people here who can validate what I'm about to say: I have the ability at times to see through people, literally, and see dark spots, which represent infections or diseases.²⁶ Now this came from the same formula. I don't do it for money, and if I did it wouldn't happen. But I try and if it happens, it's wonderful. If it doesn't happen, it's not time, or maybe I'm wrong.

The truth

So what is the path? You don't need a Zen teacher. It's nice if you read books; it will put your mind in that direction. But the whole thing is finding the truth. You have to find the truth, but this is what we don't do. I realized that my failure as a five-year old child to question the so-called authorities led me into years of belief – which later I was accidentally spared from. Years later I was freed from it. But of course, what I *did* hunger for, which wasn't ego, was the truth. I didn't want power, I just wanted the truth. I wanted to know whether there was a God. I wanted to know whether I was going to live after I died.

²⁴ Missing tape of interview.

²⁵ Paracelsus: "Visible matter becomes invisible, and is acted on by the soul, and invisible matter becomes organised and is made visible again through the influence of the soul." Franz Hartmann, *Life of Paracelsus*. <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-06-magic-and-sorcery.htm>

²⁶ Paracelsus: "The inner man is the substantial reality, while the outer one is only an apparition, and therefore the true physician sees the real man, and the quack sees only an illusion." (chapter 8)

Then when I found this, I tried to pass it on to other people. But above all, you don't charge. I notice that when you came in tonight you paid some money at the back, and the only reason for this is that the group has to rent these rooms and it's kind of expensive; it doesn't come to me. And this is the way we operate.

Now the mind can settle itself, it can take a direction without ego. The other thing is that we always have to be able to recognize the truth. And I know what you're thinking, immediately: "What do you mean? – truth in what? truth where?" But it's basically truth everywhere. To me, society is in a turmoil because of the simple fact that there are vast thefts, irregularities, whatever you want to call it – millionaires dipping in for a billion – and they're doing it by not being truthful. So they get the money but they inherit a curse. By that I mean they're not happy. Because you can't stop; the temptation is that if you're ninety years of age and you've got a million dollars, you're going to go for another thousand or another hundred thousand, until you drop dead. And you don't leave much of a print anyplace with that.

I think we should teach our children the truth; but we don't do it. Any organization, including the government of a country, does not speak the truth. You can see it going on right now;²⁷ there are people dying to get in there who are professional liars, getting into a position where they can get more possessions and a lot more money, power.

So what goes on? What happens? We've got to start from the very beginning and question almost everything, even our parents, because they are our first teacher. We have to question them, not to be arrogant or that sort of thing – parents should be honest and I don't think they'd mind it – but I think they should be questioned of any belief. And I can remember when I started questioning my parents about religion – I got slapped; it was blasphemy. But it wasn't blasphemy, it was just a kid starting out on the path to the truth; he'd like to know the real instead of the fraudulent.

I've got some more things to cover, but let me interrupt this and get some questions from you about what you're interested in. There may be some of this that is gray to you.

[break in tape]

Male and female

Q. Could you explain more what you said about the differences between women and men in understanding Zen? You said that women have mood changes; does that mean that because we have periods, we can't understand? That we can't be enlightened?

R. By nature, men and women were created not to understand each other, and that's so they'd be foolish enough to reproduce. I don't think they'll ever understand each other – until many years go by and they get old, and that sort of thing.

Q. I'm talking not so much of understanding one another, but of understanding Zen philosophy.

²⁷ Primary races, March 1992: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1992_in_the_United_States

R. Oh, I'm glad you said that. The female mind is capable of religious conception long before the male. I maintain that the female has maybe been created with this, or developed it over a period of centuries, because she's the one who has to protect the children, the babies. And she has to be able to make instantaneous decisions; she has to *know*. She has to have a faculty even, that she'll sense when the predator is close. Consequently I think that that's the basis of the female direction. The male direction is one of *disregard*, because he disregards danger. And back from primitive times, if he didn't disregard danger he was lost, and his female mate and the children would also be lost. Consequently you've got two opposite types of people.

The male, the man, right down the line says, "I want proof." It's like with two primitive men in the prehistoric times, they're out in the country and they want to know whether the other fellow knows the right road. Maybe the fellow's just lying, to show he's an authority, or maybe he's going to direct him the wrong way. But the man is going to be angry if the fellow tells him a lie. That's what the male is interested in, the truth, basically. It starts off with very basic, primitive decisions.

Now he wants it, but he can't fight his way through it; he has to allow the thing to come to him, he has to keep struggling. The man is a spiritual warrior; he has to fight, whatever it takes. And maybe this means to avoid certain things, maybe a change of diet. When I was a teenager I would read a book on yoga and it would say to quit eating meat, so I quit eating meat. It's just a laboratory experiment then: we'll see what happens when we quit eating meat. I didn't receive any visions but I felt better; so I was a vegetarian for quite a few years

Also, for some reason, the woman, the female, can pick up a feeling of enlightenment, a feeling *for* enlightenment, whereas the man will spend many years perhaps in speculation and even ridicule. But anyway, there is a difference. And as the guy said, "Vive la différence."

Progression

Q. Do you see human beings as progressing from this primitive state, or that we still have not progressed at all?

R. I think we reached a certain peak, and I don't know why, but it seems that like every time there's a good situation that develops on the world scene, along comes a whole destructive mechanism. Nations go to war with each other and they kill off the best. This is one of the things that's not scientific. I always said that a fellow my age [75] would make a good soldier, because what have I got to lose? Two years, five years? But the boy 17-18 years of age has the energy to develop a nation. So I think this is backwards.

One truth

Q. Is there only one truth, or does everyone have their own truth?

R. Well, you've got your own truth about your toenails and I've got my truth about my toenails. But the one truth is the fact that what we discover is the same thing.

Q. So there's only one truth then; it's just that we might see it differently.

R. We do. Everybody has different words. When I got to looking into this thing I found all sorts of terms like satori, samadhi,²⁸ moksha,²⁹ salvation. And these mean different things to different people. But if you reach complete enlightenment, and somebody else reaches it, and you get together and compare notes, you'll find that you'll understand the other person.

There are incidents about it. I always read these little books that come out, like Moody's *Life After Life*^{30,31} If you get a chance, read some of them. These are medical reports about people who died. There was one in the paper here recently; some of you may have read it. They told this lady her mother had died, but when she went up to the hospital room her mother started moving, she started gasping for air. She had been pronounced dead and they already had her wrapped, all except for her face. So they called the doctor and they unwrapped her, and they hurried up and gave her attention and she lived. This was about a week ago that I read this. Today I picked up the paper and it said she died again.

But perhaps the mother did have time to tell them what happened the first time. It was amazing that they were able to revive her at all, because of the serious condition she was in. It was a freak awakening.³² So you get these accounts. There are different patterns: some of them see a tunnel, while others don't.. But I have never read of a single case where a person found God, meaning Mr. God, the only one.

Biology

Q. Could you talk about the paradox of yin and yang?

R. Yes, that's what we were talking about, with the male and female; it's paradoxical but it's necessary.

Q. Where does that come from?

R. Well, I think it comes from the same place that the mice and the cows and the humans come from – this is a developed aquarium; we are creatures developed from other creatures. And I think that in order to keep these creatures multiplying themselves, whoever was the head of the herd – you might call that God – would have to be kept very busy, mating people or injecting them with something to make them produce, like the chicken to lay eggs. But it's much easier just to instill instincts and urges within the person. Now they're still working with the chemistry of

²⁸ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samadhi>

²⁹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moksha>

³⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_Moody

³¹ Pdf: <http://selfdefinition.org/afterlife/>

³² See "The Lazarus Phenomenon", *Journal of Royal Science of Medicine*, December, 2007: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2121643/>

whatever causes these urges, still belaboring themselves with that. But basically, this is caused from somewhere else.³³

Q. You're talking about the theory of evolution.

R. Well, it's evolution of a sort. But if you ever stop and think about it – think of the fine details that had to be entered into, to create a neurotransmitter. A neuron is something so small we can hardly see it, but with our present technology we've discovered what it's composed of, we've got a name for these chemicals.

