

L/L RESEARCH



HOMEcoming 2016  
LOUISVILLE, KY

SEPTEMBER 2-4

THE PARTICIPANT-DRIVEN SYMPOSIUM



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I. CURRICULUM PRESENTATIONS & DESCRIPTIONS

---

1. *Table*.....4

## II. PRESENTERS' MATERIAL

---

### JONATHAN G. PRESENTS

2. *Of Identity and Dancing in Consciousness* .....6

### FOX H. PRESENTS

3. *Microbes A Us or Realizing Oneness with Gaia* .....11

### GARRY F. PRESENTS

4. *The Resolving of our Seeking*.....22

### BEATRIZ G. PRESENTS

5. *Aligning With Being*.....26

### JOSEPH D. PRESENTS

6. *What Is an Archetype?* .....29

### GARY B. PRESENTS

7. *Introducing the Law of One: Is It Possible?*.....32

## III. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

---

8. *Volunteer List 2015* .....36

9. *A definitive collection of awesome Law of One passages* .....37

## IV. AND ONE MORE PRESENTATION (IN THE BACK BECAUSE IT COULDN'T BE FORMATTED)

---

### CAT D. PRESENTS

10. *The Nature of Service: Humility, Reciprocity, Power, and Ego* .....83

## PRESENTATIONS & DESCRIPTIONS

Jim M	<i>Unusual Factoids From the Ra Contact</i>	Unusual factoids from the Ra contact that Jim has commented on in his daily <i>Camelot Journal</i> entries.
Amos S	<i>Kundalini Journey: Experiences of the Long Awakening</i>	I will share my processes of awakening and experiences of kundalini as portions of my life story and spiritual seeking.
Jonathan G	<i>Of Identity and Nothingness</i>	Using material from Ra & Q'uo, as well as personal experience, the presentation will look at identity and its relationship with consciousness, particularly as regards a sixth-density wanderer in third density.
Ken W	<i>Music, Because I Have To</i>	Spending my life as a musician has brought on many truly unique experiences. I'll share some of these stories as well as some music that I've been working on.
Fox H	<i>Microbes A Us or Realizing Oneness with Gaia</i>	Exploring the micro-cosmos, microbe gardening, the need to shift to a less-human centered viewpoint of life on Earth, and our physical and metaphysical role through realizing our oneness with Gaia.
Austin B	<i>Spiritual Bypassing and the Law of One</i>	We'll examine the concept of spiritual bypassing and how it might relate to the journey of a seeker of the Law of One. The first half will be a presentation introducing the concept and the second half will be a group discussion where attendees are invited to briefly share their own experiences or observations of spiritual bypassing on their own path.
Garry F	<i>The Resolving of Our Seeking</i>	Hollywoo Stars and Celebrities: What Do They Know? Do They Know Things?? Let's Find Out! Not a Bojack Horseman Presentation.
Wayne/John/ Emily	<i>Nameless: The Dance &amp; What Happens When It's Unimportant</i>	When you don't know what to do, Do nothing.  When the world is dull Or too much Allow It to be Nothing  The evidence Of God Will catch up with you  And maybe the whole world will follow
Beatriz G	<i>Aligning with Being</i>	The process of expanding in consciousness by embracing catalyst. Through acceptance, forgiveness and balance we integrate life

experiences that facilitate our moving beyond the sense of self as “body/mind” into the knowing of the self as “love and light,” pure awareness. This is the emergence of the spirit, the experience of the divine within. As we access this spaciousness within we also facilitate it for others.

Cat D	<i>The Nature of Service: Humility, Reciprocity</i>	Working in the thick of civic engagement, navigating a variety of philosophical attitudes towards multiple forms of service, and being a salesman of service under the mentorship of a Sufi wayfarer has deeply shifted my own perspective. I look forward to sharing that perspective with you.
Joseph D	<i>What Is An Archetype?</i>	It's been two years since I've made my way to homecoming. The first year I have spent attempting to grasp the archetypal mind from a different and, hopefully, helpful perspective. The second year I have spent learning to be the kind of teacher who encourages his students to think for themselves. I intend to join the fruits of these efforts by leading a group discussion targeted at one simple question: what is an archetype?
Morris H	<i>A Wanderer's Journey</i>	A story about a life elsewhere before arriving on this planet.
Jim I	<i>How It Works</i>	How this wanderer found a path to daily service to others through a service-to-self catalyst.
Jeremy W	<i>Social Media as Catalyst</i>	Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms offer avenues of sharing unparalleled in their reach, density of information, and rate of exchange. While these platforms offer great opportunities for service-to-others, they exhibit similar potentials for misunderstanding, hurt feelings, and less than loving actions. How can we appreciate and use the unique qualities of social media platforms to understand ourselves and render service?  In this presentation, Jeremy will focus on the often unappreciated aspects of manifesting oneself in the hyper-connected world of social media. Special focus will be given to questions of how to benefit from its unique reflection of the self and how to align usage with the same disciplines of personality we work on in the physical world.
Gary B	<i>Introducing the Law of One: Is It Possible?</i>	I'll lead the group in a light-hearted examination of facets of the <i>Law of One</i> that shine through various aspects of pop culture, sometimes in unexpected places.
Jade N	<i>A Sharing of Love and Light</i>	Jade hopes that she can take a brief moment with each in attendance to share a personal moment of mingling of energies and gratitude for the experience of coming to meet at this nexus in space/time.

**JONATHAN GOODWIN**  
*Of Identity and Dancing in Consciousness*

First, I wish to thank the L/L Research people for providing the context for the creation of this little presentation. It's been very interesting struggling with its composition, and in the doing, I've become more clear about my own general situation. Incidentally, I should thank them also for creating and maintaining the work they do because it's been rather important to me over the years.

My presentation is principally concerned with the phenomenon of identity, particularly from the point of view of a sixth density entity within third density incarnation. What is identity, why is it useful and how do we throw it away when we're done using it? We'll explore, using the context of the Ra Material, how the creation & dissolution of our personal identities recapitulate the story of universal creation, and how this is just one more iteration of the upward spiraling trend of consciousness. As we move from identity to identity to no identity, we are the means of the Creator knowing itself, and my hope is that, hearing this little discussion, you might accidentally slip into some deeper ways of knowing your own self.

So, we'll begin at the beginning and run quickly through the Ra Material version of the Creation Story.

If we search the *Law of One* books, what can this channeled material suggest to us about the origin and the nature of Creation? Well, the story goes like this... [13.5] *The first known thing in the Creation is Infinity.* Then... [13.6] *Infinity became aware. This was the next step.* And then... [13.7] *Awareness led to the focus of Infinity into infinite energy.... The Creator is the focusing of infinity as an aware or conscious principle.* These statements are supplemented later on [15.21] with the idea that what infinity became aware of was free will, that is, the freedom to break the infinite whole into discrete sections and become aware of "many-ness." However, at that stage, there were no divisions yet created until awareness found focus as the conscious Creator which began focusing intelligent energy into the elements of Creation. Ra refers to the Creator as "Love," and I view this the seminal prototype of identity...also the ultimate one.

Returning to the story now.....[13.8] *The next step is an infinite reaction to the creative principle [which is]...freedom of will. Thus, dimensions, infinite in number, are possible.* We should also note... [13.16] *Each step recapitulates Intelligent Infinity in its discovery of Oneness.* Meaning that... [13.15] *the progression is from galaxy spiraling energy to the solar spiraling energy to the planetary spiraling energy to the experimental circumstances of spiraling energy which begin the first density of awareness...of planetary entities.* In a different passage, Ra describes it this way: [13.12] *Intelligent Infinity discerned a concept:...finitude....Thus, the one Intelligent Infinity invested itself in an exploration of many-ness. Due to the infinite possibilities of Intelligent Infinity, there is no ending to many-ness. The exploration, thus, is free to continue infinitely in an eternal present.*

Stopping to restate this, the first known thing is Infinity, then Infinity became aware. Became aware of what? Inchoate infinity became aware of the possibility of creating infinite patterns of infinite energy. (And as we know from modern physics, the term "energy," broadly interpreted, encompasses matter as well as wave forms.) The Creator is that which, having awareness, then focuses or shapes these patterns of energy in order to become aware of their infinite variety. The long term goal is to become aware of manifest infinity first in a granular way, then to consciously re-encompass the totality of it eventually in seventh density.

In some sense this also describes how we live our lives: we become aware of various sorts of energies and choose to become more consciously aware of some of them. Often, these turn out to be the energies and drives of our own feelings and proclivities, but we try to experience them in the moment, and then to synthesize or distill the experience into a more general understanding. From this perspective, we are conscious co-Creators, choosing ways to shape the infinite energies around us.

Just to state the obvious here, though, within this fabulously expansive panorama of celestial forms of conscious being, our one specific personal identity shows up as a rather small dot. However, in another sense, all of the dots are comparatively small, and also, all are stepping stones towards an encompassing conscious awareness of the totality. As for “an eternal present” mentioned above, Ra describes it like this: [36.1] *There is a dimension in which time does not have sway. In this dimension, the mind/body/spirit in its eternal dance of the present may be seen in totality and, before the mind/body/spirit complex which then becomes part of the social memory complex is willingly absorbed into the allness of the One Creator, the entity knows itself in its totality.*

Ra explains further: [41.16] *The seventh density is a density of completion and turning towards timelessness or foreverness. To one degree or another, graduation from seventh density is a returning to something like that initial state of Infinity. Ra further states: [16.22] There is past, present and future in third density. In an overview such as an entity may have, removed from the spacetime continuum, it may be seen that in the cycle of completion, there exists only the present. We, ourselves, seek to learn this understanding. At the seventh level...we shall, if our humble efforts are sufficient, become one with all, thus having no memory, no identity, no past or future, but existing in all.*

To sum this all up before we move along, we are derived of infinite energy which has taken infinite forms and then progressed through various levels of consciousness. Right now we’re at some particular stage of progression through the densities and a higher manifestation of ourself sees the totality of our entire evolution as it is, was and shall be, and based on all of that guides us in between incarnations. Of course, our journey through the densities might appear entirely unnecessary if everything is already mapped out and known in “an eternal present.” However, the thing to bear in mind here, if I may be so bold as to say, is that the eternal present is not a static diagram, rather it is a flow of energy, an eternal dance, if you will. Therefore, our nature is to flow from one state to another so long as we travel within the realms of fluctuating identity.

That’s it for the brief cosmic view of identity. Now we’ll move towards the human level.

As we all know, in utero, our identity as biological beasts is physically recapitulated as we move from single cell critters to multi-celled things resembling a fish, then to something resembling a monkey—tail and all—until our bodies actually take a human form. As we grow we move through various stages of development where our energy centers become more active and conductive of energies as we continue to mature and explore the world around us. Naturally, our identity also develops as this process unfolds. Additionally, we bring into incarnation with us various proclivities and biases with which we also tend to identify ourselves. Q’uo described this nicely. [9/4/2005] *As a body, mind and spirit dwelling in flesh, you are a doorway through which you have been able to bring, out of all that you are, a little suitcase-full of personality traits, gifts and limitations, which you have chosen very carefully and with exquisite thought. You wished to bring those gifts that you would use to offer your outer service. As well, you wished to bring blockages and limitations that you felt would enable you to be confused in certain helpful ways that would lead you to question your suffering. For, indeed, the blockages and limitations are brought through specifically in order to offer you catalyst—and, therefore, what you normally conceive of as suffering—that would bring you face to face with those parts of yourself that you have not yet, in your own estimation, brought into perfect balance.*

And speaking of “perfect balance,” our seven primary energy centers recapitulate the seven densities, and the ideal, as Ra portrays it [54.15], is to have all your chakras clear and resonant and in harmony with each other energy. And this approach is viewed as prime service to the One Creator because it offers to consciousness maximum flexibility. That is, if all your energy centers are available and freely responsive, then your consciousness is ever ready to accept and respond to new catalyst.

Of course, this ideal might seem to be just out of reach for most of us, but the basic principle is something always available to be practiced, that is, we can always try to open as much as we can to the experience of being who we are. Maybe this is a little harder than it sounds, but the essence of it is transparent.

As Q'uo commented, [5/17/2005] *"It is difficult to think of the main and centrally located constituent service to the One Infinite Creator as that of being, and yet that is what you came to Earth to do. You came here to be yourself, to breathe the air, to participate in the illusion of planet Earth, to go through each and every detail of receiving catalyst, responding to catalyst, moving through the periods of joy and suffering that this catalyst offers you, and always your chief responsibility is to be yourself, to feel truly, to examine yourself as fully as you can and to know yourself to the very limit of your ability. You wish to know yourself, not judge or condemn yourself or to pat yourself on the back, but simply to become aware of who you are."* In other words, you are the agent of consciousness whose job is to be conscious of the infinite energies around you and within you, and to know these things—as elements of yourself—fully. Thus, the deeper you penetrate your own identity, from the personal to the impersonal, the closer you come knowing to the One Infinite Creator. Of course, doing this work can be a bit of a strain on the old personal identity, but we'll say more about that a little later.

So, now we'll move to the final section of this presentation where I discuss the Q'uo reading done for myself in 2006 and make some final comments on identity and try to tie this whole package together.

