

## BABA RAM DASS LECTURE AT THE MENNINGER FOUNDATION: PART II

*This paper is a transcription (Part 11) of a taped lecture given May 5, 1970 under the sponsorship of the Menninger Foundation, Topeka, Kansas. The text has been edited in such a way as to preserve its spoken content and flavor. Baba Ram Dass is the name given to Dr. Richard Alpert by a teacher of yoga in India. Dr. Alpert was formerly a professor of psychology at Harvard-Editor*

*Audience:* Could you comment on your impressions of Meher Baba and Edgar Cayce for a little bit?

*Ram Dass:* I talk about Meher Baba and Edgar Cayce in two separate breaths, I take it. Meher Baba was an Indian holy man who was a very pure, pure statement of Bhakti Yoga, the Yoga of Devotion, the Yoga of Love. Love is a vehicle . . . the heart is a vehicle for transcendence. The relation between lover and beloved that I was talking about before. He left his body about a year ago. He died. And to the extent that one reads his discourses and his books like *A God Speaks* or *Listen Humanity!* with the openness of the fourth chakra, with love in one's heart, he is a very, very high teacher. There's no doubt about that. I've had very powerful spiritual contacts with Meher Baba and I feel that he is one of my gurus, one of my . . . the beings that guide my . . . my unfolding. And he pointed out to me in correspondence, when he was in his body, that he thought that there was a problem in relation to LSD—that you became addicted to the experience of LSD rather than working for the true reality. I have come to understand what he meant by that, over the years, as I've gone on in my own work. I feel that he's just a very

*Meher Baba  
and Bhakti  
Yoga*

ICopies of the audio recording of this five-hour talk with Baba Ram Dass (Richard Alpert) at The Menninger Foundation In Topeka, Kansas, may be secured from either of the following tape recording archives: request "Baba Ram Dass Tape List" and prices: BIG SUR RECORDINGS, 117 Mitchell BOUlevard, San Rafael, CA 94903 (West Coast) or NOUMEDIA COMPANY, PO Box 750, Port Chester, NY 10573 (East Coast).

loving being who is there for people that can open their hearts to him.

*Edgar Cayce  
and two states  
of consciousness*

Edgar Cayce, it seems to me, was a being who had available to him the . . . what William James calls the discontinuity of two states of consciousness. He could move from one state of consciousness into the other. However, he did not have recall of one from the other. He didn't have it "all together," as we would say in the West. OK? So he would go into a sleep state, where he would be in another state of consciousness where he would see the universe differently than he was seeing it in another state, and see more than was available to him when he was in his waking consciousness. I think that's all valid and that what he was reporting was what he was seeing at that astral plane . . . which is a relatively low astral plane, as far as I can see . . . and was open to certain influences and so on. It's not perhaps a totally pure statement, but it's a very good statement. It's certainly more than we knew before. It is another way of defining reality. And James' point is well taken. Any premature closing of our accounts with reality which fails to take into account all of these other states of consciousness is an error on man's part because man has to be pretty pompously presumptuous to assume that he's already found out the way. And so, you take a person like Edgar Cayce and it is difficult because of the . . . sort of shucky nature of the organization that got going around him, often . . . to hear the wisdom of the message in there and to hear the real stuff in there. But there certainly is a lot of real stuff in there. There's no doubt about it.

*fear of  
Pandora's  
Box*

It's like when you get to a certain point you can start to read the Bible as a very high manual, a text, a manual for work on yourself in consciousness. When Christ is using the •.. talking about, "He that is born of flesh is flesh; he that is born of spirit" ... and "that ye be born again, ye must die and be reborn." Things like, "I and my father are one." A whole set of ... you can take almost all of the stuff and find immediately how it is relating to what process we are going through at this moment. I find that once you are open to new possibilities ... I see that the problem we're all afraid of, especially scientists, is opening Pandora's Box. We're afraid if we let something in sloppily, somehow we're going to drown in our own, you know. . •. What we better decide is, "Is Edgar Casey good? Is Meher Baba good? Should I listen to him? Should I?" ... as if we're protecting our virginity somehow. Well, it turns out that one of the things that has to be surrendered is that model. You've got to have

enough faith to allow it all to come in, with the idea that that which is truth will rise to the surface. The scientific mold is to say •.. to listen to something sitting back, listening to it, saying, "Shall I believe it or not?" The other way of doing it is to open yourself to it, embrace it, and become it; and if it is inappropriate it will spew itself out. But that takes a certain kind of faith that is very, very scary if you think you have to sit in this protected place, and the predicament is that a person who's saying, "Shall I allow that to be known or not by me? Shall I consider this as another part of reality?" is cutting himself off from knowing it by the nature of his mechanism. He can't know it that way. That's the problem. He can't know the stuff in that objective sense. He's got to embrace it. He has got to make love with the unknown. He's got to enter into a love relationship with the unknown, risky though that woman may be because she sure has . . • she's got a lot of weird foibles. And you've got to make love with her with the total faith that if your intent is pure, the thing will be OK. The truth will out. And you've finally got to get off your place you're standing on. That's part of what we are talking about tonight: that ability to risk ... risk your position. "You've got to risk it all to have it all" ... as these old saws out of the mystical literature tell you. You've got to give it all up to have it all. Very far out! You've got to give it all up to have it all. Yes?

*the place  
of risk*

*Audience:* Could you say something about what man fears he will see if he risks all?

*Ram Doss:* Would I say something about what man fears he will see if he risks all? Well, generally I think that the first level of fears are concerned with the ... that part of us which is in nature, that Freud talks about . . . the unconscious impulses. And I think that there is a fear that if one lets go of rational control, surrenders that, one will be animal-like in the sense of antisocial impulses. I think that's the first fear- 'that there are things in oneself that are ngly, untenable, unsociable, and so on. That's part of the fear, part of one's own animal. This is because one doesn't go back far enough, as far as I can see. Because if you go one step behind that, you see something else in man behind that one, too. And then that's just another melodrama. The fear is, at the first chakra, the loss of the separate entity, the loss of one's individuality, the loss of one's identity, the dying of •• the psychological dying, the loss of the experiencer or the knower. That's part of what that fear is. Another part of the fear is that you may start to go out and only get part way, and get stuck somewhere else that will be worse than this

*fear and  
higher  
states of  
consciousness*

one. That's another fear which is called "eternal damnation," when in fact *this is* eternal damnation, for people who are experiencing eternal damnation. And eternal damnation is just another trip. Send them through eternal damnation for awhile is marc like where eternal damnation is at. It is ... fear is perhaps a frontward or a front emotional reaction for man's lack of readiness to deal with the higher energy states and higher input and output that is connected with these other states of consciousness. The fear is a protective mechanism in the sense that he experiences a kind of free-floating anxiety or ambiguous fear about it. And that keeps him from getting too close to it. He isn't ready, or able to get close to it because he can't do the necessary things to be able to live in those states of consciousness without doing destructive things to himself. He's not pure enough.

*impurity as  
separateness*

I think fear is the result of impurity. And impurity means, thoughts that define oneself in a "profane" sense, that is, thoughts which define oneself as separate. And as long as you are attached to those thought forms, you are going to fear, because it involves the extinction of that separate being, that separate conceptual entity. Most of my experience with this has (, . . I'm going to ask different people for questions so why don't you relax, since I'm not going to .• I'll deal with questions very gently and talk around them for a while so don't keep holding your hand up because we all have questions. We're all here together. It's all our questions of ourselves. And what we don't ask we already know the answers to anyway so it's all right. It's only a little dance we're doing, anyway. We shouldn't take it too seriously.) In my experience in guiding people through LSD experiences, there is the fear that many people experience as this chemical transformation occurs in their bodies which leads them to the breakdown of all existing models that they had about how the universe works. As that happens there are many people who experience intense fear, which makes them want to hold on to the structure they had. And they could say, "I am afraid, I am going insane," meaning I am going into another space that I don't have any control over on this level. In general I would say, "Well, groovy, let's go insane together. Here we go." In other words, it is my feeling that the only thing you have to fear is fear, in that sense that to the extent that you have enough faith or trust to let it happen, you go always through the next one and the next one and the next one.

*role of  
faith and  
trust*

In the Tibetan literature they say, "Embrace your ten thousand horrible demons and your ten thousand beautiful

demons. You've just got to take it all and keep going. "Yeah, that one too," and "That one too," and keep going. All your fears have to be embraced, entertained, honored, and you go on with them.

There is a qualitative difference in my life now from ten years ago, in that I do not experience a fear of death as a real fear when I get into situations where death seems a possibility, or violence, or something like that. I don't have any of the usual or earlier kinds of reactions of anxiety or fear and yet I do what is adaptive to protect the temple or body I'm working with. But I don't do it out of fear, because the fear of death seems somehow to have flown the coop somewhere along the way in this game. It certainly changes the nature of my living experience every day because each day can be whatever it is, and it's all all right. I'm not collecting something to avoid something later. Am I dealing with your question? Sir?

*Audience:* Yes.

*Audience:* I have two questions. One, if a Western man were to become totally enlightened, what would happen to other people and to his feelings, especially lovers? And the other one is what do you think about *The I Ching*?