And incidentally, while you're talking about it, did you ever stop to question what thought is? Is it something that happens to you, or do you *have* it?

Q. It just happens.

R. Yes, it happens, but when they get into this neurochemistry, they find that it happens as a result of chemical changes. I was really surprised, just reading today, about what causes Alzheimer's disease. That it's a degeneration of cells in the brain, because some of the cells have committed suicide in order to allow the production of a thing called choline.³⁴ So the brain was eating itself. All this stuff means that you have a very intricate robot; possibly just a robot,³⁵ because we can't put our finger on it and say we're not going to allow something to happen, that we're not going to allow Alzheimer's disease. But it happens, and the reason it happens in my estimation is that the time has come to die. If you can't get the right vitamins to perpetuate that life, then he's going to die. And if you try to hold the life a little longer, then the brain cells are going to be devoured in the process.

Morality

Q. Do you think people are born with a basic sense of right and wrong, and society's programming covers that up as they get older? Because I've met children who know a lot more about Zen it seems than I could ever know.

R. Well, I don't think children are born with any sense of right and wrong. I don't think a cat was ever born with a sense that he shouldn't eat mice. He kills them. He murders them. And in one respect, we murder *each other*, sometimes quite openly. But what is the compulsion? That party may have been raised in a family who went to church and said that killing is wrong. Killing is not wrong. Don't get the idea that I want you to go out and shoot somebody. But nobody kills. We're just reactors; we don't *do*. That's the whole thing, to try to get to a point where you can *do*.

³³ Rose: "Nature consumes us. There is no escape; everybody is going to die from some sort of natural consumption. It is hard to submit to events that perpetuate a balanced natural aquarium that seemingly has no meaning. If we knew that this ferment of life led to a smile on some god's face, we might languish into death with some masochistic complacency." *Direct-Mind Experience*, p. 274.

³⁴ For example, see article from 1997, "Massachusetts General Hospital researchers connect Alzheimer's mutations to cell-death process." <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/1997/07/970718110026.htm>

³⁵ That is, something with a life of its own, its own programming, not subject to our will.

The experience

Q. What was your experience that put you on this path?

R. I don't think it was an experience, I think it was curiosity, and instinct perhaps. And it happened when I was quite young. I was quite young when it started.

Q. I thought you spoke of an experience of enlightenment.

R. Oh yes. I was thirty years old, though.

Q. Is it possible to describe that, in some limited way?

R. I could tell you what happened, that's the only thing I can describe. And I'll be very honest with you; don't think I'm drawing a grotesque picture just to entertain, but there were some grotesque things that happened.

I was about 29 years of age,³⁶ and I had followed all of these prescriptions for advanced spirituality. For instance, I became a vegetarian; I thought that would help, and I think it did help a little, because I think meat sometimes poisons your system. But I went by all the rules I could think of. And I got books – this is necessary. I studied Theosophy, and I've got a library yet at home of the books I read thirty years ago. I looked into everything, I looked under every rock, wherever something was mentioned. I would go around these organizations or groups that had people who were going to save you – and came away empty-handed. So besides making a living, I'd spend all the time I could reading esoteric literature or meditating. Of course I had been celibate too, and this is what I advise. I don't legislate, but I say you'll go a lot faster if you're celibate. So I was celibate, and after awhile it wasn't too difficult to maintain that.

And one day I came to the conclusion that I was wasting my time. I was getting absolutely nowhere. And I thought I might as well get married. I thought, "I'm getting close to thirty years of age and my hair is starting to fall out, my teeth are starting to fall out, and if I'm ever going to get a girl I'd better move." So I had met this girl in Columbus, Ohio, who was now in Seattle, Washington, and I asked her if she would consider marrying me. I hadn't dated her or anything; I had just been talking to her.

"Yes," she said; she would. So I got on a bus and went to Seattle.^{37, 38} And it just so happened that I heard her refer to me as "the country bumpkin" – I come from the farm, you know – and that was because one day I pulled that old-fashioned trick of not telling her when I was coming. So I surprised her, thinking she'd be happy. Instead, I caught her with her lesbian lover. So you

³⁶ Rose's experience occurred in 1947, soon after he turned 30.

³⁷ Rose first wrote to Robert Martin from Seattle on April 18, 1947. By then he was already working as a waiter at the Seattle Tennis Club, reporting a rocky experience with the woman. See letters from Rose to Martin, March through May, 1947, pages 18-22, *Peace to the Wanderer*. <http://selfdefinition.org/rose/>

³⁸ Rose also applied for a Merchant Marine seaman's card, which was issued in Seattle on May 12, 1947, See image of card with photo of Rose: <http://selfdefinition.org/rose/richard-rose-mariner-card-1947.htm>

see, there's always adversities on every field. And of course to me it read, "Back to the drawing board, son. It isn't time."³⁹

So I left. I had gotten a job as a waiter at the Seattle Tennis Club. So I continued to hang around, got into the library again and found books that I couldn't find in Wheeling, thinking I'd spend a little time there before going back to West Virginia. I had a room in a hotel, not an apartment or anything, just a place to sleep. I'd go home in the evening and I'd sit on the bed. They had one of those old-fashioned beds with a headboard on it, and I'd cross my toes underneath me and lean against that to keep from falling over. And I'd sit there and read or think.

And sitting there one day I got a tremendous pain in the top of my head, right in the center. And I knew it was going to kill me. I knew that whatever it was, I couldn't survive it. And the first thing I thought was, "Almost three thousand miles from home – how are they going to get the body back to West Virginia?" And not too long after that I went out, I went unconscious. I remember going to the window, looking through the glass, stepping through the glass, and looking down at the people on the pavement. And then I looked up at the Cascade Mountains, they were snow-topped, and I thought, "That's where I'm going." And I did. It was like Flash Gordon – zip, I went right for the mountains.

And when I got there, there was no snow. There was nothing there, nothing that the Cascades would look like. But I was standing there, and I knew that I had made it. And I knew that this wasn't earth. But I was tremendously happy, tremendously sure that I'd made it.

Memory

Another thing was the memory. When I was there I had a memory of the earth, and when I came back from it, I had a distinct memory of what happened there, just like I'm telling you now. So the memory was carried across. And this is something worth thinking about: Where is the memory in a person?

We think it's in the brain, but it doesn't have to be. I maintain that whenever anything happens to you, it records in different parts of your body. We've got memories in the synapse, memory in the DNA, memory in the genes.⁴⁰ How does all this stuff get around through the body? Here is just an animal walking around – but he's studying philosophy, he's memorizing words, and some of them are going to his brain, some are going to his genes. But why the synapse? No medical source has ever demonstrated why there had to be a spark jump.

A synapse is similar to a spark plug in an automobile. The impulse comes in and it hops across a space. Why this space? Because the space is where the mind is, the mind that is not physical.

³⁹ Rose reports this to Martin a week after this happened, in a letter dated May 11, 1947, saying he was still working as a waiter, 12 hours a day, and was expecting to go to sea soon. In this letter Rose also lays out the groundwork for a spiritual organization ("a circle with no head or tail") that he wanted to form with Martin.

⁴⁰ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genetic_memory_\(biology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genetic_memory_(biology))

So it's not a physical mind. This is the only way I can explain the possibility of a person leaving his body, going up on the ceiling – which is quite common during an operation⁴¹ – he's dying, they count him off as dead, and then somehow he gets back into the body. But all that stuff is recorded; he realizes everything he's going through, he watches the operation, he remembers the conversations in the room, but he's physically unconscious. They gassed him to perform the operation.

So I contend that the memory of everything we do, say or think is recorded in a space – where the human soul is also receptive. The human soul interlocks this physical being here, but not in a way we can get a clear a picture of. But regardless, it has to do something of that sort for the soul, once it's out of the body, to remember anything.