By the late 1990's I had been working for several years with a clairvoyant uncovering a variety of strange distortions in my subtle energy field. For instance, she averred that I had characteristics of one who had ascended to a high degree in darker dimensions. At one point she jokingly referred to me as "King of the Hell Realms." She said I was a double agent in this lifetime, working for both the Light, when it pleased me, and for the forces of Darkness when that seemed like more fun. That she said these things was not disturbing. What rattled me was that I could pick up indicators within myself to verify this, and that caused me a fair bit of visceral distress. I didn't mind the part about being an agent for the Light, but my being an agent for dark forces was much harder to accept. It expanded my identity, shall we say, in ways I was not prepared for.

She told me that, searching her memory banks for things she had read on the topic, *The Ra Material* had some things to say about ascension in the ways of evil, and maybe I'd like to find a copy and read up on it? Well, I immediately did so, and it's hard to describe the comfort I felt sitting in that vibration and reading that elegant model of existence. I gained greater respect for the material as I more fully understood the deep respect it has for the negative path. I've never before nor since found comparable appreciation—if one can call it that—for entities traveling in those creepier currents of exploration.

Anyhow, years passed and I began to integrate things more smoothly, but I felt I wanted to leave on the Internet a document for the benefit of others in my position of having some level of activation in the lower and higher chakras, but not so much in the area of the heart. I wanted it to be a hint to my fellows about other pathways of exploration that might be open to them. So, I scraped up the cash for a personal reading from Q'uo and it went in a direction I did not expect. There was very little mention of Light or Dark at all. Rather than speaking about polarization and all that jazz, the session was about... [4/16/2006] *balancing... love, light, power and peace. We offer these words to indicate the dimensions of love and wisdom, or the lessons of fourth density and fifth density, that are studied in sixth density in order to unify and solidify the point of awareness that contains all of the consciousness that is granted to all aspects of the creative principle.* In other words, the nature of my overall creative assignment here isn't so much involvement in gaining positive or negative polarity, but rather seems concerned with acceptance and balancing of an unpleasant array of inimical and antagonistic forces with a strong inherent connection to supernal energies.

Q'uo went on to note that I am overbalanced in Wisdom—notably arrogant, actually—and that it would be a good idea if I were to cozy up closer to my heart. However, *[t]he difficulty that entities find when*



*attempting to enter their heart is that they must needs integrate all of their personality shell into that entity which stands at the door and seeks entrance. All entities carry the full 360 degrees of personality: the entire spectrum of light and dark lives and thrives within each spirit sent forth by the One Infinite Creator before the world was. This hearkens back to the Q'uo quote above about the suitcase. Those few personality characteristics we bring along to vivify a particular lifetime are as threads that can be traced back to an entire tapestry of subtle personality, and one may choose to regularize or crystallize or integrate all of this into one entity who seeks communion with the One Infinite Creator.*

*After that followed some information particular to those who cannot see beyond their own intelligence and who have trouble because there is no cleverness involved in opening the heart and about how it's hard to release the intelligence and knowledge that is so proudly carried and so skillfully used in the outer manifestations of life on planet Earth. But then it took a turn for the better. To one who has indeed cast aside arrogance, the voice of spirit becomes quite audible and there is a liveness of interchange that is not possible while the egoic structure of the personality shell retains its knowledge of its self-sufficiency. And then it got more interesting.*

*What is the "I" of a person and of a soul? When consciousness itself is the "I" of you, then shall your heart be free to open and blossom and radiate infinitely. And from that perspective alone shall you at last be able to march from the sanctum sanctorum fed and strengthened in full knowledge of who you are for the first time and ready at last to do serious work upon balancing the wisdom you offered to yourself as a gift and as catalyst.*

It seems that the summing up of all of one's potential for consciousness conduces to a liberating effect which allows one to much more freely "dance in consciousness." But then the question naturally arises, by what means do we travel from our normal state of partial identity to a fully integrated one?

*Later, the following was stated. We speak as if there is a "we" and a "they," a "you" and an "I," and this is not precisely correct. For there is an ever flowing movement of energy along lines of force which are created by your thoughts and feelings rather than there being a dynamic of two. You are experiencing ways of structuring the self so that it may be known to the self. We do not wish to take away every structure of your thought in an instant. Rather, we would that you would conceive of this journey as a dance. It is a dance in which your movements express a gradual increase in your ability to be naked and without personality. Viewed this way, all the tools we need are at hand. Once again, we are playing the role of consciousness becoming aware of Infinity.*

We'll finish up now with some suggested exercises from the same reading to make the dancing a little easier. Here's the first. *In the privacy and intimacy of your silent meditation, allow all to fall away, as it will, and sit with that which is left until it, too, falls away. Repeat this process until when you sit, you simply sit.*

*And here are the others. Practices which aid an entity in becoming more aware of its own heart are those practices which are very momentary. It is difficult to discipline the self to use the present moment, but it is in the present moment that you may practice opening the heart.*

*Stop and think about your facial expression. Are you smiling? Are you frowning? Place upon your face the beginnings of a smile and each time you become aware of your expression curve up the edges of your lips into a slight smile. Over time, examine the results of this seemingly completely superficial practice.*

*When you are aware that you are entering the presence of another, take a moment to acknowledge, accept and admire the perfection of that individual. Naturally, that perfection is not apparent to the outer eye in most cases. Do not let that stop you. You know that each entity is the Creator. Take a moment to establish that acknowledgment, acceptance and admiration.*

*Before you arise from your bed, call for help. Your guidance system cannot begin to act actively in your life unless you call it, not just once, but every day and every moment.*

And we'll conclude with this. *Wisdom has a tendency to create within an entity the feeling that he or she is powerful and self-sufficient. In truth, when power has been wedded to peace and light has been wedded to love, true power emerges. And in that power is rest. In that compassion is wisdom. But the ground upon which you stand in order to do this work of reconciling and harmonizing those factors that blend into who you are is Love.*

I thank you all for your “eternal presence” and for your patience.

Fox HUTT

*Supplementary Material for “Microbes & Us” or “Realizing Oneness with Gaia”*

*Exploring the micro-cosmos, microbe gardening, the need to shift to a less-human centered viewpoint of life on Earth, and our physical and metaphysical role through realizing our oneness with Gaia.*

“In the human spirit, as in the universe, nothing is higher or lower; everything has equal rights to a common center which manifests its hidden existence precisely through this harmonic relationship between every part and itself.”  
Goethe

41.10 Questioner: When first density is formed, we have fire, air, earth, and water. There is at some time the first movement or individuation of life into a portion of consciousness that is self-mobile. Could you describe the process of the creation of this and what type of energy center that it has?

Ra: I am Ra. The first or red-ray density, though attracted towards growth, is not in the proper vibration for those conditions conducive to what you may call the spark of awareness. **As the vibratory energies move from red to orange the vibratory environment is such as to stimulate those chemical substances which lately had been inert to combine in such a fashion that love and light begin the function of growth.**

The supposition which you had earlier made concerning single-celled entities such as the polymorphous dinoflagellate is correct. **The mechanism is one of the attraction of upward spiraling light. There is nothing random about this or any portion of evolution.**  
The Law of One

9.14 Questioner: Then there were second-density entities here prior to approximately 75,000 years ago. What type of entities were these?

Ra: The second-density is the density of the higher plant life and animal life which exists without the upward drive towards the infinite. **These second-density beings are of an octave of consciousness just as you find various orientations of consciousness among the conscious entities of your vibration.**  
The Law of One

“...*The New York Times* reports [that] after arranging the genes in evolutionary family trees, they found that 355 bacteria and archaea—single-celled organisms with no nucleus (prokaryotes) that eventually gave rise to all plants and animals (eukaryotes) originated from Luca, an acronym for the Last Universal Common Ancestor,...[possibly] in scalding deep-sea hydrothermal vents.”

From a recent news clip in *The Week* magazine

“...Every life-form we see—again, *every* life-form, including your and me—is simply a modification of bacteria in a more complex form. We are complex innovations of the bacterial communities of the Earth extended over very long time lines. And we really aren’t that important, in spite of how numerous we appear to be. We are only a *tiny* part of the biomass of the planet. While plants make up over 90 percent of that biomass by weight, bacteria are still the dominant, and most numerous life-forms. There are some  $5 \times 10^{30}$  bacteria on this Earth. That is 50 followed by 30 zeros (nine zeros is a billion, to put it in perspective). Another  $5 \times 10^{18}$  continually circulate in the atmosphere. And that bacterial biomass? It is fundamental to

Earth. Gaia would not exist without it. As microbiologist Carl Woese puts it, “If you wiped out all multicellular life-forms off the face of the earth, microbial life might shift a tiny bit...If microbial life were to disappear, that would be it—instant death for the planet.

“The Gaian ecosystem, the self-organized system that we know as Earth, came into being with the emergence of the global bacterial community. That bacterial community still is the foundation of this world. It *is* Gaia. It is the interconnected network of millions of bacterial biofilms, individual bacteria, and symbiogenic, bacterial generated, complex life-forms [including us] that lies deep within the crust of the Earth (perhaps by as much as 5 kilometers), covers the entire surface of the planet, and extends at least 50 kilometers above the Earth’s surface.

“...Bacteria came to form one global, exceedingly diversified, yet functionally unified peculiar being.

“Once that self-organized system emerged, it began to modulate the environment at a global scale in order to keep it self-organized state intact.”

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:

Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 134-136

“...The biosphere can be understood as a complex three-dimensional biofilm that extends from deep in the Earth to the edges of space. That Gaian biofilm continually regulates the environment of the Earth; it is, for instance, what keeps the oxygen content of the atmosphere at 21 percent. Oxygen, a highly reactive gas, will, when left to its own devices, combine with other elements to achieve a stable state, but on this planet, it does not. It was that insight that began James Lovelock’s understanding that the Earth is a self-organized system regulating its own environment.”

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:

Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 137-138

“Mitochondria...[which are] direct descendants of bacteria lodged inside the cells of animals and plants, inhabit nearly every nucleated cell...providing the cell surrounding them with abundant energy derived from oxygen of the air. Because of mitochondria, all earthly beings made of nucleated cells—which, of course includes us and all organisms except bacteria—have remarkably similar metabolisms...Bacteria, by contrast, exhibit a far wider range of metabolic variations...They indulge in bizarre fermentation, produce methane gas, “eat” nitrogen gas right out of the air, derive energy from globules of sulfur,...combust hydrogen using oxygen to make water, grow in boiling water and in salt brine...and so forth. As a group bacteria obtain their food and energy by ingenious methods, using every sort of plant fiber and animal waste as a starting material. (If they did not, we would be living in a mounting heap of garbage.) We, however, use just one of their many metabolic designs for energy production, namely that of aerobic respiration, the specialty of mitochondria.”

Micro-Cosmos: Four Billion Years of Microbial Evolution,  
Lynn Margulis and Dorian Sagan, pg. 128

“There are over ten million billion mitochondria in the human body...They regulate energy production, aging, epigenetic signaling between and within cells and many other important functions.”

<https://www.hormonesmatter.com/mighty-mitochondria/>

“Human bodies don’t contain 10 times as many bacteria as human cells, new calculations suggest.

“A “standard man” weighing 70 kilograms has roughly the same number of bacteria and human cells in his body, researchers report online January 6 at bioRxiv.org. This average guy would be composed of about 40 trillion bacteria and 30 trillion human cells, calculate researchers at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, and the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. That’s a ratio of 1.3 bacteria to every one human cell.

“...The reduced ratio in no way diminishes the effect bacteria have on human health, commenters told *Science News*. Most said it doesn’t matter what the real number is, just that it’s right. Besides, ‘one-to-one is pretty impressive,’ Rosner says. ‘There’s as much of them as there is of us.’ ”

Body’s Bacteria Don’t Outnumber Human Cells So Much After All,

<https://www.sciencenews.org>

“Microbes (Microorganisms) are divided into **six types**: bacteria, archaea, protozoa, algae, fungi, and viruses.”

<https://www.boundless.com/microbiology/textbooks/boundless-microbiology-textbook/introduction-to-microbiology-1/microbes-and-the-world-19/types-of-microorganisms-207-1066/>

“Viruses...perform the really irritating function of intermingling the DNA from every species of Earth with every other.

“...Horizontal gene transfer between all life-forms on this planet, often through mosquito bites with transmit viruses in and out of organisms, is, along with symbiogenesis, one of the main driving forces in genetic innovation. We contain within ourselves the DNA of plants, insects, and bacteria and viruses. We are, in fact, the “other” that we have been trying to kill. There isn’t, ultimately, any truly separate species; there isn’t, ultimately, any pure bloodline of any sort any place on this planet.

“...As James Lovelock [the founder of Gaia theory] puts it, “The entire range of living matter on Earth, from whales to viruses, and from oaks to algae, could be regarded as constituting a single living entity, capable of maintaining the Earth’s atmosphere to suit its overall needs and endowed with faculties and powers far beyond this of its constituent parts.

“...(That would indicate, of course, that we, as subpart, have capacities far less than that of Gaia. In other words, that our capacity for thinking is exceeded by something non-human.)”