*Ram Dass:* The two questions are: if a Western man were to become a fully enlightened being what would happen to his human relationships, particularly love? And the second is what do I think of *The I Ching*? Let me start with the word "love" for a moment. I think there is a transformation that goes on in one's conception of the term "love." And I think one changes from seeing it as a verb, to seeing it as a state of being. And you move much more towards what would be called Christ-love, that is, the state of being where one "is" love. One is like a light that emits, and one is a loving being. Consciousness and energy . . . are an identity, as I said last night, and similarly with those identities is the term love. That is, that love and consciousness are one and the same thing. So that as you get into a higher state of consciousness you come closer to being in love. That doesn't mean in interpersonal love. It means being-love. Now if you and I love or fall into love and I say, "She really turns me on. I love her," from this model what I see is happening is that I'm saying, "You are a ... ," in the imprinting literature, "You are a superordinate key stimulus that is eliciting an innate response mechanism. You're releasing an innate response mechanism." Or I could say it in a more general sense, saying

*love as a  
state of  
being*

*love and  
existing  
contracts*

that, "You're turning me on." And you're turning me on to a place inside myself that is love. So I am experiencing what it means to "be in love." And I'm saying I am in love with you. I am in love with my connection to the place in me that is love, is the way I would now say it in this Western framework. Now to keep working with this I would say that as you ... many of you, I suspect, have had that experience of making love to somebody . • . making love and getting totally into interpenetration as much as your bodies would allow and your thoughts and feelings would often allow and still feel that there was a separateness. And it is interesting that as long as you are under the illusion that what you are loving is "out there," you will always experience that separateness. It is only when you begin to understand that if you and I are truly in love, if I go to the place in me that is love and you to the place in you that is love, we are "together" in Love. We start to understand that what love means is that we are sharing a common state together. That state exists in you and it exists in me. Now the enlightened being •• what happens to him is that he changes the nature of his love object from a specific love object to it all, finally. You would say that an enlightened being is totally in love with the universe, in the sense that everything in the universe turns him on to that place in himself where he is love and consciousness. So I would say that an interpersonal relationship that has any qualities of possessiveness in it ... or ego drama of any kind, certainly undergoes changes as the nature of consciousness changes; and at the same moment I would say that as a person becomes more conscious, he understands that he has certain karmic commitments, that is, existing contracts which may be with parents, it may be with husband or wife, it may be with children-and that he can not rid himself from these without creating a karmic cost-without leaving behind him some uncooked seeds that he's running away from. The game of enlightenment starts from exactly where you are at this moment, and therefore, if you have an existing social-emotional-sexual contract with another human being, that's where it starts. To say, "Well, I've got to go do my work on myself. I can't afford you any more" is a ••• leaves a ripping which ultimately you've got to rectify. There's no doubt about it. You've got to work from where you are now. You just can't walk out ••. walk away from anything, any part of your life. You've got to bring it all into harmony at every new level.

I am in India and I suddenly realize that I have to come back. My mother has died, I have to come back and be with my father in a new way than I was ever with him before. To

share that particular drama, I don't think I shared my father last night, did 11 When I came back to Boston from India, I arrived at the airport and I was wearing a beard and I was barefoot, and I had come from India with my tamboura and I was generally a weird-looking being. My father came in his car to pick me up ... a conservative, as I said, a conservative Boston Republican and a very responsible member of our society. He took one look at me, and his response was, "Get in quick before anybody sees you," which I did, and we started to drive towards the house. Now what he regaled me with all the way home was the fact that he was experiencing a depression, a deep depression, as he approached death. He was 72 at the time. He told me all about how his life was meaningless and even though he had started Brandeis University, and raised many funds for The Einstein Medical School, and been President of the New Haven Railroad, and done lots of glorious and grand things in his life-he was experiencing the feeling that he was a failure as a human being. That was all there was to it. And he was telling me about his will and the clauses in his will . . . and all I felt was ... I was sitting in the car doing my *Om Mani Padme Hum, Om Mani Padme Hum*. And it was like his mind was creating this huge big black cloud of . . . of pollution in the car; I mean, this heavy, dark depressed place of "it's all over" and "we'll look through the old photographs tonight"-you know that kind of place. And I just did my mantra and off we drove to the house.

We got home and he said, "What would you like to do now?" I said, "I don't care, Dad, anything you'd like to do." He said, "Well, I want you to rest. You've had a long trip and.... " He said, "I'm going to make some raspberry jam," because that's one of his hobbies, is making raspberry jam. So I said, "Well, can I help you?" "No, don't bother." I said, "I'd like to." He said, "All right." So I go in, and we start to make raspberry jam. We're sterilizing the bottles and mashing raspberries, and he's telling me about the horror of his life and how sad it is, and how everybody's forgotten him and, boy, he's got a routine . . . • it's a very heavy story, very heavy story. I feel fantastic compassion for him because I love him very dearly and at the same moment I see the predicament his consciousness is in. I see where he's stuck. So I'm just doing my mantra and mashing raspberries and so on, and I'm saying to him things like, "Should the bubbles all rise to the top? Are the bottles right? Where do we put that?" and so on. And after awhile, since I'm giving him no reinforcement at all for this fantastic dark cloud that he's creating and holding all by himself, since I'm part of us ...

*raspberry  
jam and  
the here  
and now*

but I'm not helping him hold it up particularly, he starts to say, "Well, get ~~an~~the bubbles up ... " and pretty soon his conversation is shifting until it's in the here and now, That is, he's talking about how to make raspberry jam, right? And as he starts to talk about how to make raspberry jam-this is a technique you're all familiar with of bringing a person into the here and now-the lines of his face are relaxing and the whole model of himself as somebody who's old and about to die and his life is lived out and all this stuff about his failures and unhappiness and bankruptcy of the railroad and all that stuff, that's all sort of falling into the past and here we are making raspberry jam, We're just two guys making raspberry jam, right? Now we finish making the raspberry jam, and he's happy, see, he's smiling. So now his question is, "What are we going to do together next?" Right? Because what's happening is he's getting a "contact high" off me, because I'm living in the here and now. All I'm doing is making raspberry jam. And he's coming into that place, and it feels good. Everyone wants to feel good. He's coming into that place, and he feels good. If I walk away for an hour or two, he'll go right back into that other space again, because that's his karma at that moment to be stuck still in that space. But ~~we~~ start to spend ~~a~~ great deal of time together and as we spend more and more time together, he's living more in the here and now.

To short-cut the whole story, let me explain that eight months later, I gave the bride away at his marriage, Right? He married a woman in her late fifties, a beautiful, high, wonderful woman who had actually been one of his secretaries in the Junior Achievement organization, of which he was president. There was another Junior Achievement for him. As he went into the temple, he said to me, "This is all your doing, you know," because what I did was hold his hand all the time because all of his questions would be about the future or the past, like, "Is this wrong in terms of the memory of Mother? Is this going to be a terrible thing later?" All I was saying was, "How does it feel today? Did you have a good time at dinner last night? What are we doing today?" And he said, "Oh, it's wonderful. She's a wonderful person, but I'm just concerned about. . . ." As soon as his mind stopped creating all that stuff about then and then, and he lived here and now, it was a gas. He was having a ball. He was writing love songs and they went on a honeymoon in Scotland and Ireland. She is a very high being, in that she lives in the here and now very much of the time. She's a very conscious being. He married a good one. He's in good hands. And when I call, I say, "What are you



doing?" "Oh, well, we're . . ." and he sort of laughs, "we're writing some songs at the piano. We're writing some movie routines. We're going to shoot some sound movies and, you know, have some people over." He's having a ball. He's ... he is no more 74 now. Before he was 96 and now he's about 23, the way I figure it. And he can't walk as well and he's slowing down in all his processes but . . . there they are. The depression has fallen away because he's started to live in the here and now. Now that's part of what consciousness . . . how consciousness affected the nature of a love relationship in a sense.

My relationship with my father was a love relationship. He is karmically my father, that is, in this incarnation he is my father. Otherwise, I don't think he and I would have much going with one another. Right? Because he *lives* in a very different psychological space from the one I do. He has this big estate in New Hampshire and he's a member of this club called the President's Club. It's made up of people like presidents of United States Steel and Bell Telephone and all the ... they sit around saying, "You're a president, I'm a president. ... " It's a status reward for having made it in the game, you know. It's an inner club and they play games together. It's beautiful. So they come up to visit him and then he'll always say things like, "I've got this son. He's a little strange, but I'd really like you to hear him." And then he'll say, "Rich," or he calls me "Rum Dum," actually. "Rum Dum, would you come down and visit?" And I come down and I sit by the fire and I tell ghost stories. I mean I talk about the weird and the beyond the beyond and strange experiences in the Himalayas—the farthest reaches of the Himalayas, you know. And as long as it's not threatening, everybody's having a ball, you know: "fascinating, absolutely wonderful." And my father, who's listened to the story probably a hundred times now, always sits in the same arm chair, and about ten o'clock he pushes himself up out of the chair and says, "Well, damned interesting." He says, "Don't understand a word of it, but if he's doing it, it's OK with me. I guess I'll turn in now." And he always does the same routine. And I know that he is just not ready or interested, or at all involved in hearing the conceptualization or the ability to work with this stuff, but nevertheless the spin-off is very much part of his daily life. I feel that this is a very subtle way in which karma works, and that we have dealt here with a matter of how consciousness changes, because my father and I *are* closer *than* we have ever been in our lives together. We genuinely and openly love one another now, *in* this way. I see the game of father and son as merely

*a karmic  
relationship*

*changes of  
consciousness  
in karmic  
relationship*

another social role relationship. We don't have any biological function at the moment, but we do have a karmic connection. And I honor him as my father. The result is, we're very close, and we're not hung up in all the melodramas we always were before.

*The I Ching*

Now you asked another question about *The I Ching*, and the answer about *The I Ching* is, that I think that it's a very, very high statement of how it all is and that it can be used very cautiously and consciously to wake you up to other perspectives of where you're at in the here and now. I tend less to use it as an oracular book than as a statement of the here and now, of where you're at at this moment in your consciousness when you're asking that question that you're asking of *The I Ching*. As such it's very useful for up-leveling the melodrama you were caught in, to ask the question in the first place. Yes sir?