We remember *here* because we're drawing from our memory bank, the brain if that's possible; we're drawing from the individual cells and their DNA or genes. But when a person dies and goes someplace, he remembers it, and that memory comes back when he wakes up, when he comes back to this mind.

I saw myself [on earth] when I was out there. And I saw a lot of people too. In fact, I wonder somewhat about the different places you land on when you die. They're not all quite the same. But I realized that I was able to do anything or see anything I wanted to. And my first reaction was, "Where are the people on earth? I wonder if I can see them." And immediately I saw them, millions of them.

So this in my estimation gives you some validity for what you see while you're dead or unconscious.

Trauma

I was all by myself when I went out to Seattle. Of course, the girl and I broke up, so naturally I'm not going around her house. I knew no one else in Seattle; I was totally alone and helpless. So I had to sweat it out. When I woke up I wasn't ready to live. I didn't care to live. I preferred to be dead, I preferred to return – which was impossible, it wasn't happening. And I walked the streets in pretty bad shape. I mean for possibly seven consecutive days I couldn't stop weeping, which isn't my nature.⁴² So finally I decided that the way I'm going to stop this is to get out of town, I'm too close to it. So I caught a bus and came eastward.⁴³

But of course that didn't stop it; I mean, it took away the misery. In fact, I was so obsessed with death at the time, that I was looking over the bridges in Seattle. But the bridges were low and the water was shallow, and I thought that maybe if I dove off I might just get my head stuck in the mud. So I put in another day of sweating it out. Finally the Greyhound people solved the problem for me to a great extent; I just got away from that part of the country. But the return to

⁴¹ Rose is referring to his brother's experience after an automobile accident in Oklahoma.

⁴² This evokes Rose's koan of whether life can be known without an understanding of death.

⁴³ Rose writes Martin from Seattle on May 15, 1947 saying he is "in trouble" and is heading east to visit Martin, then in Cleveland, to arrive at the Greyhound station on May 19.

this lifestyle is tremendously painful. At least it was for me. I can't speak for other people; they're not all the same.

Ego illusion

Q. Zen is often described as an escape from ego, a loss of ego. And yet what you describe seem as maybe the maintenance of ego, even beyond death. I wonder if you could reconcile those two.

R. I don't understand – when I was talking about Zen I said what?

Q. It's my understanding, from my readings of Zen, that one of the critical characteristics is the realization that the ego is illusion.

R. That's true.

Q. So if the ego doesn't exist in this life, it's hard to see how it would carry on into another.

R. Well, I don't say that it would. I think you're *without* ego then. I think I was without ego even when I came back. But don't get the idea that the ego is something criminal. Without that we wouldn't keep our head fat, and if we didn't have a fat head we wouldn't try to live. We've got to have that pride to live. We look in the mirror and admire ourselves, and that stimulates the bloodstream, you live a little longer.

Q. So then what does it mean to you that ego is illusion? What is illusion?

R. Well this whole planet is an illusion.

Q. The planet?

R. You. Everybody.

Q. But if I'm an illusion, then if I die, how will I still be here?

R. The guy who's talking will die, but you won't. You are two people. What you see is an illusion, but your inner self, your real self, is not an illusion. Your real self finds a home in a setting that is not this illusion. My feelings are – I can't prove it – that this planet is also an illusion. This creation, however it's spun – from what head I don't know, but whatever it is – it's spun in such a manner that this illusion is maintained for some reason.⁴⁴ Now what the point of that is, I don't know. Nothing can be stated without taking the possibility that the opposite also exists.

Q. You're saying that life is a dream. And we have a lot of dreams, maybe an infinite number of illusions, maybe in multiple dimensions, and we can stroll into different illusions to gain different experiences.

⁴⁴ Paracelsus: "The great world is only a product of the imagination of the universal mind, and man is a little world of its own that imagines and creates by the power of imagination." (chapter 6)
<http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-06-magic-and-sorcery.htm>

R. You're going to have a circus, going from one to another.

Q. Is that what you're saying? That we dream these experiences, we're living in an illusion right now; that we condense ourselves within that dream or illusion and live out these experiences, and maybe we can go live in another one, maybe the opposite, as you say?

R. Well, I don't argue with any of your maybes, because I don't know what possibilities are ahead.

Q. That maybe there are an infinite number of possibilities, that these opposite points are infinite, and if we experienced these infinite points, maybe that's what life is?

R. Well, I can see what your direction is. You're thinking, "What's the sense of having illusions, when somewhere there must be reality?" And I agree with you.

Q. Well, that the illusion *is* the reality, if you make the right choice.

R. No, no. I'm saying we have to decide that which we consider the most illusory. That there are things that are more eternal or more indestructible than we are. And I think there's a part of that in every person – there's a part in every person that is indestructible, that is not an illusion. When I speak of illusion I'm talking about bodies, basically.

Heaven

Q. How do you define heaven then, as far as a reality different from our own?

R. If you're talking about a realization or experience – this only happens in relation to a world that, after we've lived awhile, we become disgusted with, and we realize that we're not the ones doing it. That we seem to be thwarted, outwitted and used. And after so much of that type of thinking, you realize that this body is not going with you. We've got cemeteries as witnesses that these bodies don't leave here. Consequently, if there is a human, a person called Richard Rose, he'll be someplace else. Abbot and Costello worked that out very carefully on the ball diamond.⁴⁵ If he ain't here, he must be someplace else.

Q. There have been a couple of occasions in history where the body does leave; one I heard of in India sometime in the last hundred years, and the other was about two thousand years ago.

R. Well, it's in the Catholic Bible, that they took someone up in a chariot and he didn't come back. Of course, these are written accounts,⁴⁶ and I'd like to see it.

Q. If somebody told you they had an experience where they knew they had left earth and then came back, would you believe them?

R. I could believe them after I talked to them awhile.

⁴⁵ "Who's on first?"

⁴⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entering_heaven_alive

Q. So you think it is possible?

R. Oh, sure.

Spark gap

Q. You were talking a moment ago about the synapse, the fire, the spark, and you were talking about the mind, where it is, and that memory can be stored in places in the body. But can't the mind also be the consciousness that's within all the universe? And that when you're talking about thought happening to us, you're talking about actuating this stream of consciousness from the universal or cosmic mind that comes through each one of us?

R. But you see what you're doing: I'm having a hard time just defining the mind, and you threw the cosmic at me.

[Some joking from the lady as she says she's from West Virginia.]

R. Okay, give me the question again.

Q. Don't you think – because life has to do with the fact that we're living in an electromagnetic matrix, and we're all part of that electromagnetism – that there in that space, where that spark of fire is, that synapse, that jump – that's where it's all happening? Because as you say, the body is not real, so it's happening in that space. But that space does exist, both within and around us.

R. Yes, but ...

Q. And what occurred to me when you were talking about thought just happening, then this thought happened to me; it just came to me out of who knows where. Well, thought is happening to us because it's in the cosmic consciousness that's within all the universe, probably streaming through that synapse, streaming through that fire ...

R. Yes, but that's a concept.

Q. Well, I don't know whether it's a concept or not, but it just seemed to make scientific sense from your description; that's what I heard when you were talking.

R. Well, I'll be honest with you, I don't know anything about the infinite. I don't pretend to know. I don't pretend to know what would have happened had I spent more than one day up there; I don't know what I would have found. But the only thing I found was a tremendous happiness. Now that might be an illusion too. It could have been that certain things could cause the illusion of happiness.

Cosmic consciousness

Q. Did you ever really try to find out – since you were so happy there – why you didn't spend more than one day there? I mean, what really made you come back?

R. I didn't have any control over it. You don't have any control. We're just like the mosquitoes and the other animals; we can't call the shots. A person's just lucky if they have an experience of any sort. I set out to cause it and I couldn't. I didn't cause it. An accident caused it.⁴⁷

Q. Right out of that cosmic consciousness, it just happened.

R. Well, "cosmic consciousness" of course is just a word. Richard M. Bucke⁴⁸ wrote a book on it, and that's the name of the book, *Cosmic Consciousness*.⁴⁹ Now the experience he describes⁵⁰ is what I would call *kevala samadhi*.⁵¹ Ramana Maharshi describes the two different types of samadhi, symbolically. One is the bucket in a well; you lower a bucket into the well, and when it comes back up it's full of water.⁵² It's a marvelous experience, cosmic consciousness, and Bucke thought this was the total enlightenment. I don't agree with him. I do think he experienced it. But afterwards, the well and the bucket disappeared and he was back, standing and looking at the sky, on the porch where it happened.