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:

Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 141-143

“Many of the latest discoveries are challenging previously held ideas about good and bad bacteria. We are witnessing the shift from a World ruled by the antibacterial obsessed and non-stop antibacterial marketing, to one that has a heightened awareness of the importance of the microbial ecosystem (the microbiome).”

<http://bigthink.com/amped/humans-10-human-and-90-bacterial>

GMO and Round-up

<https://gmo-awareness.com/resources/glyphosate/>

Glyphosate levels in our food

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/05/20/glyphosate-roundup-levels.aspx>

34.7 Questioner: Do what we call contagious diseases play any part in this process with respect to the unmanifested self?

Ra: I am Ra. These so-called contagious diseases are those entities of second density which offer an opportunity for this type of catalyst. If this catalyst is unneeded, then these second-density creatures, as you would call them, do not have an effect. In each of these generalizations you may please note that there are anomalies so that we cannot speak to every circumstance but only to the general run or way of things as you experience them. The Law of One

“The neurochemicals in our bodies were used in every life-form on the planet long before we showed up. They predate the emergence of the human species by hundreds of millions of years. They must have been doing something all that time, you know, besides waiting for us to appear.”

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:  
Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,  
Stephen Harrod Buhner, pg. 123

“The original neural networks that are present in all bacteria and their communities have been expanded in both shape and size and extent over long time lines. All the living self-organized systems that we know of as life-forms contain neural networks based on the original bacterial network that emerged. And the neurochemicals that bacteria originally developed have been refined over long time lines and are now used by virtually every life-form that exists.

*Our neural network is only a modification  
of an already extant neural reality  
that pervades the entire Earth ecosystem;  
it is only a specific instance of a general condition*

“This expansion of the neural net, in multiple forms, all interconnected, facilitates the intake and processing of environmental information at ever more sophisticated levels for the Gaian network as a whole. Each self-organized system, that is, each subset of the larger whole, possesses a drive to fulfill its ecological function within the whole, and each possesses a sophisticated neural network with which it gathers data about the local environment in which it exists. *Each also possesses free will as to how it accomplishes its function and how it responds to environmental perturbations. Gaia does not use top-down control over the parts that make up the whole.*

*“...The parts are relied upon to use their own analyses and choices as to how to respond, in essence, giving Gaia a network of trillions upon trillions of neural networks all working in their own sphere to help maintain Gaian homeodynamics.”*

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:  
Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,  
Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 139-140

30.6 Questioner: ...Just as a passing point, I was wondering, in— on this planet during the second density I believe there was habitation at the same time/space of bipedal entities and what we call the dinosaurs. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct.

30.7 Questioner: These two types of entities seem to be incompatible, you might say, with each other. I don't know. Can you tell me the reason behind both types of entities inhabiting the same space/time?

Ra: I am Ra. **Consider the workings of free will as applied to evolution. There are paths that the mind/body complex follows in an attempt to survive, to reproduce, and to seek in its fashion that which is unconsciously felt as the potential for growth; these two arenas or paths of development being two among many.** The Law of One

“What [is] important over long evolutionary time lines...is not any particular organism or any particular period of life expression or any particular form life on this planet takes or has ever taken, but simply the continuance of the self-organized system itself.

“...All forms that have been still are and all that will be already exist in the Ocean of Being...These forms are continually drawn into being in physical space to serve a specific function...[and] any particular organism that emerges out of the self-organized matrix of the Earth system does so for particular reasons at a particular time.”

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:

Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 143-144

Perhaps the process of the sub-sub-Logos spinning through free will is also like a water wheel, plunging, reaching, descending into the finite, concrete world, through the Potentiator's infinite possibilities, and then rising again through the Matrix, filled with Catalyst, much spilling out unused, to be processed into the essence of Experience. Fox's musing on The Law of One, 92.13

29.8 Questioner: Then every entity that exists would be some type of sub- or sub-sub-Logos. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct down to the limits of any observation, for the entire creation is alive.

29.9 Questioner: Then the planet which we walk upon here would be some form of sub-sub-Logos. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. **A planetary entity is so named only as Logos if it is working in harmonic fashion with entities or mind/body complexes upon its surface or within its electromagnetic field.**

29.10 Questioner: Okay. Do the sub-Logos, such as our sun, do any of them— in our major galaxy— do they have a metaphysical polarity, shall we say, positive or negative as we've been using the term?

Ra: I am Ra. As you use the term, this is not so. **Entities through the level of planetary have the strength of intelligent infinity through the use of free will, going through the actions of beingness.** The polarity is not, thusly, as you understand polarity. It is only when the planetary sphere begins harmonically

interacting with mind/body complexes, and more especially mind/body/spirit complexes, that planetary spheres take on distortions due to the thought complexes of entities interacting with the planetary entity. The creation of the One Infinite Creator does not have the polarity you speak of.

29.11 Questioner: Thank you. Yesterday you stated that planets in first density are in a timeless state to begin with. Can you tell me how the effect we appreciate as time comes into being?

Ra: I am Ra. We have just described to you the state of beingness of each Logos. The process by which space/time comes into continuum form is a function of the careful building, shall we say, of an entire or whole plan of vibratory rates, densities, and potentials. When this plan has coalesced in the thought complexes of Love, then the physical manifestations begin to appear; this first manifestation stage being awareness or consciousness.

At the point at which this coalescence is at the livingness or beingness point, the point or fountainhead of beginning, space/time then begins to unroll its scroll of livingness. The Law of One

“Roots of plants are exquisitely aware of *self* and *not-self* [or other-self in Confederation language] and engage in sophisticated interactions with a wide range of living organisms...

“The plant roots enter into symbiotic relationships with bacteria, fungi, and other plants that are highly sophisticated. Bacteria form colonies on roots systems and produce nitrogen nodules, which the plant can then use as a nitrogen source...and in exchange the bacteria gain nutrients...Roots also form close attachments with fungal mycelia. In fact, most plant roots are part of a sophisticated root/fungus communal network that can extend over miles. The mycelia provide immune enhancing compounds and various neurochemicals for the plants, again in exchange for nutrients, that supports the development and immune function of the plant body and root brain, just exactly as they do in us when we take them as herbal medicines.

“This highly developed mycelial/plant root system connects all the plants in a particular ecorange into one self-organized whole that, itself, possesses capacities not perceivable in any of the parts. In essence, a large self-organized neural network develops. This leads to the emergence of a unique *identity* in every identifiable ecorange on Earth.

*It is possible then, if you reclaim your capacity to feel,  
to make intelligent contact with the intelligence of any ecorange  
in which you are embedded, to establish rapport and deep friendship  
and to learn from that relationship, to, in fact, learn to “think like a mountain  
[or in my case, think like a garden]” from the mountain itself*

“...Within that system, all the plants are continually communicating with each other, sending chemical communications along the mycelial network to other plants in the community...*a biological internet that existed long before our pale imitation.*

“If plants in the system detect that another plant in the mycelial network is ill, unique compounds are generated by plants most able to do so and sent through the mycelial network to where they are most needed...This kind of cooperation...produces an ecorange much more adaptable to environmental perturbations than would occur if each organism were constantly fighting each other...The old lie...that life is a constant struggle for survival in an implacably hostile environment, just doesn’t bear up under close examination. Life-forms die, yes, but they also help other members of their family, and other members of their species, and the members of other species off and on throughout their lifetimes. Just as we do...



"These interactions are highly intelligent and individually generated out of each self-organized plant entity

"The underground roots are...engaged in social activities that require self-awareness." *Baluska et al.* Like bacteria, plants form social communities that are tightly coupled together. And similarly to bacteria, plants

*show just the same sort of complex and sophisticated behaviors that humans do, from language, to sentience, to intelligence, to the creation of cities, to cooperation in groups, to complex adaptation to their environment, to protection of offspring, to species memory that is handed down through generations. And, if the definition of tool is extended, as it should be, to the creation of chemicals that are designed to produce specific impacts on environments their capacities include intelligent tool making.*

"...The boundaries of these ecoranges, by the way, like the boundaries of all self-organized systems, are very porous. There is a constant flow of energy, and information, into and out of them. They are all tightly interwoven into the larger ecosystem of the Earth itself. Each acts locally, each acts globally. They are part of a highly complex and redundant system for maintaining the homeodymanis of the Earth. They develop more complexity over time, for the greater complexity, the greater the ability to maintain homeodynamis."

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:

Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 124-129

Tu-shun, a Chinese Buddhist who lived at the turn of the 7th century, developed a profound metaphor for the structure of reality called the Net of Indra. Stephen Mitchell writes in The Enlightened Mind, "Imagine a vast net; at each crossing point there is a jewel; each jewel is perfectly clear and reflects all the other jewels in the net, the way two mirrors placed opposite each other will reflect an image ad infinitum. The jewel in this metaphor stands for an individual being, or and individual consciousness, or a cell, or an atom. Every jewel is intimately connected with all other jewels in the universe, and a change in one jewel means a change, however slight, in every other jewel." He quotes Tu-shun, who explains, "[Each] jewel...is all the jewels of the ten directions. If you don't believe that one jewel in [say] the southwest is all the jewels of the ten directions, just put a dot on the jewel in the southwest. When one jewel is dotted, there are dots in all the jewels in all directions. Since there are dots on all the jewels in all directions, we know that all the jewels are one jewel." If you remember this metaphor when you think of our tiny microbe cousins and our Mother Gaia, and even our galactic Logos, as well as our human mind/body/spirit complexes, it is easier to see the present oneness of the Creator's experience in this very "now".

The Enlightened Mind, edited by Stephen Mitchell, pgs. 41-44

"...We emerged not only from our mother's wombs, but also from the wildness of the world...We are an expression of the ecosystem, the womb, the Earth, an ecological response of the planet."

The Secret Teachings of Plants:

The Intelligence of the Heart in the Direct Perception of Nature,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pgs. 94-95

"The characteristics of a living object is that it reacts to external stimuli rather than being passively propelled by them. An organism's life consists of constant mid-course corrections' *Lewontin*...[or] the capacity of a living organism—and that includes everything from viruses to human beings—to choose among multiple

effective options in response to incoming environmental pressures. It is in fact indicative not only of the capacity to choose but also...of free will...Most people, including the majority of scientists, have been taught that human beings are somehow innately different from the other organisms on this planet.

*nevertheless we are not*

"We are different only in the specific ecological functions we serve—just as every living organism is—but we are not different in our underlying capacities from other life-forms on this planet. And that most definitely includes intelligence. Our intelligence is only a special instance of a general condition."

Plant Intelligence and the Imaginal Realm:

Beyond the Doors of Perception into the Dreaming of the Earth,

Stephen Harrod Buhner, pg. 78

"Few planetary experiences are as challenging in their very nature and in the structure of catalyst that abounds as the one whose experience you now share and partially constitute. It is a wholesome meditation to contemplate that every last portion of the planetary experience is part of a whole which will, in the fullness of time, be healed. Every last voice will be invited to sing in the choir." Q'uo., November 21, 2015

14.2 Questioner: When this Earth was second-density, how did the second-density beings on this Earth become so invested?

Ra: There was not this type of investment as spoken but the simple third-density investment which is the line of spiraling light calling distortion upward from density to density. The process takes longer when there is no investment made by incarnate third-density beings.

19.5 Questioner: When the first second-density entities became third on this planet, was this with the help of the transfer of beings from Mars, or were there second-density entities that evolved into third density with no outside influence?

Ra: I am Ra. There were some second-density entities which made the graduation into third density with no outside stimulus but only the efficient use of experience.

Others of your planetary second density joined the third-density cycle due to harvesting efforts by the same sort of sending of vibratory aid as those of the Confederation send you now. This communication was, however, telepathic rather than telepathic/vocal or telepathic/written due to the nature of second-density beings.

20.2 Questioner: Then the second-density entities that did not get harvested at the beginning of this 75,000-year period, some are still in second density on this planet. Were any of these who remained in second density harvested into third density in the past 75,000 years?

Ra: I am Ra. This has been increasingly true.

The Law of One

"...each entity's creation is his own. The biases that he encourages in his life become the biases of his world. Entities are people of great power. They are part of the godhead principle. All entities, even the elements, the animals, and all of nature, have this power. But they do not know that they have it. And consequently they

use it effortlessly and without any impurity, being incapable of altering their nature and only capable of fulfilling it.

“You, as self-conscious entities, have far greater ability to create because you are conscious of yourself. You are aware that you are a being that is seeking... You can create a lot of complexity in terms of how you perceive things and what you choose upon which to focus.

“Consequently, your particular creation has sometimes a dramatic difference in coloration from the creations of some about you as you walk through your everyday experience. When you have achieved a sense of your own power and are dedicated to using that power rightly, you become a force beyond the normal run of human energy. Because you have awakened to your potential as the creator of your universe and because you have begun to enter into creating the universe as you feel you would wish it to be by acting in an ethical manner at times of choice, you begin to develop an energy about you that is the energy not only of your personality but of the creation which has become imagined into being within your life.”

Q’uo, February 11, 2007

“[The harvest] includes not only the individual mind/body/spirit complex, but also a great many other mind/body/spirit complexes who have come together in the unity of a one seeking, and who together comprise a kind of energy configuration which expresses what we might call a certain signature of being.