*Audience:* Would you say something about diet, food?

*vibrational  
nature of  
the body*

*Ram Dass:* About diet and food. Well, when you are working on consciousness, just like I said that the kind of breath you have, the intensity of your breath, becomes part of the environment in which you are doing your work, so, too, the entire constitution of your body becomes part of the environment in which you're doing the work. In the Hindu system this would be known as the temple in which you are residing while you're working on yourself in this round. Right? And the nature of the constitution of the temple, the vibrational nature of it, has something to do with the ease with which you can bring your consciousness into other states. That is, your body can bring you down. Now, your body, if it fidgets and is agitated, brings you down and therefore the whole business of developing a clear seat, or *Asan*, through Hatha Yoga, is part of that process of getting your body cooled-out so it will stay in the same place for awhile. Right? That's one of the reasons for doing ... just one of them. So, what you eat starts to affect the nature of your attitudes and feelings. In India, foods are divided into three categories, which are called *Tamasic*, *Rajasic*, and *Sattvic*, and since the Hindu system is based on concern with consciousness we can listen to it with a certain kind of thoughtfulness. Of these three forces in the universe, the Tamasic one is like inertia, towards "rockness" or toward the inert, the Rajasic force is like that of fire, towards action and movement, and the Sattvic force is that which is towards consciousness. There are certain foods that are called Sattvic foods, other foods which are called Rajasic foods, and still other foods which are called

*Hindu categories  
of food*

Tamasic foods. And it is suggested that when you are working on consciousness you eat primarily Sattvic foods. Now Sattvic *foods* turn out to be primarily-various books describe them differently and list different ones-primarily diet involving ... limiting oneself to fruits, honey, nuts, dairy products. As you go on into this work deeper and deeper, you sensitize your body through various asans, opening certain nerves through meditation, through pranayam, and your diet keeps changing. You get into lighter and lighter diets until finally you start to move towards giving up the grains and the wheats and moving towards fruits and nuts and milk and things like that. And pretty soon you get into primarily

*avoidance of  
crash program*

fruits, and so on. Now, you can't go on one of these diets in a crash program when you're not ready to be on it, because unless you're at a certain degree of purity, your body needs other things. And so aU of the World Health Organization standards about what are the protein requirements, and so on, are all true for a Western man who is thinking like a Western man. As you change your nature of consciousness in terms of thought forms, and as you change your environment, then the kinds of foods you need change as well. Right? I don't eat meat, fish, chicken, or eggs. I don't eat them because I am in a situation where I meet people in India who know how it is and they say, "Look we don't eat them," and so I don't eat them because I'm a copy cat because I want what they've got. That's the reason I don't eat them. I can't give you a very hip, sophisticated, rational model.

I'm not going to give you a model in terms of killing, because it is true that even in the act of killing, if it can be done without attachment, it does not create karma. You can eat animal flesh if you can do it without attachment. If you're a realized being, you can eat anything and convert it. If you're not a realized being, whatever you eat affects who you are. Some of the rationale that is extant in the temple I was living in about meat, for example, is that the animal kingdom has a rudimentary type of self-consciousness and experiences some kinds of fear, rudimentary types of fear, at the moment of death. This fear releases certain kinds of adrenalin substances into the flesh of the animal and when you eat them these substances affect your constitution, no matter how they are transmuted through cooking and so on. And while it is true that there is research showing ... plants show electrical reactions to being cut down and anticipation and all *that* ... we don't know that that is the same thing as pain or fear or suffering. All we know is that these are electrical reactions. It may be the reaction of fear that is

*correlation  
of meditative  
life. and  
meditative  
food*

forced in, which releases adrenalin, which gives one that agitated rajasic quality that meat is connected with in the West. As you're getting into a more meditative life, you start to eat more meditative food. So I used to be on the macrobiotic diet and now I am not. I have some reservations about it and about the ... the wisdom of George Osawa's theories, and so on. I feel there is truth in that as there is truth in everything. There was truth in Newtonian physics even though it was slightly off because it wasn't Einsteinian, and Einsteinian, I'm sure, will . . . it's all part of how it all is, which is unknowable. But I generally .•. the Vedas refer to keeping a diet of bland grains and milk and fruits and things like that. And I think that you keep getting simpler and simpler.

Now it turns out that what we know about the human possibility is so absurdly trivial thus far. A woman like Teresa Neumann, the Christian mystic, has lived for twelve years eating one eucharist wafer every morning and those are mighty thin, I'll ten you-and that's it. She's a good healthy woman, a *saftig medchen* with flesh on her bones and all that. The scientists have followed her into the bathroom to see how she's cheating because they can't do it. And when they say to her, "What do you live on?" she says, "I live on light." Now, we can't do photosynthesis because we don't know how to do it and because we're busy being somebody who works a certain way. Now that doesn't say anything about Man's possibilities. Once you find one person whom you could let in the doorway without thinking there's a lie or a deception or "I'm being hustled" because "I can't do it," you begin to see that there are extraordinary other possibilities in terms of what a person needs for life force other than what we think of as the minimum daily requirements. The whole picture starts to change. There are beings that live on less and less. And as you do this purification you indeed live on less and less. Yes, sir. You had a question?

*Audience:* Would you say a word about insanity or psychosis?

*perceptual  
vantage points  
and psychosis*

*Ram Dass;* I feel the resonance of all the past words that have been said about that in this room. I'm sure I could find something in here to resonate with. We live at a plane of reality which we share ... it would seem • . • in which we all agree that certain things are the way they are. And when somebody disagrees with that and disagrees with it with deep faith, under certain conditions we characterize that

as psychosis. I would now reinterpret that and say that what has happened is, that the person-and this is not yet saying anything more, it's merely giving us a framework to see an alternative possibility-has moved from one perceptual vantage point to another. A person through something which might be a chemical change, could be a trauma of some sort, it might be ingested, or psychically induced, psychogenic in nature-but through some trauma to the system-moves from one perceptual vantage point to another one, and then gets as attached to that one as we are to the one we're in. Right? He is attached to that and from our point of view he is psychotic. From his point of view, we are. That is because we don't see reality as he sees it. He's seeing another reality. In any kind of a Hindu system this would be called merely an astral plane. He's in another astral plane.

This morning I was talking with one of the psychiatrists here on the staff, and I was telling him about my brother who has been in a mental hospital, who has been considered psychotic, who thinks of himself as the Messiah, and with whom I have spent a great deal of time, since I have as much a karmic link to him as to my father and whatever this consciousness is all about, it must have something to do with my brother, too. And my relation to him was to be as much "here and now" as I could be just as I had been with my father. To realize that he is stuck in a reality, just like my father is, just like I get stuck, and that any reality you're stuck in is just as bad as any other reality you're stuck in. And so, one of the things I do is I go into the reality he's stuck in with him. I look around, enjoy it with him, look at the world from that place with him, and then show him that from my point of view, you have to be able to go in and out of all of them, that anyone you get stuck in is the wrong one. And if one guy's stuck in one who may be a psychiatrist, he is trying to cure somebody else stuck in another and is, in one sense, just substituting one stuckness for another stuckness. The journey of consciousness is to go to the place where you see that all of them are really relative realities and these are merely perceptual vantage points for looking at it all. When one looks at the universe from within the spirit, which is the . . . another "take," one sees that the entire universe all makes absolutely exquisite sense, but it's all slightly different because you're looking at it from an entirely different perceptual vantage point.

*on different  
ways of  
being "stuck"*

There are some beings that we call psychotic who in India would be called "God-Intoxicants." They are people who are primarily preoccupied with the fifth chakra at this mo-

*limitations  
of current  
categories  
of psychosis*

ment, That is, they are beings who have experienced compassion outwardly and then their entire energy turns inward to inner states that they are experiencing. We see them as catatonic. That would be usually the category we would see them in. Because we are not getting an elicited response out of them, we project into them a certain kind of psychological state. Now in India they project another kind of interpretation into that, surround the person with another environment, which changes the nature of his experience, because of their models of what it is that's happening to him, you see? So that a God-Intoxicant is treated with great reverence and respect. Ramakrishna, a very famous mystic in India, was often God-Intoxicant. I would say that probably most catatonics are not God-Intoxicants, but there are some that we're confusing, and we've got them in the same category because we don't have these differentiations at this point.

*another  
karmic  
relationship*

My further understanding is that there is no being at any state of consciousness that one cannot make contact with, if one is himself free of attachment to any specific plane of consciousness. That is, I think that all of us are available at all times. There is a place in all of us that is available at all times, and our inability to make contact with another human being is our own inability to get out of the place we are stuck in. There is much to say for the flexibility of the consciousness of the ... the behavior change agent ... to be able to make contact with another human being where he is, without themselves getting stuck in where he's stuck. That's the work on one's self. It is my ... from dealing with my brother . . . he was producing voluminous amounts of material, reading Greek, which he had never been able to read before. He was doing a number of phenomenal things which the doctors saw as pathological-his agitation, his . . . the fact that he could steal, lie, and cheat and tell that he was Christ. He escaped from the hospital a number of times, a very creative fellow. My reading of his materials showed me that he was tuned in on some of the greatest truths in the world that have ever been enunciated by some of the highest beings. He was experiencing these directly, but he was caught in a feeling that this was happening only to him. In other words, he had taken an ego with him into this other state of consciousness and he was experiencing it as unique to himself. And, therefore, he got into a messy predicament of saying, "I've been given this, and you haven't," you see. As we decided to share time and space, he noted that everything he said on this level I understood, and we could talk at this level together, although the psychiatrist sitting in the room was having a very difficult time dealing with this visitor who

was obviously crazier than the patient, you know. And my brother often said to me, "I don't know," he says, "I'm a lawyer, I'm a decent citizen, I've got a tie and a jacket, and I go to church, and I'm a good person, and I read the Bible. Me they've got in a mental hospital; you, you walk barefoot, you've got a beard, you've got a funny name, you really wear . . . you, you're out, free. How do you explain that?" And I say, "Well, I'll show you how." I said, "Do you think you're Christ? the Christ . . . in pure consciousness?" He says, "Yes." I say, "Well, I think I am too." And he looks at me and he says, "No, you don't understand." I say, "That's why they lock you up," you see. Because the minute you tell somebody else they're not Christ, they lock you up. The minute you say, "I am and you're not," then you gotta go. It's very clear. That's the way the game is played. As far as I'm concerned, we're all God. Here we all are. Now I don't go around forcing you to say "You are God, aren't you?" Because you only come to somebody else when you are caught in an ego drama, when you are caught having to "do" something. I said, "Leonard, if you didn't have to do anything to anybody else, nobody would put you away." The funny play ..• the reason they put him away, which was just so cosmically humorous, was that my father, a Republican, conservative ... came into my brother's apartment and found him sitting there naked, surrounded by five or six elderly ladies who were worshipping him. And he was sitting there burning his money and his credit cards. **In** a Jewish middle-class family you can do everything, but you don't bum the money, I'll tell you ... so that anybody could see that he was obviously crazy.