But the other, which Ramana Maharshi called the final samadhi, which is sahaja samadhi,⁵³ was where a drop of water falls into the ocean. This is a pretty good analogy, because in reference to the possible space we can see with our telescopes, or the pictures the astronauts take in outer space, we're a drop in the ocean. But in this experience the person loses his identity to a great degree. But yet he doesn't totally. You can't see the drop once it falls, but that drop is still there, the spirit of that person is still an individual. And that is the difference. One can return and not have any experience except something mechanical. And the other enters the stream and doesn't return.

Spiritual experiences

All attempts to describe this in human language can't match the experiences. And people have different shades of that. There are different types of experiences, and I don't know why they're different. For instance you hear the story of the fellow who swears off the whiskey because he's seen the light. Well, these are spiritual people; they're doing something very valuable. But what

⁴⁷ Rose: "What happens is that you are forced into it. No one really succeeds in following the blueprint for a spiritual awakening or an accumulation of power. What happens is that he just keeps driving. ... A person on the spiritual path lives this every moment, every day of their life; they push, and push, and push... and then nothing logical, mental or verbal can explain what happens -- an explosion. Your being changes." From 1980-Psychology-of-Miracles-aka-Betweenness-Columbus, published as Chapter 6, "Lecture on Betweenness" in *Direct-Mind Experience*.

⁴⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Maurice_Bucke

⁴⁹ Pdf here: <http://selfdefinition.org/christian/>

⁵⁰ Rose erroneously states that the experience happened to Bucke in Canada, but it occurred during a visit to London, England.

⁵¹ Kevala nirvikalpa samadhi, where kevala = not permanent. <http://www.helium.com/items/1360138-what-is-nirvikalpa-samadhi>

⁵² That even while the bucket is still in the well, the water in the bucket is considered to be separate from the rest of the water in the well.

⁵³ Sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi, where sahaja = natural or spontaneous.

he's trying to do is save his body. He doesn't know anything much about a spirit. He knows he's going to kill himself if he goes on drinking.

So there are different experiences, and every little bit of effort counts for something. But you have to be careful of taking too many images. We have a cemetery back home, and the people who bought the ground put in a statue so they could sell more grave lots. They presumed it was the Blessed Virgin, you know, the Christian idea, with the arms outstretched. So one night they had the floodlight turned on, and this local fellow who didn't know what they were doing passed by there and he was drunk. And he turned around and went back into the church and took the oath; he was going to quit drinking. He thought it was the Blessed Virgin that appeared to him. But it was a combination of the floodlight and the fact that he was drinking too much.

So these are the different extremes in people's spiritual experiences. I think a lot of people see what they'd like to see. But I think if it comes as a shock to you, that is more evidential.⁵⁴

Reality

Q. What do you think of the relationship between reality and time?

R. Well, first you'll have to define reality, and then I'll try to find out it's relation to time.

Q. I was going to work off your concept of reality.

R. [laughs] I didn't give a concept of reality.

[break in tape - missing question]

R. The fact is we like to say we did it, after it happened.

Q. You suggested earlier that if you wanted to win at a poker game, the best thing is not to care about the game?

R. Right.

Q. Are you suggesting that in order to find the truth we should separate ourselves from our wants and our needs?

R. Possibly. I tell you, when I quit fighting, that's when things happened. I was spending 24 hours a day trying to find the truth, and finally I gave up. I just said, "This is it. I put an honest effort into this and it hasn't worked. I haven't gotten anything." And I made up my mind that I was going to get married; to do what any good animal should do. If you can't find spirituality, go out and raise a family. But I think that both are true, fighting and giving up.

⁵⁴ Reference to Blavatsky. (source not identified yet)

Now earlier I was talking about a mind condition that develops after you have more or less discovered the capital “r” Real. I’m saying that these things can come into effect if you want to help your fellow. That’s all they’re good for; they don’t raise your spiritual essence one iota. But you *can* help other people. In history there have been people who can do little things, and they’re not all the same either.

Q. Is there anything that frightens you? What gives you courage?

R. Mmm – I don’t know. I think maybe we all react differently. But it hasn’t been my philosophy, I’ve just never been afraid. I won’t walk into a propeller of an airplane just to show I’m not afraid, but I’ve been in some tight situations. I don’t think it has anything to do with my philosophy; it’s just a peculiarity.

Afterlife

Q. I’ve noticed that in most western religions, people have to sort of earn their ticket to the afterlife. But do you think maybe we’re all entitled to the afterlife, just because we’re human beings? Secondly, do animals have souls also? You seem to support that, that they’re in evolution, and it would make sense.

R. I don’t know the percentages of people who have experiences. But I think that everybody lives after death. Everybody. I haven’t talked to enough dogs and cats to know whether any of them have been over there and back, but I’d say it’s possible that they do too.

Basically, the only reason for this thing of enlightenment – it looks like the game is fixed, and you want to find out the rules, if possible, to get a little advance knowledge.⁵⁵ And every man fears – just the same as a dog; if a dog is smashed up by a car, he’s going to complain, he’s dying. And I think there’s a sense of death, a sense of danger in animals. They get away when they see it’s too dangerous; they have that fear of death as well.

The fear of death is put into us. I always pictured that we’re some sort of robotic creature that’s put here for a purpose, and we’ll be able to leave when we’ve done what we’re supposed to do. Meaning – that when a cat has so many kittens she dies. People reproduce, and then, just like when fall arrives, the leaves come off the tree. Everything comes and goes.

I think there *is* an essence. But I can’t say, and nobody knows, where for instance this inner mind or memory is grafted onto let’s say an astral body and its appendages.⁵⁶ There’s nobody who has found that out; there’s nobody who has even speculated on it. They just say, well, the whole being is going [to the afterlife]. And perhaps the cats, the dogs, the animals, may be involved too.

⁵⁵ Paracelsus: “If a man is to go to a certain place, it will be useful to him to know all about that place before he goes there; he will then after his arrival be enabled to move about freely, and to go wherever he pleases.” <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-06-magic-and-sorcery.htm>

⁵⁶ The appendages being the physical body.

Of course, I'll be honest with you, I can't see that the evolution of the planet or anything on it has anything to do with real life. We're sitting inside a creation which very well could be a chicken-coup type of adventure. That we're all chickens in the chicken coup, we lay so many eggs and then we're allowed to go.⁵⁷

Drugs

Q. It seems that earlier you indirectly endorsed the use of marijuana and LSD to study the human mind.

R. No, I never endorse it. Because while it gives them a certain leeway or leverage, it also can clog up the thinking processes. Marijuana seems to do the least damage, but when you get into cocaine or heroin or something like that you've got a lot more brain damage. Consequently, there may be wonderful visions seen, but you may pay a tremendous price. That's the catch.

So I'm not advising marijuana. Incidentally, of the people who came, the hundreds who actually came down to my place, you can count on two hands all of them who dedicated themselves to finding the truth – although they did have the intuition. But I do say that the intuition is abetted by certain drugs, possibly because it momentarily frees the anxieties of the physical body and the physical urges. But I don't know for sure. I just found that to be the case.

Morality

Q. Do you think that morality is ultimately something that will determine what kind of path your life will have, or is it just like an illusion?

R. I really don't know. I don't conceive of a hell or a heaven, a polarity in the next dimension. I don't see that. So I don't imagine that what a person does would affect that – anything that you do. We're not too responsible; we're just reacting to our mechanism. When you read in the paper about a killing, that guy is reacting to something.

Q. Most people who commit crimes, choosing the evil if you want to call it that, are usually exceptions to the rule. The majority of people choose the good over the evil.