Now this signature is a product of the unique evolution of mind/body/spirit complexes in their union that takes place over the course of long periods of time and, in fact, upon this planet, we would say that it is a period which has begun far earlier than your third-density experience, and will continue far after the third-density portion of the experience has been completed. Thus, we might speak of a destiny of evolution which it is the function of each individual planet to carry forth that this destiny might become an adornment to the Creator, and an honestation to the creation.

“... These are a portion of that which shall be experienced and is, indeed, being experienced at this time, for within your third density there is a great deal of the movement of entities, of energies, of ideas and concepts so that it seems like this is a world in turmoil.

“And from an outer point of view it may indeed seem such, but we would suggest that upon the metaphysical level of the inner planes of your planet, this type of turmoil is seen as that which is the bubbling of the yeasty fruitful mixture of various entities and ideas so that from this cauldron of experience will be brought forth that which you would see as light, that which you would see as a direction for energies to be experienced, a direction for the intelligent energy of the Creator to move in discrete patterns, in patterns of organization, in patterns of inspiration, in patterns of ability to excite the imagination of entities to look beyond that which is now present in their conscious minds to bring forth that which is within the subconscious mind, to have a birth of a new kind within each entity; for you will see that there are many upon your plane now who seek spiritually in a sense which has not been experienced in times past. There are many who are seeking diligently and passionately for an experience of the One Infinite Creator.

“When these entities are able to bring forth this intelligent energy and intelligent infinity into manifestation within the third density, you will see more of what you would call the miracles, the changes of consciousness, the transformations of people, of places, of events; there shall be that which is momentous within your earth spheres.

“... You will find within your illusion, much of inspiration if you but seek for it within your meditative state. We would encourage, as always, that all entities engage in the meditative period as often as is possible, for there is nothing more helpful or hopeful in your incarnations—and for this planetary surface and future as it

transforms into fourth density—than the connection in the metaphysical state and the meditative state to that One Creator which resides within all things.

**“We encourage you in your meditations to send light and love to the planet itself, and to all who are in need of such...The One Creator exists in each and is making itself manifest in each in some fashion. The eye of the beholder is within the mind of the meditator. When your eye is single, your light shall be filling your body, and shall be that which leads you to the One Creator.** Q’uo, February 6, 2016

The Neolithic Makuna tribe of Columbia, South America, “maintain that humans, animals, plants, all of nature, are part of a great oneness. Our ancestors, they say, were magical fish who came ashore along the rivers and turned two-legged. As these first land beings began to conduct their lives, and to sing about it, everything in the world began to be created from their songs: hills and forests; animal and bird people; insect and fish people.

“But...this creation is ongoing...The world, say the Makuna, is still being created: our words, actions, and songs still determine the nature of the hills and forests, and still help create, sustain, or destroy the animal, fish, and bird people [and I would add our plant, microbe, and infinite other cousins].

“...According to the Makuna, our essential oneness with other species is...the source of enormous obligation. We depend on fish, animal, and bird people [again I would add our billions of other cousins] to eat and live. In return...[they] depend on us to spiritually enact, daily, the hidden oneness of all life...We have a dire obligation to offer “spirit food” to [our cousins, which the Makuna did with] elaborate gifts, dances, and feasts.

“What is a modern-day spirit offering? I’d say that now, as ever, it is anything we truly value. Our energy, our focus, the hours of our days...we [can] pour it out on the finned, feathered, four-legged [on down to the one-celled] peoples behalf...Prayers and mantras from the mystics. Money, time, and trouble from the capitalists and activists. Unflinching accuracy, no matter the political climate, from the scientists. The big blockade to change is lack of passion. And the birth-house of passion is the heart. A spirit offering, then is anything we can offer with a whole heart—any song, dance, phone call, plea, letter, insight, gift or prayer that helps determine the way we, and other humans continue to create our world, rivers, hills and forests.”

My Story As Told By Water by David James Duncan, pgs. 105-107

14.1 Questioner: Going back over this morning’s work, [inaudible]. You said the second density strives towards the third density which is the density of self-consciousness or self-awareness. The striving takes place through higher second-density forms invested by third-density beings. Could you explain what you mean by this?

Ra: I am Ra. Much as you would put on a vestment, so do your third-density beings invest or clothe some second-density beings with self-awareness. This is often done through the opportunity of what you call pets. It has also been done by various other means of investiture. **These include many so-called religious practice complexes which personify and send love to various natural second-density beings in their group form.**

The Law of One

“I am aware of my body, and therefore I am not just my body. I am aware of my mind, and therefore I am not just my mind. I am aware of my self, and therefore I am not just that self. Rather I seem somehow to be the Witness of my body, my mind, my self.

“...That single witnessing awareness...is God itself, *in its entirety*.

“...When I rest in single, clear ever-present awareness, every object is its own subject. Every event “sees itself,” as it were, because I am now that event seeing itself. I am not looking at the rainbow; I am the rainbow, which sees itself...The entire manifest world continues to arise, just as it is, except that all subjects and all objects have disappeared. The mountain is still the mountain, but it is not an *object* being looked at, and I am not a separate *subject* staring at it. Both I and the mountain arise in simple, ever present awareness...I am in fact nothing other than witnessing Spirit itself; I simply recognize the Spirit that I always already am.”

The Simple Feeling of Being, Ken Wilber, pgs. 245 & 252

“...In the inner or metaphysical sense, you are the sun of your inner universe. You have created that universe and you can recreate it at any time. That which you judge remains judged. That which you love remains loved. In every thought, in every circumstance, you are the Creator.”

Q'uo, August 12, 2007

“...Encountering moments that define me by erasing me.”

My Story As Told By Water, David James Duncan, pg. 77

**GARRY FUNG**

*The Resolving of our Seeking*

My Presentation today is on the nature of our Seeking. What is it? How does it present itself? What Frustrations does it lead to? What can we learn from it, and how do things 'resolve' as part of our Seeking. Seeking is something that we all become aware of at some point in our Lives; some would say they were born with it, and never lived without it. For others, it's something that kicks into high gear later in our Lives, which then motivates much directed, albeit sometimes much confused, activity. But if there's one thing I can say with some Certainty, it's that everyone here, listening, has had this Seeking Impulse put into motion; mere curiosity is not enough to have made us travel such a long way. We've all deliberately **chosen** to be in this Space that we currently are.

So what is Seeking? What is it's Nature? What is it's Purpose?

In the *Law of One*, Ra mentions a phenomena that they call the 'upward spiraling Light'. This is an aspect that is **fundamental** to Creation, as it is everpresent, in all places, and cannot in any way be extinguished. This 'upward spiraling Light' is present in every atom, every cell of a piece of spinach, is present in the consciousness of a Dog or a Cat; it's a quality which motivates higher density beings, it's present in our life-giving Sun. And, finally, of course, it is something which is inherent in the nature of human consciousness.

This upward spiraling Light is ubiquitous, and finds expression in many ways. But it is something truly fundamental. It is everpresent.

So how does that tie into the nature of Seeking, and today's topic?

Well, this upward spiraling Light desires to know itself more, and become more aware and conscious of what it is. So it finds all sorts of Expressions; from the basic and simple, like the loving earth and grass around us; to the more complex and convoluted, like the consciousness of human beings. But it seeks to become more aware and integrative; as that is it's very nature. It desires to **grow**, in other words.

But Growth in itself is not effortless. It takes a matching of the desire to grow; which is an awareness of what we are seeking, and pairing that with our present Situation, and seeing that it has the perfect parameters to inform the nature of our Seeking.

But maybe that sounds like a Word Salad to you: put more simply; we ourselves are a Question, and everything in Life around us, is the Answer. We just have to become more aware of what the 'Question' we are asking is.

//

So to seek is inherent in who we are. The big shift comes about when we are much more aware of the Process, and are able to facilitate it more.

So how does that come about? How can we facilitate our Seeking?

There is a beautiful quote which comes from Session 83 of the Law of One. It goes:

"Those of like mind which together seek shall far more surely find."

So being in good company is extremely helpful in this process.

//

Another way to bring our Seeking more closer to clarity is to increase our sensitivity to the Feedback of Life. In Ra's terms, this would be the processing of Catalyst, and being able to acknowledge things at an earlier stage of the Process, rather than a later one, when things have escalated. But this is not always easy: as sometimes things have to become really exaggerated, before we pay attention to it. We don't even see that there is a problem, until it has become one. But many times, we can 'feel' that things have gone off-course, and rather than continuing to plunge into wilderness, we can take a moment to stop, and try to 'query' what is going on. But again, this is not always the easiest, as many times we just don't have enough 'information' to clarify the Situation.

This is where Dreams and Meditation can help, as more introspective processes.

Dreams can be very helpful, as it serves as a 'bridge' from the conscious mind to the unconscious. In Ra's words (Session 86):

"The activity of dreaming is an activity in which there is made a finely wrought and excellently fashioned bridge from conscious to unconscious. In this state the various distortions which have occurred in the energy web of the body complex, due to the misprecision with which energy influxes have been received, are healed. With the proper amount of dreaming comes the healing of these distortions. Continued lack of this possibility can cause seriously distorted mind/body/spirit complexes."

So dreaming can serve as a healing function. But it is also **extremely helpful** to comprehend what has been healed, and why. And that's where the post-dream analysis comes into play, as it serves to increase awareness of ourselves and our interpretations, so that such Situations do not need to repeat themselves in the Future. It is very much a learning Opportunity.

In regards to Meditation, this is just taking an opportunity to honor the pathway of our Life, and trying to be more honest and sincere about what and why we are doing things. It's much more than just 'quieting the monkey mind'. It's then using that quiet space for a specific purpose. Again, from Ra (Session 49):

"The passive meditation involving the clearing of the mind, the emptying of the mental jumble which is characteristic of mind complex activity among your peoples, is efficacious for those whose goal is to achieve an inner silence as a base from which to listen to the Creator. This is an useful and helpful tool and is by far the most generally useful type of meditation as opposed to contemplation or prayer."

And if we are 'listening to the Creator', we are doing nothing more than just listening to Ourselves, albeit at a more deeper and profound substrate.

So in short, both Dreams and Meditation can help elucidate our Seeking, and give it firmer 'context'.

//

So back to the title of today's Presentation. The Resolving of our Seeking.

My premise is that we *can't help* but seek, and that it's the nature of consciousness to expand the domain of itself. But it also desires to have a **conscious comprehension** of it's seeking; and so when we are able to articulate an Understanding about our Seeking, then it has effectively been "resolved". Until then, it will keep surrounding us with clues, and we will notice bits and pieces of change, but not grasp the subterranean Meaning.

//

## Positive and Negative Seeking?

So how does this Seeking concept tie into polarity, and the two ways of knowing the Creator - that is, the positive path and the negative path.

Well, the fundamental nature of Polarity is that it means forming a Coherent Interpretation about the nature of other-selves. The first and second densities do not have positive and negative polarity. To have polarity, takes a certain measure of self-awareness, and that is facilitated by the physical vehicles that we have now; there are certain freedoms of thought which are enabled by the human brain; the type of conceptualisation that is not possible for a frog mind or a tree mind.

So in terms of Seeking, a bifurcation is possible in third density; which leads to coherent positivity and coherent negativity.

The Seeking that culminates in the third density choice of either being positive or being negative is premised on a fundamental approach to other entities. A positive entity is trying to see equality, even in the midst of inequality, by attempting to understand things as a level-playing field, that we are all in this together. A negative entity is trying to create a pyramid scheme; where some are below (the slaves and the workers), and some are above (the owners and the masters). It's very much trying to create rank and superiority, even in the midst of unconditional love. Some are deserving, and others are not.

The Seeking that leads to a strengthening of one of these 2 Available Choices is something which presents itself again and again; it's the basic catalyst of this Density.

//

## Unresolved Seeking?

As I said at the start, one cannot really escape from this upward spiralling Light, that seeks to become more fully aware of itself. To be conscious, and human beings are 'consciously conscious', if that makes any sense, means that we are always aware of the next aspect that desires conscious Integration. The Seeking is everpresent.

When we grasp the Situations, and can articulate the Understandings, then the Seeking can be resolved, at least on that level. When it goes Unresolved, it does linger as a kind of frustration or a bafflement, and is experienced as a kind of Question with no satisfactory answer. That will nag away at us, in our Quiet Moments, when we are able to experience the deeper currents of ourself. And it's not very satisfying at all - to be constantly presented with a Question that you don't know how to Answer, and yet is quite insistent and seemingly always present.

But to truly grow, we have to move towards resolving our Seeking. Or at least make earnest and genuine attempts to do so.

Unresolved Seeking that persists over years is something which is truly depressive.

//

## The Takeaway Message

So in short, I think I am pointing to something that is both elegantly simple, as well as being truly Profound.

It's that the nature of Consciousness is to move towards greater wholeness, and that we are literally inundated with the symbols and the clues to do so.



Our Seeking is ever present. As is the means to resolve each instance of it.

We are truly being empowered by the Creation itself to grow and become more than we are.

Namaste.

**BEATRIZ GONZALES**  
*Aligning With Being*

## **Aligning with Being and Self Healing**

This presentation is about accessing self healing by awakening to the divine within and living from this center of our being. In my quest to facilitate healing for myself and others, I discovered that we have within us the ability to heal ourselves of imbalances that may manifest as disease, and to even live beyond disease.