Now if you happen to be a very deeply religious student you would understand exactly what was going on on quite another level, you see, and the humor of it is very far out . . . and the compassion and the poignancy and the predicament. Now, I don't feel pity for Leonard. I just see his karma unfolding. I feel great compassion. I certainly don't want him to suffer. I realize that I can reduce his suffering by not getting caught in his suffering with him, by being with him at the highest level of consciousness we can meet at, at all times. Therefore, I can help him by working on myself, and all summer long I would go to the Veterans Hospital one day a week and I would sit with him for many hours, just being as conscious as I could be. We would share this space. And all that time he became extraordinarily right here and now, because there wasn't anybody surrounding him that said, "You're nuts," because I don't think he's nuts. I just think he's living on another plane. That plane is a

plane, just like this plane is a plane. And he and I would sit around and we'd look at the psychiatrist and we'd say, "Do you think he knows he's God?" And the psychiatrist would say, "They are wondering whether I think I'm God?" A beautiful flip-over predicament we created there, you see. And that reinforcement of my brother's position ... he is out of the hospital now, by the way, and he's studying ... it's very strange . . . he's studying Yoga and he's studying meditation. It's not all pure, by any means: He's perhaps just waiting for the day he can go back to being the Christ again, you know. And maybe he's just cooling it so he won't get locked up. I don't know the level at which he's playing the game.

*compassion  
without pity*

I have worked for ten years under the model that there was nobody that I couldn't make contact with if I could purify myself enough, you see. That was the model I worked under. And I have dealt with many, many emergency situations when I was a therapist and LSD guide with people calling up in terrible states. And generally what I deal with is I go immediately to the place where I feel compassion for their predicament, but no pity, and I don't get caught in a symbiotic role to the dance they're *presenting* to me. I center, that's what I do on myself, so that somebody calls up and says, "This is horrible and I'm going to commit suicide." I say, "Well, then don't let me keep you. If you've got to go do that, you do whatever you need to do. But I just want you to know I'm here, if you want to hang out for a while before you commit suicide. Since you're going to do it anyway, you know what you've got to do, but if you'd like to hang out, here we are." And I always am right here. A girl calls me in the middle of the night and she says, "I've taken LSD and my mind is falling apart," and she's crying hysterically. She calls from California to New York. And I say, "Well, who called me?" She says, "Well, I did." I say, "Well, who dialed the number?" She says, "I did." Well, I say, "Would you put whoever it was that dialed the number on, because whoever dialed seven digits plus an area code in the middle of the night to find me, that person I can talk to. You, you're a raving maniac." That is, I am perfectly convinced that always in another human being there is that place, if I can just cut through to that place, which is my own ability to not get caught in the melodrama each time. Now often it becomes an ego struggle and all I do is center because a person does what he can do. And I never, at any *time*, get involved. I just do what I do. If the person can make the contact, fine. If he can't, there are often times when custodial care is required for a person, because he is



doing work. You see, I'm very far out and I'm somewhat scary from a societal point of view, because I'm not sure I can tell you that two years in a mental hospital isn't much more advantageous in one's growth as a being than four years of a college education. And that maybe six months in prison could be comparable to a post-graduate education in education.

I'm not sure I can look at total-care institutions as other than total-care institutions that do a certain kind of training and provide you with a certain kind of psychological environment. And I do see that there are points in the transformations in beings where they "can't keep it all together." That is, where more is happening to them than they fit . . . so that they can't keep all the planes together at anyone moment, So they get stuck in one plane or another. A schizophrenic goes into one and then flips back into the other, and flips back and forth. Somebody that's totally psychotic stays in another plane. Somebody that is a total anxiety neurotic is afraid to leave this plane. You know, there are all these deep, different gradations. And it seems to me that we must introduce into our society the concept that there are socially sanctioned moratorium centers, there are places where a person can have a total-care environment, where they can go through the changes they need to go through with respect for the fact that they are doing work on themselves. I would say now that a good 40 percent of my friends have been through mental hospitals because they didn't see the world like the psychiatric community saw the world. And I would say that they are now out and that they are some of the highest beings in our culture, and they are functioning optimally and effectively and quite beautifully as human beings. And I think that they did their work often with the help of very hip psychiatrists, and often in spite of the psychiatrist. I think that many of them just needed that kind of total environmental protection while they did the work. And the psychiatrist needed the security that he was doing something, so he met with the patient so many times and he did his thing. The patient humored him, and then kept doing the work he needed to do on himself. I only guide patients, and I say, "Cool it, Baby, so they won't, you know, shoot you up with stuff or shoot your brain full of electric current, or stuff like that. Just cool it enough so that doesn't happen, and then just use it as a moratorium center. It's a groovy ashram. It'll protect you. It's cool."

*need for  
socially  
sanctioned  
moratorium  
centers*

I visit and I see that prisons and schools are baby-sitting institutions so that we don't glut the labor market. A lot of

*prisons and  
schools as  
baby-sitting  
institutions*

what is being taught as Western education, is a total, phony hype, as everybody knows. It has nothing to do with anything. It's initiation rites, so you can play ball in the big league park, which has nothing necessarily to do with any great payoff. I think that we are realizing that education is a much more profound matter than the way we've been trivializing it through our schools of education, of which I used to be a professor. I begin to see that we don't learn like rats, primarily, that it is not memory curves based on learning as object. There are other ways of relating to the universe, so that one learns in what would be called Gutherian one-trial learning, if one wants to play science games. I guess that's what I have to say about psychosis. How far out it all is. Yes?

*Audience:* From what you have said about the various things that your guru can do, and also from what I have read in *Autobiography of a Yogi*, all these fantastic things that Yogis can do, like go without eating and materialize objects at will and things like that, how come the Zen masters never get into that sort of a trip?

*attractions  
and dangers  
of powers*

*Ram Dass:* Well, you see, why they don't is because all those are merely powers. They are the use of powers that exist on various planes between here and where it is you're going. What happens is you get your rational mind and then you can do all these groovy things with it. Well, once you can read other people's minds, you can do even groovier things with it. Once you can do astral travel, there's no end to the groovy things you can do. You always want to do groovy things with them. "I can help mankind with this new power." Well, in fact, every time you do that, it just sticks you in another level of the dance of being stuck still in separateness. You haven't finished the trip. After a while of doing that one, you're going to see that that one is finite, too. It's groovier than the last one was, but it's still finite, and you're going to have to go on beyond that one, too. So that the Zen Buddhists say, "Look, don't stop along the way at all. That's illusion, too. Forget about it. Don't think about it. Don't use it. Don't do it. Don't worry about it,"

On the other hand, in other methods that take you through a more stepwise graded process along the way, these powers appear, and the problem is that the game is not to use the power. Most of these stories you hear of high beings using powers are really stories of the powers being manifest, although the high being isn't necessarily using them *in* an ego sense, the way we would use powers. They're just being used,

but he's not getting stuck in them. They are merely cul-de-sacs along the way. All those stories, really ... they're interesting things, and they sure fascinate us as Westerners because they're going to give us all this new power, which we still want because we still think we're separate from it all, and we think we've got to have power. Once you understand that the place you're going to is the transcendence of the experience of separateness, so that you *are* power, see ... when Christ says "Had ye but faith, ye could move mountains," he's not putting you on. This is not some lovely metaphor saying it's hard just to lead a good clean life. That isn't what it's about at all. He's just telling you how it is: that were you at a certain level of consciousness you could move a mountain, literally. But the way it happens is very far out. It only happens when you have transcended that in you which is separate from the mountain, so that you are, in fact, the mountain, and then you move. I'm giving it to you straight. You can say it's nutty. I'm just telling you how it is. Later you'll know, if you don't know now ... to the extent that you are the mountain that moves, you are also the being that put the mountain there in the first place. He neglected to say that could you move mountains, you probably wouldn't because you put it there in the first place. That's the added part of the thing, which is the final place you go out.