R. The majority of people are weak and cowardly. And that's the reason there aren't more killings. [laughs] In other words, they're impressed by law. But the killer's a free man. I'm not advising anybody to go kill anyone; I'm just defining things a little.

Q. Then is there any reason to try to lead the good life? What incentive is there then? It almost seems like a cop-out, to say it's all deterministic and we have no control over it.

⁵⁷ Rose from *Psychology of the Observer*: "And yet this destiny [of the Umpire] is such that it makes all things secondary to it. It is the plan of Nature, and the blueprint for the balanced aquarium of life. It has no consideration for the spiritual hopes of man. ... it draws the blinds of drowsiness over the minds that speculate too long on immortality and the disciplines for guaranteeing spiritual survival." As quoted by John Kent, chapter 15: http://www.searchwithin.org/johnkent/Chapter_15.html

R. Well, I don't say that you don't have any control over it. I think that possibly the great chemistry is *desire*. What causes the chemical changes is your desire. We're ignorant, so what do we desire? We desire to get beyond our ignorance. And that's the reason we go to church and embrace religion; because we're not satisfied with the answers we're getting, or the things that are caused to happen to us. So we look for something to excuse it.

Q. Have you ever made an attempt to re-experience the initial day of your enlightenment? If so, how, and if not, why not?

R. [Didn't hear the question clearly.] Because if I shoot myself I wouldn't be here talking. I've got to say a few things before I make the trip. I figure it will happen. I don't have to worry too much; it's not too far up the road.

Q. So you don't believe that you'd survive another experience?

R. Oh, I'm not saying I wouldn't survive it. But I have no means of going out and searching for it, except just meditating, thinking and that sort of thing. If I thought I'd be promoted from the junior class to the senior class, I'd go back and see what I could find. But I don't think I'll discover anything new; maybe something a little different but nothing new.

Control

Q. I've been taught all my life that control is an illusion, that we have no control over certain processes, that you're prone to do certain things and they just happen. Do you believe that control is an illusion, or do you believe you can actually control things?

R. Well, what you can do – I'm not saying you can pick a certain thought and say, "I'm going to weld that into my consciousness," or anything of that sort – but you can avoid the opposite. The instructions are *not* to go out and preach or proclaim, but basically to avoid the things that are interfering with your thinking processes. Or maybe adopt something as an experiment; that's the reason that we negate certain things like eating meat or having sex.

Down the line you run into somebody, or you read a book, and it says, "Why don't you try going without sex?" It's like using a chemistry cookbook, or a kitchen cookbook: You want to bake a cake, so you've got to get the ingredients, but you don't know what they are. Maybe you've got a bag of flour at hand but not the technique. Maybe it would take you a year just fooling around to come up with the same formula that some other woman had for baking the cake.

Well, this is what we're doing with our lives. We don't know where we're going. So you just try what the authorities say. The authorities are the preachers, the authors – some people don't preach, they just write books – the old scripts from ancient times. If the fellow is speaking the truth, there's a chance to learn from his lifetime, especially if he's known in history as being a unusual person. So it's just a matter of desperation, and where do you grab? You grab for literature, you grab for a teacher. And you slip repeatedly, until sometime you run across a situation, or a book, and the book does the trick. Whenever I hear people say they were

impressed by this or that, I say good. Any type of experience gives you a hint that there's balm in Gilead,⁵⁸ that it's not all hopeless. This is what's important.

Reverse path

That gives you courage and determination, to adapt, to focus. You can't focus *at*, you focus *away from*. You can't focus on truth – it's not a physical object – we've got to focus away from untruth, which we more or less can recognize. Now when I'm saying "untruth", if you lie to the cop on the corner about a nickel in a meter, that's not untruth, that's just living, that's survival. But untruth is when you lie to yourself.

And that's what you find, that you're lying to yourself. That will happen. And when you begin to remove that, you'll start to expand. And incidentally, that's the reason for communal living, because that helps you do it a little faster. They call it joining a monastery, but it's just associating with people who have the same direction. If you loaf with these people, they'll prod you, they'll point out your egos. And you will realize that you're an inflated animal, after you get to accepting the fact that you do have these egos. That's the best explanation I have for a spiritual path in everyday life.

Soul progression

Q. You were talking about the transition experience you had, and it sounded like the entity you were describing was *soul*. Do you believe in souls?

R. I don't disbelieve. But what we're saying is that if this is phony and I'm still talking, there must be something that's real.

Q. Do you think the soul can progress after it leaves the body, to go on to a different level?

R. I have no idea. I don't think anybody does. Do you mean progress after you're dead? No. I think there's all sorts of literature that's been made on that, but I don't see the basis for it. Because there haven't been too many people who went over and came back. For instance I'll tell you candidly, I didn't meet anybody when I made the trip. I met no one. I saw the people, but I didn't talk to them. It was supposed to have been the human race, you know, I was curious to see them. But that could have been imposed. It could have been projected from some camera onto my consciousness so I would have something to report when I came back. I don't know.

Judgments

Q. You seem to have a concern between what's true and what's not true, as the product of your experience. Is it constant? Do you always have that sense? Are you sometimes less sure – say making a particular judgment between A and B?

⁵⁸ Jeremiah 8:22.

R. Oh, I have to be continually making a judgment, and being suspicious of my own judgments. I have to. This is a mundane factor.

Q. Is there a quality that you detect when like you're more sure?

R. Oh yes. That's the reason I mentioned this idea a little while ago, that there's a condition you can get into by not desiring, that leaves the door open for acquisition, or for changing something. It only happens when – you're not doing it for money, you're not desiring anything. That's the reason why I went through that little story about the kid looking out at the snowflakes. I saw it in the child. He sensed it. He sensed that his craving something wasn't going to get it for him, necessarily.

God and miracles

Q. You say we're all searching in life and we don't know exactly where we're going ...

R. Everybody is worrying, searching and struggling for the truth. Everybody is.

Q. Okay, but what I'm saying is, you say we don't know exactly where we're going, that we have to find out. Do you believe that there's any kind of a God that actually helps us do this?

R. I never saw one.

Q. Even though in your experience you never saw one, how can you say there isn't a God? In other words, how can God not be there? How can you prove the unknown?

R. Exactly. You answered your own question. God is unknown.

Q. How do you know it's not a God that's helping you?

R. It could be Mephistopheles too. He might have done it.⁵⁹

Q. Okay, are you saying that you can't ask for anything of this God, and it definitely will not occur?

R. Did you ever conceive how big "God" would be?⁶⁰

Q. It's the universe; God is in every one of us.

R. Okay. Now do you think he's worried about every *ant* that wants something?

Q. Maybe. Maybe if God is us.

R. Maybe, maybe. You're running your whole show on "maybe".

⁵⁹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mephistopheles>

⁶⁰ See "Scale of the universe": <http://htwins.net/scale2/>

Q. [Long reference to a spiritual experience that happened to him, which he considered a miracle; therefore he believes that there is a God and disagrees with Rose.]

R. Well, did you see him?

Q. I didn't see God but I saw a miracle. If you want me to say what the miracle was, it might take a minute to explain, or to clarify. Shall I go on?

R. Well, no, what this whole thing – this originated from some understanding or some belief that the people who believed in God were right. And there's nothing criminal about belief, but nevertheless you can't make everything right that people believe. There are a lot of beliefs. Like the continent of Atlantis – we don't know whether Atlantis existed, but a lot of people believe it did.

Q. But what if it came out of the sea and therefore existed, and that would be a miracle?

R. No, it wouldn't be a miracle, it would be a natural thing that was there all the time.

Q. Well if somebody asked God for it to appear, and then it did ...

R. Don't get me wrong; I'm not trying to negate your experience, whatever you had. It's just alien to my view of things, let's put it that way.

Q. It didn't happen to you and therefore you don't know about it. But I'm saying it happened to me.

R. How did you know it was God?

Q. Well, should I say this thing rather quickly?

[Other audience members say no. Rose says to let him speak.]