In the (*Law of One* 4:20) Ra talks about healing:

*RA: I am Ra..... One of the primal distortions of the Law of One is that of healing. Healing occurs when a mind/body/spirit complex realizes, deep within itself, the Law of One: that is, that there is no disharmony, no imperfection; that all is complete and whole and perfect. Thus, the intelligent infinity within this mind/body/spirit complex re-forms the illusion of body, mind, or spirit to a form congruent with the Law of One. The healer acts as energizer or catalyst for this completely individual process.*

My work is as a health intuitive. I am clairsentient and have learned to use this gift to facilitate healing for others. In the beginning, the focus of my work was in providing relief from physical symptoms with herbal remedies, diet changes and other supportive therapies. After I nearly died in 1990, I realized that even though disease manifests physically, the cause is elsewhere in our being, and this cause is “noble”. In fact, disease, however it may manifest in our lives, can be a very effective catalyst to facilitate spiritual evolvment. My quest then became one of not just alleviating physical pain, but of facilitating presence for myself and others and through this, accessing self healing.

## **The body/mind/spirit complex**

We are beings of body, mind and spirit. The cells, tissues and organs of the *body* are governed by the more evolved *mind* which is capable of controlling the body’s relationship to its environment and can even reverse adverse physical symptoms in the body. Some may consider this a form of healing, but it is just the exercise of mind over body. The mind, if occupied with painful memories of the past or influenced by distorted belief systems, can physiologically change the atomic structure of the cells and cause them ultimately to manifest as disease. In working with cancer patients, Deepak Chopra (*Quantum Healing*) discovered that even when cancerous growths were removed from a patient and they were clinically healed of this condition, the cell memory survived to re-infect healthy new cells that were just forming. With time, this once again manifested as disease.

Beyond the mind is consciousness, the self as *spirit*. Within the finer fields of consciousness is pure awareness, the divine within. We are beings of light and love. It is by awakening to and living from this greater dimension within the self that is one with the Creator that we access our wholeness and perfection, where we access self-healing. This is what I believe Ra is referring to as “.....*the intelligent infinity within this mind/body/spirit complex [that] reforms the illusion of body, mind or spirit to a form congruent with the Law of One*”.

Many people who have had near-death experiences spontaneously encountered this divine within and a sense of self as magnificent, perfect, totally one with Source, God. Miraculous healings have often followed these NDE’s.

Let us look at the *body*, our nature as physical form. As we pass through third density, lessons unfold through challenges of loss, abuse, rejection and failure which may trigger a sense of powerlessness, fear and anger. Our resistance to this that unfolds in our lives nurtures a sense of self as “victim”. Eckhart Tolle (*A*

*New Earth*) talks about the “pain body” as that part of the unconscious self that identifies with past pain and drama. Unable or unwilling to let go of the past, the self, limited to physical form, feels, “I am not enough”.

The more evolved *mind* has the ability to override some of the inadequacies of the body. It can acquire knowledge of truths that can further its evolvment into higher states of being and so liberate the self from the pain body. However, the mind’s limitation is that it is influenced by held beliefs that are limited to its knowledge, conditioning and/or experience. Living from the mind, the self still feels “I am not enough”.

The mind/body is confined to time and space and to living in the world of dualities which creates a sense of separation from self, from others and from God. And yet, the mind and body are our gift from the Creator. The soul comes into this human experience as a mind/body/spirit complex to learn to love and grow spiritually to ultimately merge in oneness with the Creator. We need the mind/body to seek higher truths and to live by them in service to others. Sadly, for many of us in third density, the human experience is consumed with survival and life’s pleasures. There is minimal interest in the nurturing of the spirit.

For the most part, our suffering is self created. We came into this lifetime with pre-incarnative lessons to learn and grow by. Whether the cause of our pain and suffering is from distorted beliefs about the self, the dwelling on negative emotions that arise from our resistance to life experiences or from the dissolution of karma, there is a way to access healing for any physical, mental, emotional or spiritual condition that we may manifest. The path to self healing is so simple that most people dismiss it.

In reference to this, Ra explains (*Law of One* 23:7):

*RA: I am Ra.....The healing, if it is to be effectuated, must be a funneling without significant distortion of the instreamings through the spiritual complex into the tree of mind. There are parts of this mind which block energies flowing to the body complex. In each case, in each entity, the blockage may well differ.*

*First, however, it is necessary to activate the sense of the spiritual channel or shuttle. Then whether the blockage is from spiritual to mental or from mental to physical, or whether it may simply be a random and purely physical trauma, healing may then be carried out.*

We are spirit. Our nature as body/mind, our past life experiences, physical characteristics, knowledge, race, titles.....these do not define us. Who we are is not confined to this mind body but is *expressed* through it. Tielhard de Chardin said, “*We are not human beings having a spiritual experience but spiritual beings having a human experience.*” We are defined by our Creator, God. Awakening to this knowing of our infinite nature as love and light aligns us with being and facilitates healing.

## Accessing Self-Healing

One disease that touches almost all of our lives directly or indirectly, is that of addictions. In talking about addictions and Alcoholic Anonymous, Dr. David Hawkins (*Healing and Recovery*) explains that the success of this program is founded in its ability to facilitate a “spiritual awakening” by elevating participants through the stages of evolvment: body, mind, consciousness and awareness. Dr. Carl Jung, when approached by Bill Wilson, founder of AA, expressed that science did not have an answer to this issue of addictions which he believed could only be accessed through spirituality. And it was through a spiritual experience with God that Wilson was finally able to achieve true sobriety and subsequently create AA to facilitate self healing from addictions.

Does this mean that the Twelve Step program of AA can help us to access self healing? Yes! In the case of addictions the catalyst is dependency on alcohol or drugs, but it may as well be cancer, depression, heart disease, or any other physical, mental or emotional condition that is the source of ill health. The process is the same.

The steps for accessing self healing are the steps for accessing 'pure awareness'. Ra says, "*First.....it is necessary to activate the sense of the spiritual channel or shuttle...*" How is this done? We begin by:

- \* Making the choice to effect the change we desire in our lives
- \* Telling the truth to ourselves and others
- \* Acceptance of what is which frees us to move beyond resistance and the sense of self as victim
- \* Honor of self and others
- \* Forgiveness of self and others
- \* Love of self and others
- \* Balance: seeing and blessing the wholeness in all that is
- \* Gratitude
- \* Willingness to pursue a spiritual path of meditation and service to others to further our spiritual evolution
- \* Surrender to a higher power, God

This can facilitate the spiritual awakening that moves us through the energy centers within into higher states of being, to ultimately merge with the One Creator. We evolve from the body, to the mind, to consciousness and ultimately into pure awareness. Vibrating within this frequency of light and love facilitates our experience with the Higher Self and thus with self healing.

In the *Law of One* (50:7) Ra talks about how the mind/body/spirit complex gains polarity through this third density life experience and the significance of forgetting before entering into this life:

*RA: I am Ra.....Let us re-examine this metaphor and multiply it into the longest poker game you can imagine, a lifetime. The cards are love, dislike, limitation, unhappiness, pleasure, etc. They are dealt and re-dealt and re-dealt continuously. You may, during this incarnation begin — and we stress begin — to know your own cards. You may begin to find the love within you. You may begin to balance your pleasure, your limitations, etc. However, your only indication of other-selves' cards is to look into the eyes.*

*You cannot remember your hand, their hands, perhaps even the rules of this game. This game can only be won by those who lose their cards in the melting influence of love; can only be won by those who lay their pleasures, their limitations, their all upon the table face up and say inwardly: "All, all of you players, each other-self, whatever your hand, I love you." This is the game: to know, to accept, to forgive, to balance, and to open the self in love. This cannot be done without the forgetting, for it would carry no weight in the life of the mind/body/spirit beingness totality.*

**JOSEPH DARTEZ**  
*What Is an Archetype?*

## Description

It's been two years since I've made my way to homecoming. The first year I have spent attempting to grasp the archetypal mind from a different and, hopefully, helpful perspective. The second year I have spent learning to be the kind of teacher who encourages his students to think for themselves. I intend to join the fruits of these efforts by leading a group discussion targeted at one simple question: what is an archetype?

## Relevant Ra Quotations

[77.12](#) The philosophy [the Logos' plan for experience] was to create a foundation, first of mind, then of body, and then of spiritual complex.

Upon the foundation of transformation of each complex, with free will guided by the root concepts offered in these cycles, the Logos offered this density the basic architecture of a building and constructing and synthesizing of data culminating in The Choice.

[77.13](#) [All of these concept complexes] exist within the roots of the mind and it is from this resource that their guiding influence and *leitmotifs* may be traced. You may further note that each foundation is itself not single but a complex of concepts. Furthermore, there are relationships betwixt mind, body, and spirit of the same location in octave, for instance: one, eight, fifteen, and relationships within each octave which are helpful in the pursuit of The Choice by the mind/body/spirit complex. The Logos under which these foundations stand is one of free will. Thusly the foundations may be seen to have unique facets and relationships for each mind/body/spirit complex. Only twenty-two, The Choice, is relatively fixed and single.

[77.23](#) [E]ach mind/body/spirit complex shall, and should, and indeed must perceive each archetype, if you use this convenient term, in its own way. Therefore, you may see that precision is not the goal; rather quality of general concept complex perception is the goal.

[88.16](#) [E]ach archetype is a concept complex and may be viewed not only by individuals but by those of the same racial and planetary influences in unique ways. Therefore, it is not informative to reconstruct the rather minor differences in descriptive terms between the tarot used by us and that used by those of Egypt and the spiritual descendants of those first students of this system of study.

The one great breakthrough which was made after our work in third density was done was the proper emphasis given to the Arcanum Number Twenty-Two which we have called The Choice. In our own experience we were aware that such an unifying archetype existed but did not give that archetype the proper complex of concepts in order to most efficaciously use that archetype in order to promote our evolution.

[88.24](#) We find it more nearly appropriate to discuss our plans in acquainting initiates upon your own planet with this particular version of the archetypes of the archetypical mind. Our first stage was the presentation of the images, one after the other, in the following order: one, eight, fifteen; two, nine, sixteen; three, ten, seventeen; four, eleven, eighteen; five, twelve, nineteen; six, thirteen, twenty; seven, fourteen, twenty-one; twenty-two. In this way the fundamental relationships between mind, body, and spirit could begin to be discovered, for as one sees, for instance, the Matrix of the Mind in comparison to the Matrices of Body and Spirit one may draw certain tentative conclusions.

When, at length, the student had mastered these visualizations and had considered each of the seven classifications of archetype, looking at the relationships between mind, body, and spirit, we then suggested

consideration of archetypes in pairs: one and two; three and four; five; six and seven. You may continue in this form for the body and spirit archetypes. You will note that the consideration of the Significator was left unpaired, for the Significator shall be paired with Archetype Twenty-Two.

At the end of this line of inquiry the student was beginning to grasp more and more deeply the qualities and resonances of each archetype. At this point, using various other aids to spiritual evolution, we encouraged the initiate to learn to become each archetype and, most importantly, to know as best as possible within your illusion when the adoption of the archetype's persona would be spiritually or metaphysically helpful.

As you can see, much work was done creatively by each initiate. We have no dogma to offer. Each perceives that which is needful and helpful to the self.

89.19 The clothing one's self within the archetype is an advanced practice of the adept which has long studied this archetypal system. The concept complexes which together are intended to represent the architecture of a significant and rich portion of the mind are intended to be studied as individual concept complexes; as Matrix, Potentiator, etc., in viewing mind/body/spirit connections; and in pairs with some concentration upon the polarity of the male and the female. If these are studied there comes the moment when the deep threnodies and joyful ditties of the deep mind can successfully be brought forward to intensify, articulate, and heighten some aspect of the magical personality.

89.20 A concept complex is a complex of concepts just as a molecule is a complex structure made up of more than one type of energy nexus or atom. Each atom within a molecule is its unique identity and, by some means, can be removed from the molecule. The molecule of water can, by chemical means, be caused to separate into hydrogen and oxygen. Separately they cannot be construed to equal water. When formed in the molecular structure which exemplifies water the two are irrefragably water.

Just in this way each archetype has within it several root atoms of organizational being. Separately the overall structure of the complex cannot be seen. Together the concept complex is irrefragably one thing. However, just as it is most useful in grasping the potentials in your physical systems of the constituting nature of water, so in grasping the nature of an archetype it is useful to have a sense of its component concepts.

90.30 We would suggest that each concept be discussed separately or, if appropriate, a pair of concepts be related one to the other within the concept complex. This is slow work but shall make the eventual building of the concept complexes more smoothly accomplished.

Were we to have answered the observations as read by you at this space/time, as much space/time would have been given to the untangling of various concepts as to the building up of what were very thoughtful perceptions.

97.9 We wish not to form that which may be considered by any mind/body/spirit complex to be a complete and infallible series of images. There is a substantial point to be made in this regard. We have been, with the questioner's aid, investigating the concept complexes of the great architecture of the archetypical mind. To more clearly grasp the nature, the process, and the purpose of archetypes, Ra provided a series of concept complexes. In no way whatsoever should we, as humble messengers of the One Infinite Creator, wish to place before the consideration of any mind/body/spirit complex which seeks its evolution the palest tint of the idea that these images are anything but a resource for working in the area of the development of the faith and the will.