So the Zen Buddhists say, "Just don't attend to all that. It's just going to get you stuck on the way." Other people say, "Well, I need a more gentle method"; and that method gets you caught. Now I am working with a method that is gentle, and yet it always instructs you very carefully: don't use your powers, let them go. I had a few experiences that shook me up, to say the least. I received a letter from my teacher in India, and he said, "After a period of a few months doing the sadhana you're doing, you will be able to read other people's minds." I thought, "Oh, wow, I sure don't want that because that's the last thing a huge ego like me needs, you know. I'll be stuck in that one for the next 50 incarnations, just going around doing good, you know, like 'Let me do good.'" And I'd have these fantasies like, "What'll I do when I can go into other people's minds? I'll go into" . . . at that time it was Lyndon Johnson . . . "I'll become Lyndon Johnson's mind and I'll think loving thoughts towards Mao and I'll become Mao's mind and I'll think loving thoughts towards Lyndon and then I'll become all the members of the United Nations ... there's no limit to what I can do as a Yogi." Then when I thought it all up, I said, "Well, why didn't the guys do it who are ready?" It gave me pause, like maybe they know something I don't know,

*powers and  
- doing good"*

you know? Maybe in my zeal to do good I'm going to . • . I started to see that I was upsetting balances in the universe that would be very destructive if I didn't understand it all. I had to understand it all before I started to play those games. See? So I kept hoping that maybe I'd bypass the whole power trip.

About a year ago I was up at Esalen in Big Sur, and they gave me a house up in the hills where you had to walk up a long walk to get to see me. I was called the Holy Man of Gorda, right? I sat up there, being a Holy Man. It's as good a role as a psychiatrist or a social worker or an educator or . . . it's just another role, you know. And I would sit there every day, and I'd be the holy man, and people would come to be holified or whatever it is you come to see a holy man about ... to hang out, mainly and, you know, enjoy the vibes together.

One day there were about 40 people sitting around and a man walked in ... he was about 55 or so, I'd say, 50, SS . . . and he was a minister . . . I'd never seen him before, but he sure looked like a minister, but I didn't know that he was a minister. And I was . . . I started to talk about religion, just because it came into my head to talk about. And then somebody said to me, "Do you have any powers?" And I made the answer I just made to you, "No, I'm happy I don't, because if I did, I have a big ego, and I'd misuse them." And then I looked at this man-he had just arrived and it was late in the afternoon and I sort of wanted to include him into the group in this kind of socially concerned manner and I thought I'd use him as an example. I said, "Could you imagine," and I pointed to this man, "if I could look at you, sir, and I could say, 'You were walking up the hill to get here and you looked down on the ground and you saw what you thought was a jewel and you picked it up and you threw it away.' Could you imagine if I could tell about things like that in your life?" He stood up and turned ashen white. He held onto his chair, and everybody's silent, and he says, "I was walking up the hill," and he said, "I saw this . . . and I picked it up and I thought it was jade and it turned out to be a piece of ginger ale bottle and I threw it away." He sat down, and everybody was silent. And I looked at the picture of my guru and I said, "OK, baby, cut it out." Because I saw that, you know, that's the worst ... boy, who needs that? In Yiddish it's called like a *Loch in Kop*, like a hole in the head you need that one, I tell you. That's all you need. That gets you crucified almost immediately. Yes?

*attitude  
toward  
powers*

*Audience:* Has your guru been through this impure level we have to go through or . . .

*Ram Dass:* I have no idea. Nobody ever tells me anything over there. I'm the water boy on the team. I don't know anything about his life at all. I don't know where he came from, how old he is, what he did before. I just know a lot of anecdotes about his recent experiences that people tell me about ... you know, what he did . . . he did this, and he did that. There was only one picture of him when he was young, and what he looked like was a totally zonked-out Sunset Strip hippie, with long hair and beard and . . . he looks like he's sitting in Ben Frank's in Los Angeles, you know, just looking off into space and he's totally zonked out of his head. Somebody came along in the jungle and took this picture of him, and whatever he was experiencing at that point was very far out. I don't know any more than that. Yes?

*Audience:* Do you need a guru to find yourself? Where do you find one? Can you use anything else?

*Ram Dass:* The question of whether you need a guru: there are stages in your development where you need a guru. However, you've got to understand what a guru is. A guru is not a teacher. The relation between the guru and chela is not interpersonal, it's intrapersonal, That is, that element of my guru which is a little old man in a blanket over in India is just a little old man in a blanket over in India. He knows everything in my head. He is everything in my head, and he's as much here as he is there. If he isn't as much here as he is there, he's a hype, and I shouldn't be thinking of him as a guru, anyway. So therefore the whole idea that I would go anywhere to see the guru must obviously be a fallacy. Right? That's the first part of it. So then I realize that each person finds his guru as soon as he's ready to find his guru. That is, as soon as your head is open enough, he's available to you, because there's only one of them, in the purest sense, since it's not connected with ego in that sense, right? So "I'm looking for a guru" is obviously a trip like any other trip. We'll call it *Looking for the Guru*, which is the thing you do before you despair of finding the guru, which is the prerequisite to opening your head to finding the guru. Despair is the necessary prerequisite for the next degree of consciousness. OK? That's absolutely a prerequisite. So a lot of what we see in our society as a malaise that we call deep despair and depression is in fact this consciousness-transformation that's occurring, this absolutely necessary

*need for a  
guru*

*functions  
of a teacher*

prerequisite before we can start to hear the next level, which is a very deep despair and a depression about everything we have going. Rather than teaching each other to adapt to what we have, it would be better to honor the despair and allow a person to be in that despair until he comes through it, hopefully coming through it in a more evolved fashion, if he's got support for it.

As far as teachers are concerned, a teacher is wherever you are when you're ready for that teacher. That is, if you hear enough to ask the question, "How am I going to get on with my work?" and you say, "Well, what I ought to do is calm my mind down," then you'd say, "Well, how do I calm my mind down?" Now asking that question sensitizes you to see a lot of beings around you who have been busy calming their minds down, or teaching people how to calm their minds down, that until then you've passed by and never even noticed existed, because you were so busy thinking of them as kooks, nuts, cranks, or people that do those . . . things . . . but they're nice guys, anyway. Suddenly that's the thing about them that you want to know, you see. And so you begin to find out that your teachers are often people who have been right around you. They're called *Upa Gurus*, as opposed to *Sat Guru*. The *Sat Guru* is somebody who beckons from beyond. He's somebody who's all finished. The *Upa Guru* is anybody or anything along the way that points the path that helps you along a little way. So that even your enemies often are your *Upa Gurus* because they wake you up to a place you're not, which helps you get free of that place, which helps you get on with it. So you learn to honor everybody you meet as your teacher when you see that there is nothing else you can do but be conscious, for the good of yourself and all your fellow men, and to bring you closer to the place you're trying most to get to by all the other means you thought you were working on. You work on your own consciousness, and the way to do that is to see the teaching that is in everything in the universe ... about where you're not conscious or where you're asleep. You begin to see that everything in your universe becomes your teacher. Right? So your teacher is everywhere. Your guru is waiting for you to be ready for him. That's the model you can work on. So you don't have to rush to India because it's always right where you are. There are beings who can get as high as any enlightened being ever got, sitting in the middle of Topeka, Kansas, or in the middle of New York, or in the middle of anywhere. It depends on your readiness, and that has to do with your karma or your readiness to get on with it. Yes?

*Audience:* Why are you going back?

*Ram Dass:* Why am I going back? At the level I function at, I'm almost going back because I'm going back. I wouldn't say I have any profound model of why I'm going back. I'm going back because my karmic attachments to that whole scene aren't done yet. I also see that my role, my thing, in the water-flawing-downstream, dispassionate, Taoist sense is that I am a Western teacher and that all of the experiences I had as a middle-class person and as a psychedelici-stand as a social scientist and a cellist and a pilot and all those things are all part of my preparation to be able to teach what I have to teach. And I see that part of my role is that of a gnostic intermediary, that is, to bring metaphors from one system into another system. That seems to be my thing. It's done without attachment, in that I'm doing it because I'm doing it because I'm doing it because I'm doing it. That is, I do this and I do this and I do this, and there are tapes being made, and those tapes are going to be listened to by thousands and thousands of people, because they just pour around the country now and everything I've had to say up until now, as a teacher, is said. I've done what I have to do. Now I'm free to go the next round inward. I can go into a cabin in New Hampshire or in a cabin in Topeka, or just sit down and meditate and get on with it, but I also can go and pick up more metaphors as a teacher along the way, which is part of my teaching.

*gnostic  
intermediary*

*Audience:* Then you intend to do more teaching.

*Ram Dass:* Well, I don't have a model. All I can see is that I am a teacher and as a teacher you collect more. You see, the peculiar predicament I'm in is that I go back to the feet of this little old man in a blanket and I'm in the relation to the guru of chela. It's his trip, not mine any more. I am in the role of service. I am now living out-and I now understand in the most profound sense-what it means to say, "Not mine, but Thy will," see? So I'm just doing the trip. I'm not writing the script at the moment. When I get back, he may say, "You've finished your work," and touch me, and I turn *into* a butterfly, I don't know. Or I may go back and he kicks me and says, "I don't know who you are: Go back to America." I can't write the script. I don't know. And that is very difficult for our Western culture, where you usually have a model of what you're going to do and you're collecting this for that and you're living in time. I'm not living in time, that way. Yes, sir?

*Audience:* These levels of consciousness.... What is the ultimate and explain, as you see it, the highest level that you have attained and what you had hoped for above that.