[Long story how at ten years old he lost his dog and his mother told him that if he wants the dog to come back he should pray. So he prayed, "If there is a God, I want my dog back right now, on the count of three." He counted, and as soon as he said "three" his mother called him from the house saying that the dog had been found.]

Q. I'm just saying that Mr. Rose doesn't acknowledge God because he's never experienced it.

R. See, I'm not defining it but you are.

Q. I'm not saying that you disagree with me.

R. No, no. You've got to define it.⁶¹ And why was God running around helping dogs when he could have helped a million starving people or something?

⁶¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell's_teapot

Love

Q: [the lady from WV] I want to go back to the point where you said that the killer is a free man, and from that I understand you to mean that because he has courage, he's not afraid to take a chance, and just does it.

R. Yes.

Q. But by the same token, isn't a lover, especially one who is loving not along the line of prescribed familial structure, someone who is a very loving person, perhaps with unknown people or whatever, isn't that person also a free person?

R. Did you ever think about talking to the great lover of Wisconsin, Jeffrey Dahmer?

Q. Oh, well, that's not love.

R. He loved them. Every one of them that he ate, he loved.

Q. Oh, c'mon, Mr. Rose. Now I'm just going to get out my paddle if you keep this up.

R. [laughs]

Q. You know exactly what I mean. A great man, like Yeshua, who later on was renamed in Greek, Jesus Christ, who was a great lover of mankind, and a great healer. And he did exactly what you said – he didn't go out and tell everybody that he was great, that he was a lover, and he was a healer. And yet, there was great love streaming through him, which was healing for all around. And he was also a marvelous teacher.

R. Yes, but you see ...

Q: So what I was saying, isn't the lover, the teacher, just as free as the killer, in the society? That's what I'm asking you. I'm asking you a question.

R. It just ...

Q: And I don't want to hear about Dahmer.

R. [laughs] Is this Friday?

Q. Thursday.

R. Well, we can still eat meat on Thursday. Anyhow – what you're talking about is – I'm not arguing about the belief in Christ or anybody's belief at all.

Q. I'm not talking about belief either.

R. Well, what are you talking about?

Q. I'm talking about a manifestation of love that's something that makes you very ...

R. Well, when you use the word *love*, you're believing.

Q. Oh!

R. Oh, nothing. Get down to brass tacks. We don't know what love is. That's a word. It's a word used mostly to hurt people, a word used to sucker somebody in and then put the ...

Q. It's been misused so much that most people don't know what it is.

R. Yeah.

Q: In fact, real love, most people are frightened of it, because they're not used to the manifestation of it. But that does not mean it doesn't exist in the universe. So if you don't like my mentioning love in conjunction with the man known as Jesus Christ, why don't you define it for us?

R. Define what?

Q. Love.

R. I'm not too concerned in spending much time discussing stuff that is not essential.

Q. You don't think love is essential in the universe?

R. I don't think it's going to, by one iota, cause the astronauts to discover a new planet or you to have a happy marriage or anything of that sort.

Q. Why isn't it synonymous with truth? I don't think there's any difference between love and truth.

R. Well that's your privilege. But even the dictionary won't agree with you.

Truth

Q. [somebody else] What *is* essential, please?

R. Essential? Truth. The truth will make you free. Christ said it. She was talking about Christ, but Christ said the truth will make you free. And it's alright to follow that; it *will* make you free. You'll find out the answer.

But you're digging for the truth, not for speculation. Don't believe what I tell you. I'm not saying that. Don't believe what I say. I have no formula. I can't say that if you want to get enlightened go hunt up some lesbian and try to make love to her, and your head will pop off and you'll have a trip and you'll arrive. That's nonsense. That only worked for me.

[the lady laughs]

R. It's just wonderful to see her happy. I have no love in me, but I like that happiness.

Q: You're a comedian.

Celibacy

Q. You were talking about celibacy and its connection with enlightenment. Why would sex get in the way?

R. Well, sex is the death of the human being, and you want to postpone your death as long as possible. And it's a mental death long before the physical death. So to keep your wits about you, to keep your energy, this has been done. Let's say it's a long shot, if you don't believe it. That's what it was for me, a long shot.

I was just doing some reading about the Cathars;^{62,63} a fellow sent me some clippings and I've always been interested in them. Incidentally, the title of my book *The Albigensians* was due to my respect for the Albigensians. And when I read the history of them⁶⁴ – that the Catholic Pope killed the purest people in Europe – it really went against the grain with me, and I didn't feel so bad when I quit going to church. Because I saw that the religion was not something to make people closer to God, it was something to keep a body of people in charge of certain countries in Europe. It was for power, in other words; it wasn't a search for truth.

Consequently, in the pursuit of wisdom – I'm not advising you – I'm just saying I adopted celibacy because my intuition told me to. And this is quite common in most places except the United States; we're advocating quite the opposite. Instead of celibacy we're advocating familiarity of all sorts.

Q. Why is sex the death of the human being?

R. Well, it takes you into a position that ages you more rapidly than if you weren't a breeder, that's all. And it clogs the mind so that the only thing you can think about is the treadmill that the squirrel is on.

Q. Are you including masturbation in that?

R. Absolutely. When you talk about celibacy, that means no release of sex, period. I'm not saying this is required. I don't want to get into Bible quotations but I think it was St. Paul who said, "Better to marry than to burn."^{65, 66}

Q. Do you deny there's any benefit for some people, like in the connection between sex and magic, or sex and higher levels of consciousness, however temporary?

⁶² Also called the Albigensians, after the city of Albi. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catharism>

⁶³ See "Cathar Views on Marriage" (and chastity): http://www.cathar.info/12011316_marriage.htm

⁶⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albigensian_Crusade

⁶⁵ 1st Corinthians 7:9.

⁶⁶ Paracelsus: "... it is necessary to be chaste, honest, and pure, in thought and desire, and whoever is unable to remain so should not remain single." <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-05-pneumatology.htm>

R. I believe the only thing that would influence magic or higher consciousness is the *abstinence* from sex. I'll give you one example: One of the authorities on magic was Eliphas Levi.⁶⁷ You can read this if you're interested in studying the background of magic. He said you never went into conjuring up entities unless you had been celibate for thirty days.⁶⁸ Because you'd be open, you'd be possessed, they'd take over and ruin your act or ruin your life. And of course we like to pretend that doesn't exist. But there's a form of possession, there are entities that take over people's consciousness, take over their body, and talk through their mouth, and have even spoken in languages that the individual didn't know.

Now they botch this up a bit with these theatrical presentations that are not true. For instance Blatty's novel^{69, 70, 71} that they made into the movie *The Exorcist*. It was nearly all Hollywood. The child in the picture was a little girl. They showed some degenerate, obscene scenes, the use of the crucifix and sexual things, and yet nobody complains about this. This is part of our great free nation; you're free to do anything with people's religion. I think we should have some respect for anybody's religion, because they're trying at something; I can't argue with that.

Q. Would you deny the validity of tantra as a path then, the left hand path?

R. I've never run into it. You're talking about putting a circle on the floor and invoking powers and entities and that sort of thing?

Q. No, not only that, but like trying to take the things we do as animals, eating, drinking, having sex, and turning them into a sacrament; not doing them for their own sake, but as part of a quest for a higher state of consciousness.

R. Well, it's just like if you're in college and studying for an exam, trying to concentrate, you're going to do without a lot of things. You may even abstain from coffee. You know that you've got a mental mechanism, and you know that it works better under certain conditions. And if you load it full of alcohol or dope, sure, you'll get a flash, a high spot. But then you'll get a corresponding drop on the lower part of the line too. You'll get despair, suicidal urges, whatever.