To put this into perspective we must gaze then at the stunning mystery of the One Infinite Creator. The archetypical mind does not resolve any paradox or bring all into unity. This is not the property of any resource which is of the third density. Therefore, may we ask the student to look up from inward working

and behold the glory, the might, the majesty, the mystery, and the peace of oneness. Let no consideration of bird or beast, darkness or light, shape or shadow keep any which seeks from the central consideration of unity.

We are not messengers of the complex. We bring the message of unity. In this perspective only may we affirm the value to the seeker of adepthood of the grasping, articulating, and use of this resource of the deep mind exemplified by the concept complexes of the archetypes.

### Abbreviated Quotations for Discussion

[77.13](#) [Archetypes] exist within the roots of the mind and it is from this resource that their guiding influence and *leitmotifs* may be traced.

[77.23](#) Precision is not the goal; rather quality of general concept complex perception is the goal.

[88.16](#) [E]ach archetype is a concept complex and may be viewed not only by individuals but by those of the same racial and planetary influences in unique ways.

[88.24](#) [W]e encouraged the initiate to learn to become each archetype and...to know as best as possible...when the adoption of the archetype's persona would be spiritually...helpful.

[89.19](#) The [archetypes] are intended to be studied as individual concept complexes...in viewing mind/body/spirit connections, and in pairs with...concentration upon the polarity of the male and the female.

[89.20](#) A concept complex is a complex of concepts just as a molecule is a complex structure made up of more than one type of energy nexus or atom.

[90.30](#) We would suggest that each concept be discussed separately or, if appropriate, a pair of concepts be related one to the other within the concept complex. This is slow work but shall make the eventual building of the concept complexes more smoothly accomplished.

[97.9](#) [T]hese images are [nothing] but a resource for [developing] the faith and the will.

GARY BEAN

*Introducing the Law of One: Is It Possible?*

**The Case for an Intro (for Homecoming)**

Austin and I have the sacred honor/duty of composing a first draft of a brand new Introduction to the upcoming book *The Ra Contact: Teaching the Law of One*. (Quick explanation of book.) We are quite conscious of the honor of this duty, the need for the intro to shine with superluminal clarity, and the fact that it may be one of the most important pieces we ever write in the humble effort that is a human lifetime.

Now, about writing an introduction to something like *The Law of One*. There's no one right entry point into this material.

Take my own case for instance. Something fundamental in my soul knew what I was reading the first time my eyes fell upon Session 1. I didn't encounter an organized, structured, distilled, or even tutorially arranged teaching of the material. I just encountered Ra's words. My tears were confirmation. Lightning had illuminated the darkness. My life was set on its course.

No one in our corner is saying that the seeker *needs* an intro, but for those who would be aided by one, why not be of service?

Admittedly the best way that I, as an American, can learn about another country, say, like Sweden, is through **immersion** in its culture and geography: visiting its countryside, learning its customs, participating in its commerce, enjoying its arts, hearing and practicing its language, socializing with its people, basking in its universal healthcare and edenic conditions, eating its terrible-tasting fish products, etc.

But before I hop on the next plane and arrive in Stockholm, I think I would be helped by reading an, *Introduction to Sweden (for dumb Americans)* book. There are a *ton* of subjects for which I'd appreciate an Intro, actually. And as Ra's message was not arranged tutorially, or in any great sequence save for the evolution of Don's questioning; and as their message is replete with unfamiliar terminology and concepts, strange on both the tongue and the mind, why not offer the service of an intro?

No amount of assistance can, of course, substitute for the resonance necessary to read, enjoy, and understand the material. Thusly the introduction would presuppose that there is interest and resonance on the reader's part, and, in keeping with L/L Research's core tradition, not proselytize the seeker but dispassionately offer a resource for consideration.

Now, the super preliminary provisional barely molded "Intro to the Intro." (Because you gotta introduce the Introduction!)

**Intro to the Intro (for the actual book)**

All things in creation are telling and living a story, a story at once in common with all other stories, and uniquely theirs. In fact, all we are ever doing at various levels of consciousness is finding, living, and telling our stories of who we are to ourselves, to one another, to the Creator. Whether the million-years' story of the rock formed underground by pressure, raised into a mountain, and weathered down to dust; the white blood cell's story of its mission to combat the cold you contracted; the stories of the struggles and triumphs of a human life, or the passing ages of an entire planetary system of peoples and cultures (one *version* of which we call "history"); or the greatest of stories about which you will read in this book: The Creator Knowing Itself. In fact, the metaphysics in these pages assert that *the Creator knowing itself* is the only story ever being told—in permutations, guises, and forms without counting or end. Everything that happens, real or imagined, past, future, or in the timeless now happens in that story.



This book can be approached from a multitude of angles and filtered through a variety of lenses. It is at once a philosophy, a cosmology, a resource, an exploration, an intensive study, a teaching tool, a long-form conversation punctuated with dry-witted comedy (“You are competent at viewing pictures,” e.g.), a great blueprint of spiritual evolution, and, also, a story; a story of the infinite universe, of humanity on this planet, and of three ordinary people on their quixotic quest.

The following pages are designed simply as an *introduction* or orientation for the reader who picks up the book and doesn't want to jump into Session 1 immediately. It is a way to ease the reader into the sometimes technically challenging material, helping them to establish the framework for understanding what they are about to read. It is, you might say, a map before entering *foreign*—but for some of you, mysteriously *familiar*—territory.

The introduction contains four sections:

**Section 1: The (short) Ra Contact Biography & The Ra Contact's Mechanics**

To help provide background context, we will examine the biographical circumstances that culminated in the conversation with Ra. And then explore some of the mechanics and dynamics of the contact itself.

**Section 2: The Cosmology**

We will draw a basic schematic of Ra's unique cosmology of evolution through densities and octaves, incarnations and catalyst, narrowing in on our present stage of *human* evolution (or, as Ra, ever generous with the syllables, calls us, “mind/body/spirit complexes”), and then begin our dive into their equally unique terminology.

**Section 3: The Philosophy**

We will examine the philosophically timeless and universal essence of Ra's message, a philosophy which represents an extraordinary cohesive and internally consistent system of thought whose principles, ever so simple but superlatively sophisticated, are woven into, and through, the structure of their cosmology as thread through a loom.

**Section 4: The Readership**

We take a look at the beautiful demographic that is the community of readers who find deep resonance with this information, and conclude by articulating the hoped-for, ideal relationship that all readers may have with this great work. Which is, in short, an exhortation to become not fundamentalists about this material, but to seek the fundamentals of who you are.

It is not this introduction's job to perform a comparative analysis between the Law of One and Earth's existing wisdom traditions—of which there are many valid and valuable strains—but we do take a moment before plunging forward to assert that any such analysis will bear out the congruency between mystical heart of Ra's philosophy with what Aldous Huxley described as the “perennial philosophy.” But more on that point in Section 3: Philosophy.

Finally and relevantly, for now, a thought from Frank White, the first to coin the term “overview effect” in his book, *The Overview Effect – Space Exploration and Human Evolution*:

I was flying across country from the east coast to the west coast in the 1970s, and I was looking out the window, and as I was looking down at the planet, the thought came to me: anyone living in a space settlement, or living on the moon, would always have an *overview*, they would see things that we know, but we don't experience, which is that the Earth is *one* system, we're all part of that system, and that there is a certain unity and a coherence to it all. And I immediately called it, “the overview effect.”

The *overview effect* has been applied to the experiences that astronauts have upon viewing Earth from orbit and, in a few lucky cases, the moon. About which Wikipedia says:

It refers to the experience of seeing firsthand the reality of the Earth in space, which is immediately understood to be a tiny, fragile ball of life, "hanging in the void", shielded and nourished by a paper-thin atmosphere. From space, national boundaries vanish, the conflicts that divide people become less important, and the need to create a planetary society with the united will to protect this "pale blue dot" becomes both obvious and imperative.

The sixth man on the moon, Edgar Mitchell experienced this overview effect profoundly so, as he relates here:

The experience [of seeing Earth from space] was so powerful that when I got back to Earth I started digging into various literatures to try to understand what had happened. I found nothing in science literature but eventually discovered it in the Sanskrit of ancient India. The descriptions of samadhi, Savikalpa samadhi, were exactly what I felt: it is described as seeing things in their separateness, but experiencing them viscerally as a unity, as oneness, accompanied by ecstasy.

This overview effect is the fruit of simply moving one's body to a new location. A truly unique and extraordinary location that virtually no human in history has enjoyed save for a handful of astronauts, no doubt, but nonetheless a simple change of perspective or vantage point was all it took. Something shifts inside, something opens, something is contacted in the inner depths—illusions fade and realization results.

Ra's philosophy might be said to be an "overview," one so all-encompassing in scope that its likeness on this planet is not easily, if ever, found. The overview they offer expands so far beyond the reaches of present human vision, both in breadth and depth, that it can never, in third-density conditions, be fully understood. It can only be continually worked with and mined, and for those who do study and apply this work over spans of time continually rediscover its endlessly generous nature in yielding new treasure to the spiritual seeker. It would be wholly impossible to describe every aspect of so universal a philosophy in a human lifetime, much less in this introduction. We thusly hope only to *introduce* you to that vantage point so that instead of experiencing bewilderment over strange terms and stumbling over unusual concepts your eyes are free to open to the light of awe, grandeur, beauty, profundity, and unity that are all available from the overview. Fortunately you needn't leave the planet's surface to gain this vantage point, you need only consider the mystery that calls you from beyond that which is known, from your innermost heart.

### **(Fast Forward to) Section 3: Philosophy**

As mentioned, Section 2 will focus on cosmology. That section will set up the basic narrative and structure of the universe, including but not limited to the Primal Three Distortions, Intelligent Infinity/Energy, Logoi, Octaves, Densities, Cosmic mind, archetypal mind, Racial/Planetary mind, this density, reincarnation – seniority of vibration, graduation/harvest, Mind/body/spirit complex, Confederation assistance to Earth, social memory complex, space/time-time/space, and wanderers.

It is on and through that framework that this section, the Philosophy of the Law of One, will weave its principles into tapestry.

I have been considering the question of how we might best to tackle this section for months now. The most efficient means yet generated by my human brain is highlight the most significant and central concepts in the Law of One, and write a short paragraph on each.

Thus far I've narrowed down the terms to the following list:

Balancing	Chakras	Healing	Polarization
Beingness	Evolution	Transformation	Sexual energy transfer
Catalyst	(Free) Will and Faith	Love/Light	Tuning
Distortion	Veil of forgetting	Meditation	Learn/teaching and the forward slash

Make more sounds with mouth.

**VOLUNTEERS 2015**  
*You keep us in motion!*

A, KAREN ..... TRANSCRIPTION	H, ANDREAS ..... FORMATTING
A, MARY ..... TRANSCRIPTION	H, BILL ..... GENERAL
A, DANIEL ..... TRANSLATION	H, LINDA ..... TRANSCRIPTION
A, TROY ..... TRANSCRIPTION	H, MORRIS ..... GENERAL
A, LANA ..... TRANSLATION	H, MICHELLE ..... TRANSCRIBING/EDITING
A, ISHMAIL ..... PRISON MINISTRY	H, TERRY ..... TRANSLATION
B, LISA ..... TRANSCRIPTION	L, ANH ..... TRANSCRIPTION
B, GARY ..... GENERAL	M, MICHELE ..... GRAPHIC DESIGN
B, WALID ..... TRANSCRIPTION	M, STEVE ..... GENERAL
B, JOCHEN ..... TRANSLATION	N, JADE ..... FORUMS
B, DENNINGER ..... TRANSCRIPTION	O'D, JOHN ..... TRANSCRIPTION
B, AUSTIN ..... GENERAL	P, ALEJANDRO ..... TRANSLATION
B, ELEANOR ..... TRANSCRIPTION	R, LANE ..... EDITING
D, LANNY ..... INSTAGRAM	R, MANUEL ..... TRANSLATION
D, MICHELINE ..... TRANSLATION	T, KIMBERLY ..... TRANSCRIPTION
E, STEVE ..... WEBMASTERY	T, AARON ..... TRANSCRIPTION
F, GARRY ..... MODERATING	T, STEVE ..... GENERAL
G, JOHN ..... TRANSCRIPTION	V, SEPHIRA ..... GLOSSARY & ARCHETYPES
G, NANCYE ..... TRANSCRIBING/EDITING	W, SAM ..... AUDIOBOOK
G, LASZLO ..... TRANSLATION	W, TOBEY ..... LAWOFONE.INFO
	Y, KRISTIN ..... EDITING

*Ra Presents:  
Some of the Best Things We Ever Said:  
You're Welcome*

We spoke to one who heard and understood and was in a position to decree the Law of One. However, the priests and peoples of that era quickly distorted our message, robbing it of the, shall we say, compassion with which unity is informed by its very nature. Since it contains all, it cannot abhor any.