*remarks on  
fourth chakra*

*Ram Dass:* As I said earlier, there are seven chakras or focal points and the transition from the third to the fourth is the first one into the transcendent state. It's the first one into the state of compassion, that is, where one experiences the shifts over figure-ground relationship so that one sees that you and I are human beings behind not only blue-suitness or dark-suitness and white-shirtness but also behind personalities and ages and bodies, and there is a place where . . . although we still see each other as separate . . . we are experiencing a feeling of a unitive nature with one another. That is another level of consciousness, where that unitive nature is *real*, rather than intellectually known. It's a real plane. And that compassion is the compassion that what is happening to you is happening to me, because in that place you and I are a unitive being. We're just two different manifestations of that one consciousness. That's already fourth chakra,

*remarks on  
fifth chakra*

The fifth chakra is where you turn back inward, and rather than seeing the outward manifestations, you start to go deeper within or deeper up, as you might call it, and become preoccupied with higher planes of light or energy or form of it all, which are more and more subtle states of differences and similarities. It's as if we come into the place where we are energy or where we are cellular formations. It's sort of . . . different planes of perceptual organization of the universe. You could put it that way, what these planes are about. The sixth chakra is very comparable to what's called the causal plane, which is the . . . it's a place where one has broken sufficient attachments to anyone perspective, so that you can stand back sufficiently far to gain what could be called cosmic perspective, to begin to see the most basic laws of the universe in operation everywhere in the universe. It's very much what the Egyptians were concerned with. It's what philosophy . . . it's what Plato's pure ideas are **primarily** about. That is sixth chakra. It's what we call wisdom. It's the wisdom of the ages, of these laws, these very simple laws. It could also be called the Godhead in a religious formulation of the . . . the first thought forms, the thought out of which all the rest is manifestation. At that place you are in the realm of pure ideas. That is, if you are in the sixth chakra, you have in a sense left the gross body. You are no longer identified with this body, nor are you identified with your personality, even, which is a more subtle

*sixth chakra*



plane. You are only identified with the ideas, all the rest is but manifestation, coming outward in planes of grossness. All right? Follow that formulation?

The seventh chakra, the top chakra, is the chakra where you merge back into the oceanic, into the one, totally. If you would look, for example, at the cyclic process of ocean mist rising off ocean, forming clouds, clouds have raindrops, raindrops fall into ocean, ocean is made up of raindrops, but it's ocean, and it's ocean in the sense of oneness. Each raindrop does not retain its individuality as a raindrop any longer. And you can see this is merely process. The seventh chakra is the ocean. It's Where it all goes back into the one. It's even behind all the laws and ideas. Right?

*seventh  
chakra*

Now, when one is climbing this ladder, at each new level there are certain characteristics . . . there is a new way in which you can receive energy or transmute energy in the universe. You can work with different kinds of energy when you are localized at each chakra, than you could before. You eat different foods, you can work with light, with love, and so on-different ways. Also, you see the universe in different ways and therefore your actions or responses start -your habits of thinking about it all, and thus your responses -start to change with each new level as well. At each level you are inclined to get stuck in that level. You have to, at each level, go beyond that one, too. What is usually the case for most of us who are doing this work is that we are very unevenly distributed in our energy over the different chakras or planes. That is, there is a certain part of me that is open in the fifth chakra, There is a certain degree to which I am starting to be opened in the *sixth* chakra. There is a way in which I am opened in the fourth chakra, very deeply opened in the fourth chakra. I still have much energy attached to the second chakra, sexual chakra, and the third chakra, in terms of power and so on. Now the process is to slowly "convert *Bindu* to *Ogis*," or transmute energy, or move it up into these higher and higher chakras, because every higher chakra is a more total organization of the entire universe in a more and more cosmic way of perceiving it and understanding and living with it all, which means a higher level of functioning, if you will.

*uneven  
distribution  
of energy  
in chakras*

The job is to take energy from a lower center and move it to a higher center. This becomes the work. What I can do is, through various techniques, I can center primarily on the fourth chakra and then when something happens that is in a lower chakra, I can convert it to that fourth chakra, So

*the task*

that if I am centered in the fourth chakra, and a beautiful girl comes along and I experience lust or arousal in the terms of subject-object, which would be a second-chakra relationship, I can at the same moment see that she is God and I am God and we are in the manifestations of male and female. This is an eternal drama that has been lived out, and I can in that process make contact with that place in her which is behind woman-ness and in me behind man-ness. Then we will either do out the dance or not, depending on what a lot of conditions are, but we are no longer stuck in that place of lust. Right? So when the Bible says, "Thou shalt not lust," it's really speaking about, "Thou shalt not get stuck at the second chakra," is one way of saying that same thing.

*completing  
the cycle*

Now I would say that my own state and that of most of us in the West who are working is quite uneven, and spread over most states. I have, through psychedelics originally, and more recently through pranayam, gotten into sixth and seventh chakra states. In psychedelics I would stay many hours in what would be called *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*, a very very high form of Samadhi, a completely formless void. Now there are many reasons for coming back from that place into lower chakras, or lower ways of organizing the universe. You can come back because of "uncooked seeds," that is, because there is still some energy or libido cathected at those lower centers. However, in order to fulfill the entire journey you begin to understand what the Bodhisattva role is in Buddhism: that is, that even getting to the seventh plane, you can get stuck at that place, too. And if you are at that plane, to the negation of the other planes, you are still not finished. You are attached to the void, it's called. The final place you end up coming to is where you complete the cycle. And you come back into every plane and you live consciously at every plane, because every plane is another truth. It's another level of truth. And you live in Bodhisattva role, which means living in this world of illusion at the same time that you are not in the world of illusion, because you are fully conscious at the seventh chakra also. That is, you are conscious right across the planes simultaneously, Right?

*optimum  
being*

The job finally is not just to keep moving it up but to move it up until you are free of each one, including the last one, so that you are at all of them, all the time. You are the optimum being at every level. That must seem to be what it's about. I can't walk out on the illusion, if you're stuck in the illusion, since you are part of me. So if you're stuck, I'm stuck. So, where can I go? I can't go out and finish my

own trip at your expense, since who ends up being caught in that but us. And I'm part of us. I've already seen that in the fourth chakra, you see. A person can't really go on his own trip all by himself and forget it.

Now there are some beings whose *work* at these different planes is reasonably finished—this has something to do with karma—and therefore they are at the point where they end up in the seventh chakra. There are some sadhus in India, for example, who go into the seventh chakra and don't come back—not because they are stuck, but because their work is done, in that sense. They have divested all of their gross body and subtle personality; they have divested any energy from it. The rule of the game under these conditions is that after 21 days their body falls apart, because there is no motivating principle or thought, of which it is a manifestation, maintaining it any longer. It's as if ... as long as you want to have hallucinations, you've got to have somebody thinking the hallucination. When there's nobody around thinking it, the hallucination falls away, including the body, at that point. That only happens under a few conditions.

Now we have interesting models in history to work with because we have not only a Buddha, who goes all the way through and ends in the seventh plane, which is the Buddha state, and then comes back into the world and plays out the role form that he is as a Bodhisattva, meaning he stays on this plane at the same time that he is finished with all planes. We have also the model of a Christ, whom I can comfortably deal with as a being who doesn't come up through the ranks, so to speak, but is a direct manifestation of mind into matter, in order to play out a certain part. Now this is a different kind of storyline for us to work with, because it is as if a sixth or seventh chakra being takes a gross body manifestation for a certain function in the total drama of Man's coming out of the illusion. See, he's playing his part in it in that way, because there is rhyme and reason and law and order at each of these planes of existence . . . there are beings that are existing at these planes of existence, because only at the planes below the fourth chakra do you need to maintain a body. There are beings that do exist who have personalities and all kinds of individual differences, but they are not manifested in bodily form. They are not manifest on this particular frequency that you and I can pick up through our senses and our thinking minds. This does not refute *their* existence. It merely means our instruments at this moment, in this way of doing it, can't know them, because we don't know how to measure them. We can some-

*Buddha  
and  
Christ*

*Nad Yoga*

times meet them, and I can meet them when I will leave this particular plane, as if I'm tuning my television receiver, which turns out to be tuning into various nerves or what are called in the Sanskrit *nadis*, or as if they are like electrically finer receivers in my body. There is, for example, a type of Yoga that I work with called *Nad Yoga*, which is the Yoga of Inner Sound. That is, I put in ear plugs and I listen . . . and you can hear, for example, you might hear the ocean roar or crickets or the sound of a crowd in a railroad terminal or flutes . . . a variety of sounds. They are all organized sounds. What you are doing is you are almost tuning into a different set of nerves that are functioning in your body. You're hearing your own nerves function, in a way. And when you do this, you are . . . each of these nerves is also connected with one of these chakras or one of these levels. So that what you do is, whatever sound you hear inside, instead of just listening to it, you allow yourself to merge with that sound and then when you are one with that sound-from that vantage point you hear the next sound. Right? You change your stepping position. It's like you climb steps by sound. You use sounds as your stepping points. You can't jump two steps, you go up one step, and then from that place you hear the next inner sound. This is a very high form of yoga. It's focusing on sound rather than on visual fields. It's the one-pointedness of sound. Well, now, each of those sounds is connected with another astral plane and as you work with these sounds you see they're connected with colors, vibrations, with hallucinations or different kinds of realities that you start to see. There are sounds connected with each of them. And so you can imagine that you can work with these inner sounds as a way of leading yourself into these other states of consciousness.

*fourth chakra  
journey*

Most of the time, I am functioning in an interesting place, I guess-it sort of seems interesting from where I'm sitting -because it almost seems most of the time as if I am sitting in a completely calm, centered place where nothing whatsoever is happening, or could ever happen. And yet, all of this is happening. But there is some way in which I have broken my identification with this happening. It is very much of a fourth-chakra journey in the sense that what I feel, the emotions I feel, are waves of compassion and love for all my being. I mean, I can get on a bus and by the time I get off I feel like I have met my most intimate family that I've known all my life. And we're all in love with one another. That's the type of experience I'm having with the world around me. It's scary because of the degree of openness that it entails. There's got to be an awareness that you are not

vulnerable on the separateness level before you can let yourself live in that place. And I see life processes going on, but I don't feel identified with them like I used to. So that . . . now what I am doing is, I am trying to cook the seeds of my third chakra by playing out some of these games, because *this* game, for example, involves power. It involves fame. It involves a number of thlr-d-chakra concerns that I used to be preoccupied with getting in the old days, coming up from the tradition I came out of. But now every time I get one of those, I see how it is a liability in my journey, you see. So I can hand it back, right? I can realize that the highest response I can get from an audience now is where they see that what I've been talking about is inside themselves, and that J was just a vehicle for them to hear, and I'm no great shakes, you see. The minute I end up with people saying, "Oh, you're something and I'm not," I know I'm too impure. I'm still doing it in the third chakra, you see. I'm still doing it in a way for me to grab the power, right? And I've got to be able to give up the power all the time. Otherwise my message is not pure. So that I am dealing . . . this is a market-place journey for me to try to cook my third chakra seeds, if you would like a technical description of what I think I'm doing. All right? Does that deal with your questions? Yes?