Q. There's no way to make those things, whether it be alcohol or food or sex, to make those things pure?

R. Well, they're trying to make everything pure, and as they do it ...

Q. I'm not talking about America now.

R. [laughs] No, you know, what we're trying to get is a certain perspective. And don't get me wrong, I'm not opposed to any man's religion and his beliefs. The only thing that I will contradict

⁶⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliphas_Levi

⁶⁸ See *Transcendental Magic*, Part II (Ritual), Chapter 13, Necromancy. Rose recommended a minimum of 30 days to obtain the effects. Levi here recommends 21 days. <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/>

⁶⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exorcism_of_Roland_Doe

⁷⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Exorcist

⁷¹ See 43-minute documentary on the exorcism, featuring William Blatty and one of the participating priests: "Exorcist, The True Story", video in mp4 format: <http://selfdefinition.org/possession/>

is something that says we should just live like dogs and do what comes naturally and that sort of thing. That's all right if a person believes in it; but if he does, he shouldn't be sitting here. Zen doesn't teach it. Very few religions teach it. And yet things are getting to where we're going to have a new religion in this country, that's going to be the result of the striving of politicians, willing to admit any sort of morality just to get a few more votes.

Zen

Q. I'm wondering how things you have said so far tonight relate to Zen. I haven't heard you discuss Soto or Rinzai, or anything that relates to them, and I'm wondering, what's the Zen in anything you said?

R. Well Zen is not my direction. I'm not here to advertise or sell lessons in Zen or anything of that sort. I'm just giving an account of my life. And I don't have to know all the different branches or names of the people or teachers of Zen to tell my story. All I'm doing is telling you what happened to me.

Q. But why then do you choose the word Zen to describe your adventure?

R. I don't. I didn't. I wasn't doing Zen exercises, I wasn't living as a Zen person. I did have contact with a Zen teacher. I knew him [corresponded with him] before,⁷² but I finally contacted him for the purpose of learning transmission, not for getting enlightened. He didn't swim across the great unknown or anything of that sort. And I don't want to worry an audience with history, whether of the Catholic Church or Zen or anything else. What counts to me is the human ability to take some *profit* from some theory or religion; some ism, culture or exercise, that's all.

Q. Would it be a misnomer to say that you are a Zen Buddhist?

R. I'm not. A Buddhist I definitely am not.

Q. I once passed down the shallow road past the little farmhouse where you live and people were saying, "Aha, that's a Zen Buddhist who lives there."

R. That's exactly what they say – you've been there? [New Vrindaban]

Q. Yes.

R. Yes, well, I don't know what that fellow is.⁷³

Transmission

Q. Did you learn transmission from the Zen teacher?

R. Oh yes.

⁷² Correspondence inventory: <http://selfdefinition.org/pulyan/rose-pulyan-correspondence.htm>

⁷³ Convicted 1991; under house arrest until 1993: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirtanananda_Swami

Q. Can you explain transmission or define it in any way?

R. Transmission is the ability to put into another man's head that which you have in yours. And when you speak it, they will know what you mean. Of course they have to have their head open. You can't give it to somebody who wants to argue all the way down to every period and comma. But it's a question of rapport. It happens by rapport.

[break in tape] In Zen what happens is that they belabor each other with these little tests, these koans, you know: "How many geese are flying south?" And they bat the guy around – according to the history. All I've got is history, and one teacher, who by the way refused to give his lineage. He said he had a lineage but he refused to talk about it.⁷⁴ He said it has nothing to do with performance. A real Zen teacher supposedly is able to give you their ancestry – the guy who brought him through, and then the teacher who brought that guy through, and so on, back to Buddha. To me this is not necessary, a waste of time, and you couldn't disprove it anyhow; they could tell you whatever they wanted, when you get so far back.

Q. So to be capable of this transmission, is that parallel to the search for truth? Is it a challenge to give it to us?

R. Well, when it happens of course, you realize that you haven't been belaboring for nothing; that's the whole thing. You've arrived. You've arrived at the same place your teacher has. That's the end of it; that's what they hope to have.

I read a story one time about China, by Garma Chang,⁷⁵ that impressed me very much, and that's the reason I don't put a lot of emphasis on Zen history. I'll give you the history of things I've been into and the things I've done, but not of the things I recommend. They were talking to some monk, and at the time there were eight or nine thousand students in this monastery. They had these monasteries throughout China and a lot of people joined them, some of them because of poverty, incidentally. I read the account of one guy who turned out to be a Zen teacher,⁷⁶ his mother threw him out because she couldn't feed him, and they left him in this monastery.

Anyhow, somebody had mentioned transmission to this teacher and he said, "There is not an enlightened person among these nine thousand people."⁷⁷ In other words, what he's saying is that it became a clubhouse, and none of them graduated. And he made the remark, "There is no Ch'an in China."⁷⁸ And when I read that, I thought, "This is the same as all over the world." There are very few people who make it through. At the [Catholic] monastery I was in, they went

⁷⁴ The Wanderling talks about Pulyan's teacher here: <http://the-wanderling.com/pulyan.html>

⁷⁵ *The Practice of Zen*, pdf here: <http://selfdefinition.org/zen/>

⁷⁶ Hui Neng <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huineng>

⁷⁷ This story is not found in *Practice of Zen*. Rose may be conjoining the story of Hui Neng with the remarks of Huang Po. (See the next footnote.)

⁷⁸ Huang Po, Blue Cliff Record, case 11. <http://www.treetopzencenter.org/HuangPosGobblers.html>
Orthodox Zen says the story is a koan. Rose takes the words literally, which is consistent with accounts of the rarity of enlightened individuals and monks able to receive transmission in these monasteries, such as described in the story of Hui Neng.

by all the rules, they were seemingly very celibate, very much sticking to the rules. But what did they get out of it spiritually? What did they really find out about this so-called God that they postulated? That's basically what it is – postulated.

Q. That's the Butler monastery you're talking about, not a Zen monastery.

R. Yes, I was in the Franciscan monastery at Herman, Pa. We went up to look it over recently and it was totally empty.

Q. I don't know that any of us, or many of us, are our own person. From the time we're born we are told, "If it's good enough for me, it's good enough for you," whether that's religion, the doctor, or whatever. We rarely reach an age of maturity, using our own power of thought and experience to make choices – which may or may not be beneficial, but at least we're making them. And I commend those who are staying here this long, because apparently, most of you are your own person, or you wouldn't still be here. Mr. Rose, I'm very grateful that I know you and that I came here to hear you speak.

R. I'll give you fifty cents tomorrow, if I have it.

Q. And here's the man who taught "no money." Oh, well, another illusion

R. What do you want, two dollars?

[end of talk – conversation follows]

Addendum:

(Conversation after the lecture.)

Edgar Cayce

Q. What do you think of long-term intuitions, prophecies, like Nostradamus or Edgar Cayce or anything like that?

R. These are the byproducts of a spiritual life. They happen, like fringe benefits. As you go along you find you can do things that you really weren't trying to do. That's what I was mentioning earlier, about maybe healing a person. Now I don't want to do that – I'm not going into business – but I'm glad that they happen. It makes you happy. It's a little vanity, you help somebody, but don't try to make any money off of it.

Q. What about long-term intuitions, things that are going to happen ten or a hundred years from now, like with Edgar Cayce – do you think these are valid intuitions?

R. I've read a good bit of Edgar Cayce, and that man came up with some amazing stuff. He was on the Atlantic coast, Virginia Beach. He would write prescriptions through the mail. They'd write a letter to him and say such and such, and he would give the cure. His own wife got seriously ill, and Cayce had a doctor friend; he told the doctor to administer some poison to her, some stuff

that was actually poisonous. And the doctor didn't hesitate because he had seen so many cures that Cayce had done. He administered it to her and she recovered, and it was a serious illness.⁷⁹

Consequently he had a talent. And what caused his talent, I don't know. I didn't ever hear that he used the word *God*. He didn't deny it, but ... when that happens to a person they're just very happy to have it.

Q. To know that he had the ability to help?

R. Right. And he didn't charge; I mean, people paid him, they sent money because they were grateful. But he was a real person. And I think we get the impression that certain things happen and maybe you shouldn't accept them. Because some of the old Catholic people, if they had the ability to heal, they would have turned their back on it, thinking it was vanity – because one of the biggest crimes on earth was vanity. But I believe you've got to love yourself. If you don't love yourself, you'll rot. It's pretty hard when you get to be my age; you have to take care of yourself twice as much as you did when you were fifteen. If you don't love yourself much you're going to croak, that's all.