**Ra, 1.4**

In truth there is no right or wrong. There is no polarity for all will be, as you would say, reconciled at some point in your dance through the mind/body/spirit complex which you amuse yourself by distorting in various ways at this time. This distortion is not in any case necessary. It is chosen by each of you as an alternative to understanding the complete unity of thought which binds all things. You are not speaking of similar or somewhat like entities or things. You are every thing, every being, every emotion, every event, every situation. You are unity. You are infinity. You are love/light, light/love. You are. This is the Law of One.

**Ra, 1.6**

Consider, if you will, the path your life-experience complex has taken. Consider the coincidences and odd circumstances by which one thing flowed to the next. Consider this well.

**Ra, 8.1**

The vibratory distortion of sound, faith, is perhaps one of the stumbling blocks between those of what we may call the infinite path and those of the finite proving/understanding.

You are precisely correct in your understanding of the congruency of faith and intelligent infinity; however, one is a spiritual term, the other more acceptable perhaps to the conceptual framework distortions of those who seek with measure and pen.

**Ra, 3.9**

The Law of One, though beyond the limitations of name, as you call vibratory sound complexes, may be approximated by stating that all things are one, that there is no polarity, no right or wrong, no disharmony, but only identity. All is one, and that one is love/light, light/love, the Infinite Creator.

One of the primal distortions of the Law of One is that of healing. Healing occurs when a mind/body/spirit complex realizes, deep within itself, the Law of One; that is, that there is no disharmony, no imperfection; that all is complete and whole and perfect. Thus, the intelligent infinity within this mind/body/spirit complex re-forms the illusion of body, mind, or spirit to a form congruent with the Law of One. The healer acts as energizer or catalyst for this completely individual process.

**Ra, 4.20**

The prerequisite of mental work is the ability to retain silence of self at a steady state when required by the self. The mind must be opened like a door. The key is silence.

**Ra, 5.2**

The dissolution into nothingness is the dissolution into unity, for there is no nothingness.

**Ra, 6.7**

[The higher-density beings'] purposes are very simple: to allow those entities of your planet to become aware of infinity which is often best expressed to the uninformed as the mysterious or unknown.

**Ra, 6.25**

The mystery and unknown quality of the occurrences we are allowed to offer have the hoped-for intention of making your peoples aware of infinite possibility. When your peoples grasp infinity, then and only then, can the gateway be opened to the Law of One.

**Ra, 7.12**

The Law of One blinks neither at the light nor the darkness, but is available for service to others and service to self.

**Ra, 7.15**

Each entity will receive the opportunity that each needs. This information source-beingness does not have uses in the life-experience complex of each of those among your peoples who seek. Thus the advertisement is general and not designed to indicate the searching out of any particular material, but only to suggest the noumenal aspect of the illusion.

**Ra, 8.1**

The Law of One has as one of its primal distortions the free will distortion, thus each entity is free to accept, reject, or ignore the mind/body/spirit complexes about it and ignore the creation itself. There are many among your social memory complex distortion who, at this time/space, engage daily, as you would put it, in the working upon the Law of One in one of its primal distortions; that is, the ways of love. However, if this same entity, being biased from the depths of its mind/body/spirit complex towards love/light, were then to accept the responsibility for each moment of the time/space accumulation of present moments available to it, such an entity can empower its progress...

**Ra, 10.12**

**Exercise One.** This is the most nearly centered and useable within your illusion complex. The moment contains love. That is the lesson/goal of this illusion or density. The exercise is to consciously see that love in awareness and understanding distortions. The first attempt is the cornerstone. Upon this choosing rests the remainder of the life-experience of an entity. The second seeking of love within the moment begins the addition. The third seeking empowers the second, the fourth powering or doubling the third. As with the previous type of empowerment, there will be some loss of power due to flaws within the seeking in the distortion of insincerity. However, the conscious statement of self to self of the desire to seek love is so central an act of will that, as before, the loss of power due to this friction is inconsequential.

**Exercise Two.** The universe is one being. When a mind/body/spirit complex views another mind/body/spirit complex, see the Creator. This is an helpful exercise.

**Exercise Three.** Gaze within a mirror. See the Creator.

**Exercise Four.** Gaze at the creation which lies about the mind/body/spirit complex of each entity. See the Creator.

The foundation or prerequisite of these exercises is a predilection towards what may be called meditation, contemplation, or prayer. With this attitude, these exercises can be processed. Without it, the data will not sink down into the roots of the tree of mind, thus enabling and ennobling the body and touching the spirit.

**Ra, 10:14**

An entity which acts in a consciously unloving manner in action with other beings can become karmically involved.

**Ra, 12.29**

It shall be understood that any portion, no matter how small, of any density or illusory pattern contains, as in an holographic picture, the One Creator which is infinity. Thus all begins and ends in mystery.

**Ra, 13.13**

The harvest is now. There is not at this time any reason to include efforts along these distortions toward longevity, but rather to encourage distortions toward seeking the heart of self, for this which resides clearly in the violet-ray energy field will determine the harvesting of each mind/body/spirit complex.

**Ra, 14.14**

There is but one service. The Law is One. The offering of self to Creator is the greatest service, the unity, the fountainhead. The entity who seeks the One Creator is with infinite intelligence. From this seeking, from this offering, a great multiplicity of opportunities will evolve depending upon the mind/body/spirit complexes' distortions with regard to the various illusory aspects or energy centers of the various complexes of your illusion.

Thus, some become healers, some workers, some teachers, and so forth.

**Ra, 15.7**

There is one energy. It may be understood as love/light or light/love or intelligent energy.

**Ra, 15.9**

It is important to allow each seeker to enlighten itself rather than for any messenger to attempt in language to teach/learn for the entity, thus being teach/learner and learn/teacher.

**Ra, 15.13**

...the material for your understanding is the self: the mind/body/spirit complex. You have been given information upon healing, as you call this distortion. This information may be seen in a more general context as ways to understand the self. The understanding, experiencing, accepting, and merging of self with self and other-self, and finally with the Creator, is the path to the heart of self. In each infinitesimal part of your self resides the One in all of Its power. Therefore, we can only encourage these lines of contemplation or prayer as a means of subjectively/objectively using or combining various understandings to enhance the seeking process. Without such a method of reversing the analytical process, one could not integrate into unity the many understandings gained in such seeking.

**Ra, 15.14**

The purpose of the Orion group, as mentioned before, is conquest and enslavement. This is done by finding and establishing an elite and causing others to serve the elite through various devices such as the laws you mentioned and others given by this entity.

**Ra, 16.15**

Questioner: I am assuming that it is not necessary for an individual to understand the Law of One to go from the third to the fourth density. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. It is absolutely necessary that an entity consciously realize it does not understand in order for it to be harvestable. Understanding is not of this density.

**Ra, 16.37**

Questioner: That is a very important point. I used the wrong word. What I meant to say was that I believed that it was not necessary for an entity to be consciously aware of the Law of One to go from the third to the fourth density.

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct.

**Ra, 16.38**

Each responsibility is an honor; each honor, a responsibility.

**Ra, 16.14**

We ask you to consider as we speak that there are not words for positively describing fourth density. We can only explain what is not and approximate what is. Beyond fourth density our ability grows more limited until we become without words.

That which fourth density is not: it is not of words, unless chosen. It is not of heavy chemical vehicles for body complex activities. It is not of disharmony within self. It is not of disharmony within peoples. It is not within limits of possibility to cause disharmony in any way.

Approximations of positive statements: it is a plane of type of bipedal vehicle which is much denser and more full of life; it is a plane wherein one is aware of the thought of other-selves; it is a plane wherein one is aware of vibrations of other-selves; it is a plane of compassion and understanding of the sorrows of third density; it is a plane striving towards wisdom or light; it is a plane wherein individual differences are pronounced although automatically harmonized by group consensus.

**Ra, 16.44**

It is impossible to help another being directly. It is only possible to make catalyst available in whatever form, the most important being the radiation of realization of oneness with the Creator from the self, less important being information such as we share with you.

We, ourselves, do not feel an urgency for this information to be widely disseminated. It is enough that we have made it available to three, four, or five. This is extremely ample reward, for if one of these obtains fourth-density understanding due to this catalyst then we shall have fulfilled the Law of One in the distortion of service.

We encourage a dispassionate attempt to share information without concern for numbers or quick growth among others. That you attempt to make this information available is, in your terms, your service. The attempt, if it reaches one, reaches all.

We cannot offer shortcuts to enlightenment. Enlightenment is, of the moment, an opening to intelligent infinity. It can only be accomplished by the self, for the self. Another self cannot teach/learn enlightenment, but only teach/learn information, inspiration, or a sharing of love, of mystery, of the unknown that makes the other-self reach out and begin the seeking process that ends in a moment, but who can know when an entity will open the gate to the present?

**Ra, 17.2**

True healing is simply the radiance of the self causing an environment in which a catalyst may occur which initiates the recognition of self, by self, of the self-healing properties of the self.

**Ra, 17.18**



The best way of service to others is the constant attempt to seek to share the love of the Creator as it is known to the inner self. This involves self knowledge and the ability to open the self to the other-self without hesitation. This involves, shall we say, radiating that which is the essence or the heart of the mind/body/spirit complex.

Speaking to the intention of your question, the best way for each seeker in third density to be of service to others is unique to that mind/body/spirit complex. This means that the mind/body/spirit complex must then seek within itself the intelligence of its own discernment as to the way it may best serve other-selves. This will be different for each. There is no best. There is no generalization. Nothing is known.

**Ra, 17.30**

It is not our intent in this particular project to create erroneous information but to express in the confining ambiance of your language system the feeling of the infinite mystery of the one creation in its infinite and intelligent unity.

**Ra, 18.1**

Questioner: Thank you. I have a question here that I will read: "Much of the mystic tradition of seeking on Earth holds the belief that the individual self must be erased or obliterated and the material world ignored for the individual to reach 'nirvana,' as it is called, or enlightenment. What is the proper role of the individual self and its worldly activities to aid an individual to grow more into the Law of One?"

Ra: I am Ra. The proper role of the entity is in this density to experience all things desired, to then analyze, understand, and accept these experiences, distilling from them the love/light within them. Nothing shall be overcome. That which is not needed falls away.

The orientation develops due to analysis of desire. These desires become more and more distorted towards conscious application of love/light as the entity furnishes itself with distilled experience. We have found it to be inappropriate in the extreme to encourage the overcoming of any desires, except to suggest the imagination rather than the carrying out in the physical plane, as you call it, of those desires not consonant with the Law of One, thus preserving the primal distortion of free will.

The reason it is unwise to overcome is that overcoming is an unbalanced action creating difficulties in balancing in the time/space continuum. Overcoming, thus, creates the further environment for holding on to that which apparently has been overcome.

All things are acceptable in the proper time for each entity, and in experiencing, in understanding, in accepting, in then sharing with other-selves, the appropriate distortion shall be moving away from distortions of one kind to distortions of another which may be more consonant with the Law of One.

It is, shall we say, a shortcut to simply ignore or overcome any desire. It must instead be understood and accepted. This takes patience and experience which can be analyzed with care, with compassion for self and for other-self.

**Ra, 18.5**

Thus, what would be an improper distortion with one entity is proper with another. We can suggest an attempt to become aware of the other-self as self and thus do that action which is needed by other-self, understanding from the other-self's intelligence and awareness. In many cases this does not involve the breaking of the distortion of free will into a distortion or fragmentation called infringement. However, it is a delicate matter to be of service, and compassion, sensitivity, and an ability to empathize are helpful in avoiding the distortions of man-made intelligence and awareness.

**Ra, 18.6**

Forgiveness of other-self is forgiveness of self. An understanding of this insists upon full forgiveness upon the conscious level of self and other-self, for they are one. A full forgiveness is thus impossible without the inclusion of self.

**Ra, 18.12**

All serve the One Creator. There is nothing else to serve, for the Creator is all that there is. It is impossible not to serve the Creator. There are simply various distortions of this service.

**Ra, 18.13**

Thus, the weakening of the physical vehicle, as you call it, was designed to distort entities towards a predisposition to deal with each other. Thus, the lessons which approach a knowing of love can be begun.

This catalyst then is shared between peoples as an important part of each self's development as well as the experiences of the self in solitude and the synthesis of all experience through meditation. The quickest way to learn is to deal with other-selves. This is a much greater catalyst than dealing with the self. Dealing with the self without other-selves is akin to living without what you would call mirrors. Thus, the self cannot see the fruits of its being-ness. Thus, each may aid each by reflection. This is also a primary reason for the weakening of the physical vehicle, as you call the physical complex.

**Ra, 19.12**

We can speak only in metaphor. Some love the light. Some love the darkness. It is a matter of the unique and infinitely various Creator choosing and playing among its experiences as a child upon a picnic. Some enjoy the picnic and find the sun beautiful, the food delicious, the games refreshing, and glow with the joy of creation. Some find the night delicious, their picnic being pain, difficulty, sufferings of others, and the examination of the perversities of nature. These enjoy a different picnic.

All these experiences are available. It is the free will of each entity which chooses the form of play, the form of pleasure.

**Ra, 19.16**

The mind/body/spirit complex of third density has perhaps one hundred times as intensive a program of catalytic action from which to distill distortions and learn/teachings than any other of the densities. Thus the learn/teachings are most confusing to the mind/body/spirit complex which is, shall we say, inundated by the ocean of experience.