*cooking third  
chakra seeds*

*Audience:* Could you explain how transmutation of energy is accomplished?

*Ram Dass:* How transmutation of energy is accomplished? If I am at one point, when something happens in my field, my environmental field, that's negative, what I say is, "That brings me down," meaning it caught me in its model of how it all is. When I am able to transmute energy, I can take that energy that was . . . that was connected with that act itself and I can move it up my chakras and get high from *it*. Right? Not only can I get high from it, but I can give back a place which frees the other person from it as well. That is, if you come up to me and go "R-r-r-r-r" I can be busy going "R-r-r-r-r," see, or I can see you going "R-r-r-r-r" and say, "Yes, and that too is life and here we are and that's the way it is." And then I can look at you and be with you in a certain way where I took all that energy you fed in and it just . . . pulled it up my spine and here we are in this new higher place together which then frees you from the place you were stuck in before as well. Right? Now, for example . . . I gave a series of . . . every night for three weeks I gave *darshan* in New York City in a sculpture studio for about 200 people and more people kept coming and they kept com-

**"R-r-r-r-r"**

*re-perceiving  
toward higher  
level*

*seeing all  
beings in  
every being*

ing back and more kept coming every night and it was just like a curve, a geometric curve, and just more and more we were getting higher and higher together. But the place was next door to a fire house and usually you could count on the fact that at least once or twice a night the fire engines would be caned out. And we might be in the middle of a . . . chanting a love song to God, you know, in this very intimate sound and suddenly "R-r-r-r-r-r" and you'd look out into the audience and everybody was going through that pained "Oh, they've loused it up and we've lost our moment." And I looked at that and I thought, "Wow, isn't that far out?" Here all these high beings are being brought down by a fire engine. What I do is, I see the fire engine is merely free energy the city of New York is giving us if we know how to use it, and I'm getting stoned out of my head, getting way up into these higher chakras off the fire engine. And I'm saying, instead of seeing life as full of impediments to doing what your pre-run tape says you're supposed to do, see all of it as part of the here and now moment . . . there's the fire engine and that's the way it is. You're only bugged with it if you're still living a moment ago where you were busy not having the fire engine. At the moment, here's the fire engine. If you can live in the here and now, you should say, "Wow, here's the fire engine." Then you're in a new state. That's transmuting that energy. In other words, it's getting high off of it. Right? Now you can take almost any experience that you will have at the lower level and you can, by re-perceiving it in a certain way, just bring it up to another level and get more energy off it. Tantric sexuality is the technique of using . . . tantra means using the senses to go beyond the senses. Sexual tantra, which is using a partner, a sexual partner, as a vehicle to transcend through . . . often involves that I can sit down with a desirable sexual object, whoever that may be, to put it in a rather impersonal sense, and focus between the eyes with that person and enter into a place where I can see that which is desirable in the person, they can see that which is desirable in me. We can both see we are desiring each other but instead of rushing immediately into the melodrama that the desire leads to, we stay in that place. We look and we see that there we are, being beings who see those desire trips. Then it starts to change and we see that we are also something else and we're also something else and for many of us . . . if I look into anybody's eyes for more than about ten seconds, their face starts to change . . . and I start to see all beings in every being. I see all faces because in a way we are all beings. There's an element of everything in us. That's what I'm sure Jung was referring to at one point in ... about collective unconscious.

So that when you can take the energy that is aroused through the lust that you experienced through the desire for the partner, and take that energy and stay with it instead of running that game through, you just keep bringing the energy into a higher place. You see, you're using that energy *to* get higher and higher and higher and higher. You see how that's working? And so pretty soon you've taken that energy formed by the relation between the polar opposites, which is this fantastic force or *Shakti*, as it's called in the Hindu system, and you've used that energy to bring yourself into higher states of consciousness. That's why marriages in India are arranged by the astrologer and they are specifically designed to become conscious through. They aren't models that we in the West are concerned with ... we don't ... we marry for different reasons than they marry because we are not living in the spirit. We're living in the world of materiality and we respond to our passions that way. We feel if we're not responding, then we're getting gypped. Well, actually all we're doing is we're making second and third chakra contracts. And once you've started to be in the fourth chakra you start to re-negotiate the contracts that can be re-negotiated and living out honorably the ones that must be lived out at the other levels. But most of them you convert, you transmute. So that if a parent gets higher, the relation with his child gets higher. If a husband gets higher, his wife gets higher with him. That's part of that dance. Everybody had enough? Quarter past twelve yet?

*re-negotiating  
and honoring  
social  
contracts*

*Audience:* If somebody's getting lower can you get higher? Sort of like you were saying . . . you talked about the relationship of the therapist . . . you can go on almost despite him ...

*Rom Doss:* You mean, can you get high off somebody else's low, or do you get high even though somebody else is low?

*Audience:* Yeah.

*Rom Doss:* Yeah, you see, to the extent that you have a center independent of their consciousness, you can then take whatever energy anybody or anything feeds you and bring it to that center and get higher off it. But you would point out . . . I would point out that I'm sure many patients cure their psychiatrists in the sense that they do the work that gets them into a form of consciousness that frees the psychiatrist from the predicament he was stuck in in "doing good," which is a beautiful place and also a horrible place) depending on how stuck you are in it. And so . . . a relationship is

*centering*

as high as the highest consciousness, even though it may only be a contact high. It is true, that if you come up to me ... like if you come up to me and have any relationship to me, come on to me in any way, if I can stay centered, it takes two of us to do a dance, whatever it is. If you're angry, I've got to be angry back or something. I've got to be something back for you to be able to maintain that dance. It's very hard to maintain it in an environment where there's no support for it at all, see? And so all I can do is center so much that all you get back from me is a mirror of who you are and you see exactly where you're at. And at the same moment my mirror is in no way pejorative. As long as I have a value that where I'm at is better than where you're at, then I'm coming on to you in the most subtle way saying, "Look how conscious I am, and look how centered I am," see? You can't come on. That's impure. You can only be where you are and each person gets what he needs to get. I can't do anything to, for, or about you, all I can do is be what I be. Through your interaction with me, you may or may not change, see? That's the way in which ... and I teach because I teach because I teach. And I therapize because I therapize because I therapize, I don't therapize to save souls. And I don't teach because I'm concerned about your well-being although in the process something good may happen to you. Because it will create new problems for me. But at the ego level, I sure hope so. Yes?

*Audience:* In listening to you which I am very grateful to be able to do, I've heard you saying many times that the Bible is just as good as any other book if we go into a higher spiritual plane. And I was wondering then would that also mean that our American English can be just as good as Sanskrit?

*distinctions  
between  
English and  
Sanskrit*

*Ram Dass:* It's not a parallel analogy for the following reasons: the Bible ... I'm talking primarily about the symbology of the Bible, not the sound of it . . . the symbology of it can be understood at many levels, OK? . . . Let me for a moment deal with that distinction between English and Sanskrit. Now when Sanskrit was evolved as a letter language of 54 symbols, I guess, or 50 •.. I think it's 50 ... it was evolved by beings who saw each of these symbols connected with different relations of consciousness. Patterns of symbols put together were put together in order to, when you worked with them, take you to that level of consciousness. English has all the sounds in it, but it was not designed with that kind of level of consciousness in the designation of the way in which the sequences work together. There is a mantra that was set up by a Tibetan lama to understand the West.



It's a very interesting one, in Sanskrit, which says, in effect, *Please, please, sorry, thank you*. All you say over and over again is *Please, please, sorry, thank you, Please, please, sorry, thank you*. And because it has all those excess meanings, all the over-meanings of social roles that we work with in the immense amount of time we say "Please," "Sorry," and "Thank you," it as a mantra takes you through many, many trips. But the highest level of taking you into a vibrational space it doesn't do, because it wasn't designed with that degree ... that level of performance, in itself. Is that dealing with your question?

*Audience:* Yes. I'd like to ask just one more. Speaking of education . . . if you were starting out and you wanted to educate, whether it be egocentric or whatever you want to call it, what area would you work in? In other words, you have children, adults, teenagers, etc.