Q. Do you ever have a chance to read a book, *The Game of Life and How to Play It*, by Florence Scovel Shin?

R. No.

Q. That there's like a divine destiny, and that it pretty much carries you through everything.

R. Well, we can believe that as long as we're winning. But when we come down with leprosy or something, then the philosophy changes.

Truth

Q. Well, I'm in a Rotary class.⁸⁰ I understand everyone has their own perception about what their truth is, but that also there is one universal truth. How do you recognize the big universal truth?

R. Universal truth is whatever you can find and describe accurately. For instance, the astronauts are going out right now finding universal truths. And maybe someday they'll go further. Fifty or a hundred years from now they may be finding another galaxy – but they haven't found the *answer* yet. But we can't argue with it, because they're finding universal truths.

⁷⁹ Paracelsus: "... a medicine that may do good at one time may be injurious at another, according to the prevailing influence. That which is active in medicines is their astral elements acting upon the astral man, ... and it makes the greatest difference whether a medicine is pervaded by one influence or by another." <http://selfdefinition.org/magic/paracelsus/hartmann-paracelsus-07-medicine.htm>

⁸⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotary_International

Now the same thing exists,⁸¹ even with accounts in the Bible, and they don't gel, they don't sound right to me. Some of these guys were said to be taken up into heaven alive, on a flying chariot, physically, body and all.⁸² I can't believe it. But that same type of people later on were capable of believing that the Virgin Mary, Christ's mother, was taken into heaven alive. And that means she went with her body – so where did she get cosmetics to keep it in shape? Where did she get toilet paper? Where was the toilet in outer space? If she's going up alive, she's got a body with her that is going to be a burden. Consequently, after awhile you get to thinking, "Maybe she didn't go up alive. Maybe they buried her someplace."

What I'm saying is that the most important thing a man can do in his life is to keep whittling the untruth from the more probable. We can't swear what the real truth really is, but we can retreat from the BS and the lies, or the stuff that's problematic, maybe, in the gray areas. That's all I say. Of course we're here today talking about things, but this is only one moment. To do this, I sat for years and years and analyzed every book I read as to probability, and stayed with the ones that I thought were more probable. That's the only way you can go. You can't take my word or anybody else's word for it.

Q. So that I will have an open mind for everything.

R. Right, absolutely. I have that too. I'm always amazed: if I hear of somebody getting healed, I don't say, "Aw, that's a lot of hokum." Anything can happen.

Swedenborg

Q. Are you familiar with the writings of Swedenborg?⁸³

R. Swedenborg? I know some people who are strong adherents of him.

Q. Who would that be?

R. Well, he lives in West Virginia, and he travels from there to visit with a guy, I think he's dead now, Pitcairn.⁸⁴

Q. Yes, I live right next to the Pitcairn estate.

R. Do you? And this man thought Swedenborg was the wisest one on earth. I was married to his cousin. And he'd come up and try to talk.

Q. Swedenborg's cousin?

R. No, no. These were hillbillies in West Virginia I'm talking about. [laughs] My wife was a hillbilly. But anyhow he would try to argue. He'd come to my farm, "What do you think about this

⁸¹ Space exploration?

⁸² A chariot of fire and horses appeared, but Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind. 2 Kings 2:11

⁸³ Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emanuel_Swedenborg

⁸⁴ Ancestor was John Pitcairn (1841-1916) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Pitcairn,_Jr.

and that?" I had Swedenborg's books; I read through all of them. I didn't quite approve of his analysis of the moon being a mirror and things like that. That would kind of throw you into some doubts. Another thing was the circulation of blood. He had kind of freaked out on a couple of them. But regardless, people believed him, and he was "A1".⁸⁵

But this fellow came to my place and I had *The Albigen Papers* laying there. He asked me to send him one through the mail and I sent it to him, so he takes it down to the Swedenborgian Center – somewhere between Pittsburgh and New Jersey.

Q. Bryn Athyn?

R. Right, right.

Q. That's where I live.

R. No kidding? Okay, well, this Swedenborgian preacher he talked to – I'm using the word preacher, maybe they don't call him that – he sent and got four of my *Albigen Papers*. And the other fellow – I'm divorced from his cousin, it's not because we're related – but he buys books from me four at a time and gives them away to people who are thinkers, readers.

And I have no quibble with Swedenborg, because there's a lot in it that I thought was very good reading. But by the same token I don't endorse it. Because it's no good to go too far back. It's like with Christ: I think that there are discrepancies in it; there are things that just don't add up. I don't buy this thing of anybody going into heaven alive or anything of this sort. And I can conceive of alternates that may have happened.

The Bible

Incidentally, if you're interested in Christianity, get Josephus'⁸⁶ history. He was a historian who lived at the time of Christ and wrote the history of what was going on. He's got one line for Jesus Christ. It just says that they executed a man by the name of Jesus Christ, and he was a good man.⁸⁷ That's all he said, that he was a good man. And that's the only thing we have to go by, outside of the Bible itself.

Now the Bible has been changed and re-changed, and translated to different languages. And as it was changed, the meanings seemed to be changed. I have a Bible at home that was printed in 1457.⁸⁸ I got it in a freakish manner, picked it up on the west coast, and I didn't really realize the value of it then. It's printed in vellum; it looks like scraped skin, hide. And it's in Old English print; the letter "s" looks like "f". And my wife's father was a preacher; we used to call him a "holy roller", he was a Pentecostal.

⁸⁵ See Wilson van Dusen: "The Presence of Spirits in Madness," a paper on Swedenborg. <http://selfdefinition.org/hearing-voices/wilson-van-dusen-presence-of-spirits-in-madness.htm>

⁸⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josephus>

⁸⁷ For controversy on Josephus see "partial authenticity": <http://bede.org.uk/Josephus.htm>

⁸⁸ A facsimile; the 1457 Bible is extremely rare.

Q . Oh, you got married after all. Your wife's here.

R. Yes, I've been married. This is my second wife.

Q. Shocking.

R. Terrible, isn't it? You'd be surprised.

Q. Good for you, I'm sure.

R. I'm still celibate. They go through hell.

Q. Go on with your story.

R. What was I talking about before I was so rudely interrupted?

Q. The Bible.

R. Oh, yes. My father-in-law came to me one day and he says – he called me Rick – he said, "Rick, why don't you get out your old Bible?" He said, "I see where it says in the Bible that if a person does this thing, he will be condemned forever." It was something that wasn't really serious, not killing anybody; I forget what it was. And he said, "Will you look it up?"

And of course I got the old Bible out – it's written in Latin – and I found that the chapters were numbered the way they are now, so I could find it. But what it said was, like if a guy says something vulgar you're supposed to throw him out of your house. But anyhow it said that he would be damned or condemned for *an era*; I'll give you the word – I never forgot it – it's "saeculum", which means an era. It isn't forever.

Q. "For a certain time."

R. Right, just an era, that he'd be banned.

Q. What language is that?

R. Latin. This old Bible I had was printed in Latin. Consequently they've been fooling with it – maybe they fooled with that issue too. The Bible when it got into the hands of either the Protestants or the Catholic Church, they changed it to suit themselves.

Q. Was that in the Old Testament?

R. Yes.

Q. Okay, and all of that was changed, because it came from the ancient Aramaic and Hebrew languages. I studied under some rabbis who translated directly from the original text. And the original text doesn't say what the English Bible says, that we are reading now.

R. That's right. That's the reason we can't go by it. But people will bet their luck on it. And you run into other things that seem to be unreasonable, but when you go back and get the translations you find they're not translated correctly.

[Side conversations – Buddhism and transmission in China, Burma, etc., the Heart Sutra.]

R. I've never got into their literature at all. But Zen is just a different type of approach to searching, that's all.

End