*Ram Dass:* You mean, if I had my "druthers" in the field of education at the moment . . . free field . . . anything I want? You know, the last educational experiment I ever did, which was before I got thrown out of Harvard was . . . I introduced karate *into* the Lexington school system. And I did it not as karate but as a technique of Eastern exercise. It was a little dishonest in the sense that I brought my karate masters *in*, and they showed all the junior high school kids, so everybody volunteered because they all wanted to learn to break boards. And it wasn't for that reason at all. That was their motive for doing it but I knew that in order to do it optimally, they would have to develop one-pointedness, see? In other words, they were competing against their own inner struggle. They had to bring their mind to one-pointedness to be able to do this and in the process they would develop this extraordinary discipline of the mind which I felt would transfer into all of the other parts of their life. So I was trying to use the physical education program-instead of developing more ego trips through competitive sports-to try to develop a discipline of mind which I felt would transfer because it seems to me that teaching one-pointedness of mind is a very, very important tool or vehicle for using the rational mind and for work on oneself. And therefore I think I would probably start with very, very early schooling in terms of meditation and so on. I learned from my teacher in India something very profound. I was a professor of education and I had studied techniques of teaching. I don't think I had ever seen as pure a case as he showed me, that in all the time he taught me I was never under the impression that he was teaching me anything, because he was teaching me

*one-pointedness  
of mind*

*thinning the  
veils*

*need for  
teachers  
to work on  
themselves*

from inside myself. And he was doing that from being a wise man and then turning off the model that he was teaching me anything. He became so open that he heard where I was. Then, working from within my framework, he evolved •.. whatever came out of him was my framework moving toward the wisdom that he "was." Right? That is, one of the things I would do if I were going to teach a child, I would as quickly as possible get out of any model that I was going to teach this child. That is, by hanging out with this child and saying, "OK, now what?" You see? Because I am now under the model that the child already knows everything and my job on myself is to thin the veils that keep me from knowing it all, and to not contribute to increasing the veils that keep him from knowing it all, right? To help him thin his veils. So that, what I would be inclined to do, I think, is to sit with a group of people and say, "Let us start from exactly where we are at. All truth is in everything. There is no pre-programmed model in my head that is that vital including any books, any subjects, any ... any ... because I'm now awed by an interesting phenomenon that I've begun to see. As some of these young teenagers finish their dropouts from school and their moratorium and their anti-energies, and start to be open in a turned-on way. I see that they can absorb fields of knowledge almost as fast as they can hear it fed in because they are learning it out of a very positive thing of ... they're ready to hear it and they want to grab it. They learn it almost in "one-trial" learning. They don't learn it with that kind of resistance of subject-object where somebody's implanting it in them before they're ready to know it. So that I guess timing, readiness to learn, becomes a very critical matter and I think I'm willing to handle a lot more tension of "lack of closure" of early noneducation in the formal sense. Rather than getting kindergarten and prekindergarten kids to read earlier and earlier and earlier, running our programs through kids earlier and earlier and earlier, I think I would be inclined to surround children with as high a consciousness as I could find. That is, I think I would first of all institute a program for teachers to work on themselves. That's the first thing I would do. Then I would put them in an environment with these kids where whatever the vehicle was, the teacher saw that as merely a vehicle for us to become conscious together . . . rather than getting the teacher caught in any other achievement model, such as, "I've got to get a 'pay-off' from these kids in terms of their external performance." That means I'm willing to maintain a certain tension level of lack of performance in these kids for quite a while. I'll play for the long shot that they will open to the universe, which is within them, in a way that

will allow them to tune in on stuff much faster than if they learn it in a linear input fashion, in the way that I've been programming it in traditionally. I begin to see that the educator educates himself and then he hangs out with the child and the child gets free of the things that are keeping him from educating himself because, in effect, we only do it to ourselves. That's the model I understand now. We don't do it to each other. We only do it to ourselves. All you can do is provide an environment where the kid can do it to himself. I guess I would be inclined to realize that a classroom is as high as the highest being in the room. And sometimes that's the teacher and sometimes it isn't. Sometimes it's a kid. It is not true that kids are little Buddhas. Everybody's a Buddha, but a kid is deepest in the illusion, in a way, because he had to be born into the illusion or he wouldn't have been born this birth and here he is now and he's in the illusion. Now the question is how long is he going to stay in it? And he's going to stay in it as long as he's got to stay in it, but also as long as people around him are sucking him into it, which is dependent on the extent that they're stuck in it. So all you can do for a child is, really, not be stuck in the illusion yourself. And then that frees the child and the minute he's free he'll pick up everything he needs. If I need to repair a car, I can damn well figure out how to repair cars. And there's nothing that makes me learn how to repair a car faster than when my car's broken, I'll tell you. I could study theories of carburation until hell freezes over and it would pass through me like Chinese food, but when I need to fix the carburetor I read that manual and boy it really has relevance because I want to know how to fix the carburetor. And there is something about functional knowledge. When the kid has an itch, then he scratches it and until then it's only fun and games in our head. And the whole history of knowledge is as a drop in the bucket compared with wisdom. We're trying to preserve something and what we're doing is preserving at the cost of something much, much higher than is what we really want. We would like to train for wisdom, not knowledge. And what we're training for is knowledge, because we can measure it. But knowledge is not convertible, necessarily, into human happiness or well-being. Wisdom *is*, because wisdom is learning how to live with the Tao, to live in harmony with the world at the moment it is. Wisdom is a totally adaptive thing, but knowledge isn't. Knowledge is not necessarily adaptive. But if you're a wise being, whatever is, is. You deal with what is. You teach a child methods of how to be conscious, how to use the tool of his mind as an exquisite, analytic device. You teach methods of absorbing knowledge. You don't teach knowledge per se. That's one of the major things.

*training for  
wisdom  
rather than  
knowledge*

And I think we're moving toward that in elementary education anyway. I think we start to respect each human being's method of evolving and we allow for much wider degrees of freedom in terms of each person's journey. We present him with models of consciousness, not models of external achievement.

*Audience:* I just want to clarify one thing because you started out with junior high school and you worked down to elementary. Does that mean that you would start in the elementary and we should see . . .

*Ram Dass:* I think I would start ... I used to work for an outfit called SMSG, the School Mathematics Study Group, which puts experimental mathematics education in public schools. I was their tame psychologist and I would do computer programs and run their data through and design all their assessment projects to find out whether it did any good. I found out this very far-out thing, that most of the women generalist education teachers in the elementary schools were like typhoid carriers of the attitudes toward mathematics because they themselves couldn't count, you know, and they got all up-tight about it. They felt they had to teach it, so they would teach it but they would say, "All right, you've had a good time out at recess, now you can sit down and do your arithmetic," because their attitude toward it was so negative that they inculcated these attitudes. And I began to see that just as a parent is the conveyor of the universe, so each of these teachers are. And the earlier you can help the person out of the illusion, the better off you are. The earlier you can do it the better you help the education system. Universities may . . . your hope is that so many high beings are coming in as freshman that they may help the system save itself, at this point, from total extinction because they're bringing more and more of this stuff to the college campus. I sound horribly radical and all that but I'm not really throwing out the baby with the bath because I see that all of what man has developed in his knowledge and his technology and his humanities and his art forms and so on is living in the present. It's all here right now. There is no chance that it's going to fall away if it has a meaningful human function at this moment. If we are only carrying it on out of guilt, forget it. But if it has a function we'll find it. And we, in a sense, have to re-do the run, over again. Just like ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, so each person's journey into consciousness recapitulates all of man's journey into consciousness. He has to re-find the need to absorb music and art and history and literature. You can't lay it on him because you know it's im-

*teachers as  
conveyors  
of the universe*

*readiness as a  
critical issue*

portant. He's got to be ready to hear it. And so that readiness is such a critical issue and that's why these early experiments with preschool and nursery and elementary school are very open environments, allowing the child to listen . . . learn to listen. And that's why these meditation exercises are designed specifically to allow him to hear rather than to get so caught in ego. I think competition and ego-enhancement is one of the things that's got to go. A lot of it, it's really got to go; the whole ego . . . the competitive models we're using in evaluation and in achievement. We have a model that if we don't achieve, if we don't give an achievement incentive, the whole system will fall down.

*discarding of  
ego enhance-  
ment and  
competition*

I was a worker in the field of achievement motivation and the game was how to get people to want to achieve more. And now I begin to see that when you take all the pressures off, a person says, "Well, if there's no reason to achieve, I won't do anything." And I say, "OK. Don't do anything. Now what?" He says, "I'm just going to sit in bed." "OK. That's doing something. You're going to sit in bed. Now what?" "Well, I'm kind of bored sitting in bed." "OK. Now What are you going to do?" It's as if once we finish with all our fears that it's all going to be chaos, after the moratorium, what a person does is he starts to build a life because he's in a human birth and he's got to make it beautiful and meaningful and rich and stimulating and aesthetically fulfilling. All that stuff happens all over again. But he does it now because he really wants to do it. Once we finish drafting everybody who doesn't go to college, we're going to find that thousands of these kids are going to drop out of college. Instead of seeing this as a horrible thing, we damned well better start seeing it as a very productive thing and start to respect the journey these kids are on, because they are not rejecting all of our traditions, they're merely rejecting the fraudulence with which we are living out our traditions. When I went to college I went with a lot of veterans and I came right out of high school. And the veterans were there and they were asking entirely different kinds of questions of their education than I was because they had dealt with life and death and, man, they wanted it to mean something to them. I was perfectly delighted to just go through this little mechanical game of being a student which had no more meaning than being a good student. When I taught at Harvard and Stanford and Cal . . . clearly the highest experience was teaching at Cal, because these were city kids who were living in the world and they had to go earn the bread in a gas station to come to college and they wanted to know what the hell does this child psychology have to do with bringing up their kids?

They didn't want to sit around and play a lot of high abstract games. At Harvard everybody was delighted to play games. We'll just play games. It doesn't have anything to do with anything. We'll just play games and enjoy the game.

Now you can say, "Well there is a lot of productivity out of that pure, free, untrammled game-playing." And I can enjoy that as a research strategy. I don't enjoy it as a process of education. I don't see it as a process of education.

In India when people meet and part, instead of saying hello or goodbye, they say something to each other . . . which reminds us of who we are. They say, "I honor the Atman within you, I honor the light which is within you," meaning, I look into you for that place where we are, behind all of our individual differences. And the word they use is *Namasta*. Na-ma-sta. It means "I honor the light within you." So may I close the evening by saying to all of you, Namasta,