**Ra, 20.23**

The original desire is that entities seek and become one.

If entities can do this in a moment, they may go forward in a moment, and, thus, were this to occur in a major cycle, indeed, the third-density planet would be vacated at the end of that cycle.

**Ra, 20.26**

As, what you would call, the energy centers begin to be activated to a higher extent, more of the content of experience during incarnation deals with the lessons of love.

**Ra, 21.7**

There is only one law. That is the Law of One. Other so-called laws are distortions of this law, some of them primal and most important for progress to be understood. However, it is well that each so-called law, which

we also call “way,” be understood as a distortion rather than a law. There is no multiplicity to the Law of One.

**Ra, 22.27**

We ask you to remember that we are of the Brothers and Sisters of Sorrow. When one has been rescued from that sorrow to a vision of the One Creator, then there is no concept of failure.

**Ra, 23.10**

Here the Orion group found fertile soil in which to plant the seeds of negativity, these seeds, as always, being those of the elite, the different, those who manipulate or enslave others.

**Ra, 24.3**

[In reference to the battle being waged between the Confederation and the Orion Confederation.] At the level of time/space at which this takes place in the form of what you may call thought-war, the most accepting and loving energy would be to so love those who wished to manipulate that those entities were surrounded and engulfed, transformed by positive energies.

This, however, being a battle of equals, the Confederation is aware that it cannot, on equal footing, allow itself to be manipulated in order to remain purely positive, for then though pure it would not be of any consequence, having been placed by the so-called powers of darkness under the heel, as you may say.

It is thus that those who deal with this thought-war must be defensive rather than accepting in order to preserve their usefulness in service to others. Thusly, they cannot accept fully what the Orion Confederation wishes to give, that being enslavement. Thusly, some polarity is lost due to this friction and both sides, if you will, must then regroup.

It has not been fruitful for either side. The only consequence which has been helpful is a balancing of the energies available to this planet so that these energies have less necessity to be balanced in this space/time, thus lessening the chances of planetary annihilation.

**Ra, 25.6**

Questioner: Can you describe the mechanism of the planetary healing?

Ra: I am Ra. Healing is a process of acceptance, forgiveness, and, if possible, restitution. The restitution not being available in time/space, there are many among your peoples now attempting restitution while in the physical.

**Ra, 26.27**

To give you this information would be to infringe upon the free will or confusion of some living. We can only ask each group to consider the relative effect of philosophy and your so-called specific information. It is not the specificity of the information which attracts negative influences. It is the importance placed upon it.

This is why we iterate quite often, when asked for specific information, that it pales to insignificance, just as the grass withers and dies while the love and the light of the One Infinite Creator redounds to the very infinite realms of creation forever and ever, creating and creating itself in perpetuity.

Why then be concerned with the grass that blooms, withers and dies in its season only to grow once again due to the infinite love and light of the One Creator? This is the message we bring. Each entity is only superficially that which blooms and dies. In the deeper sense there is no end to being-ness.

**Ra, 26.33**

Questioner: Is there any reason for some portions being much more efficient in learning?

Ra: I am Ra. Is there any reason for some to learn more quickly than others? Look, if you wish, to the function of the will ... the, shall we say, attraction to the upward spiraling line of light.

**Ra, 28.13**

Questioner: Is there any loss to the mind or spirit after this transition which we call death or any impairment of either because of the loss of this chemical body which we now have?

Ra: I am Ra. In your terms there is a great loss of mind complex due to the fact that much of the activity of the mental nature of which you are aware during the experience of this space/time continuum is as much of a surface illusion as is the chemical body complex.

In other terms nothing whatever of importance is lost; the character or, shall we say, pure distortion of emotions and biases or distortions and wisdoms, if you will, becoming obvious for the first time, shall we say; these pure emotions and wisdoms and bias/distortions being, for the most part, either ignored or underestimated during physical life experience.

**Ra, 30.4**

We call it mind/body complex recognizing always that in the simplest iota of this complex exists in its entirety the One Infinite Creator.

**Ra, 30.5**

The bisexual knowing of the Creator by Itself has the potential for two advantages.

Firstly, in the green ray activated being there is the potential for a direct and simple analog of what you may call joy, the spiritual or metaphysical nature which exists in intelligent energy. This is a great aid to comprehension of a truer nature of being-ness. The other potential advantage of bisexual reproductive acts is the possibility of a sacramental understanding or connection, shall we say, with the gateway to intelligent infinity, for with appropriate preparation, work in what you may call magic may be done and experiences of intelligent infinity may be had. The positively oriented individuals concentrating upon this method of reaching intelligent infinity, then, through the seeking or the act of will, are able to direct this infinite intelligence to the work these entities desire to do, whether it be knowledge of service or ability to heal or whatever service to others is desired .

These are two advantages of this particular method of the Creator experiencing Itself. As we have said before, the corollary of the strength of this particular energy transfer is that it opens the door, shall we say, to the individual mind/body/spirit complexes' desire to serve in an infinite number of ways an otherself, thus polarizing towards positive.

**Ra, 31.3**

The green ray is one of complete universality of love. This is a giving without expectation of return.

**Ra, 31.5**

Secondly, the means of protection against any negative or debilitating influence for those upon the positive path was demonstrated by this instrument to a very great degree. Consider, if you will, the potentials that this particular occurrence had for negative influences to enter the instrument. This instrument thought upon the Creator in its solitude and in actions with other-self, continually praised and gave thanksgiving to the Creator for the experiences it was having. This in turn allowed this particular self such energies as became a

catalyst for an opening and strengthening of the other-self's ability to function in a more positively polarized state. Thus we see protection being very simple. Give thanksgiving for each moment. See the self and the other-self as Creator. Open the heart. Always know the light and praise it. This is all the protection necessary.

**Ra, 32.1**

With the green ray transfer of energy you now come to the great turning point sexually as well as in each other mode of experience. The green ray may then be turned outward, the entity then giving rather than receiving. The first giving beyond green ray is the giving of acceptance or freedom, thus allowing the recipient of blue ray energy transfer the opportunity for a feeling of being accepted, thus freeing that other-self to express itself to the giver of this ray. It will be noted that once green ray energy transfer has been achieved by two mind/body/spirits in mating, the further rays are available without both entities having the necessity to progress equally. Thus a blue ray vibrating entity or indigo ray vibrating entity whose other ray vibrations are clear may share that energy with the green ray other-self, thus acting as catalyst for the continued learn/teaching of the other-self. Until an other-self reaches green ray, such energy transfer through the rays is not possible.

**Ra, 32.5**

The entire creation is of the One Creator. Thus the division of sexual activity into simply that of the bodily complex is an artificial division, all things thusly being seen as sexual equally, the mind, the body, and the spirit; all of which are part of the polarity of the entity. Thus sexual fusion may be seen with or without what you may call sexual intercourse to be the complete melding of the mind, the body, and the spirit in what feels to be a constant orgasm, shall we say, of joy and delight each in the other's being-ness.

**Ra, 32.10**

...once the green ray has been achieved, the ability of the entity to enter blue ray is immediate and is only awaiting the efforts of the individual. The indigo ray is opened only through considerable discipline and practice largely having to do with acceptance of self, not only as the polarized and balanced self but as the Creator, as an entity of infinite worth. This will begin to activate the indigo ray.

**Ra, 32.14**

The incarnating entity which has become conscious of the incarnative process and thus programs its own experience may choose the amount of catalyst or, to phrase this differently, the number of lessons which it will undertake to experience and to learn from in one incarnation. This does not mean that all is predestined, but rather that there are invisible guidelines shaping events which will function according to this programming. Thus if one opportunity is missed another will appear until the, shall we say, student of the life experience grasps that a lesson is being offered and undertakes to learn it.

**Ra, 33.6**

Questioner: From this I would extrapolate to the conjecture that the orientation in mind of the entity is the only thing that is of any consequence at all. The physical catalyst that he experiences, regardless of what is happening about him, will be a function strictly of his orientation in mind.

Ra: I am Ra. It is completely true to the best of our knowledge that the orientation or polarization of the mind/body/spirit complex is the cause of the perceptions generated by each entity. Thus a scene may be observed in your grocery store. The entity ahead of self may be without sufficient funds. One entity may then take this opportunity to steal. Another may take this opportunity to feel itself a failure. Another may unconcernedly remove the least necessary items, pay for what it can, and go about its business. The one behind the self, observing, may feel compassion, may feel an insult because of standing next to a poverty-stricken person, may feel generosity, may feel indifference.

**Ra, 33.8**

The impulse to protect the loved other-self is one which persists through the fourth-density, a density abounding in compassion. More than this we cannot and need not say.

**Ra, 33.11**

...the primary mechanism for catalytic experience in third-density is other-self. The list of other catalytic influences: firstly, the Creator's universe; secondly, the self.

**Ra, 33.14**

Our understanding of karma is that which may be called inertia. Those actions which are put into motion will continue using the ways of balancing until such time as the controlling or higher principle which you may liken unto your braking or stopping is invoked. This stoppage of the inertia of action may be called forgiveness. These two concepts are inseparable.

**Ra, 34.4**

Questioner: If an entity develops what is called karma in an incarnation, is there then programming that sometimes occurs so that he will experience catalysts that will enable him to get to a point of forgiveness thereby alleviating the karma?

Ra: I am Ra. This is, in general, correct. However, both self and any involved other-self may, at any time through the process of understanding, acceptance, and forgiveness, ameliorate these patterns. This is true at any point in an incarnative pattern. Thus one who has set in motion an action may forgive itself and never again make that error. This also brakes or stops what you call karma.

**Ra, 34.5**

The societal and self interactions most often concentrate upon the second and third energy centers. Thus those most active in attempting to remake or alter the society are those working from feelings of being correct personally or of having answers which will put power in a more correct configuration. This may be seen to be of a full travel from negative to positive in orientation. Either will activate these energy ray centers.

There are some few whose desires to aid society are of a green ray nature or above. These entities, however, are few due to the understanding, may we say, of fourth ray that universal love freely given is more to be desired than principalities or even the rearrangement of peoples or political structures.

**Ra, 34.9**

Finally, one may polarize very strongly fourth ray by expressing the principle of universal love at the total expense of any distortion towards involvement in bellicose actions. In this way the entity may become a conscious being in a very brief span of your time/space. This may be seen to be what you would call a traumatic progression. It is to be noted that among your entities a large percentage of all progression has as catalyst, trauma.

**Ra, 34.14**

To know your self is to have the foundation upon firm ground.

**Ra, 35.4**

We make note at this time that each entity has several beings upon which to call for inner support. ...the Higher Self... may communicate with the mind/body/spirit ... during the incarnation... if the proper pathways or channels through the roots of mind are opened.

**Ra, 36.10**

We remind you that the negative path is one of separation. What is the first separation: the self from the self.

**Ra, 36.14**

We can approximate the percentage of those [wanderers] penetrating intelligently their status. This is between eight and one-half and nine and three-quarters percent. There is a larger percentile group of those who have a fairly well defined, shall we say, symptomology indicating to them that they are not of this, shall we say, "insanity." This amounts to a bit over fifty percent of the remainder. Nearly one-third of the remainder are aware that something about them is different, so you see there are many gradations of awakening to the knowledge of being a Wanderer. We may add that it is to the middle and first of these groups that this information will, shall we say, make sense.

**Ra, 36.24**

...you may see your self, your Higher Self or Oversoul, and your mind/body/spirit complex totality as three points in a circle. The only distinction is that of your time/space continuum. All are the same being.

**Ra, 37.6**

The mechanism of inspiration involves an extraordinary faculty of desire or will to know or to receive in a certain area accompanied by the ability to open to and trust in what you may call intuition.

**Ra, 38.4**

The principle so veiled in that statement [Don presents an equation] is but the simple principle of the constant or Creator and the transient or the incarnate being and the yearning existing between the two, one for the other, in love and light amidst the distortions of free will acting upon the illusion-bound entity.

**Ra, 39.6**

The other portion of healing has to do with forgiveness of self and a greatly heightened respect for the self. This may conveniently be expressed by taking care in dietary matters. This is quite frequently a part of the healing and forgiving process.

**Ra, 40.13**

Thus self reveals self to self.

**Ra, 40.14**

There is nothing random about this or any portion of evolution.

**Ra, 41.9**

The chemical vehicle is that which most conveniently houses the consciousness. The functioning of consciousness is the item of interest rather than the chemical makeup of a physical vehicle.

**Ra, 41.11**

The will of the entity as it evolves is the single measure of the rate and fastidiousness of the activation and balancing of the various energy centers.

**Ra, 41.17**

The more strongly the will of the entity concentrates upon and refines or purifies each energy center, the more brilliant or rotationally active each energy center will be. It is not necessary for the energy centers to be activated in order in the case of the self-aware entity. Thusly entities may have extremely brilliant energy

centers while being quite unbalanced in their violet ray aspect due to lack of attention paid to the totality of experience of the entity.

The key to balance may then be seen in the unstudied, spontaneous, and honest response of entities toward experiences, thus using experience to the utmost, then applying the balancing exercises and achieving the proper attitude for the most purified spectrum of energy center manifestation in violet ray. This is why the brilliance or rotational speed of the energy centers is not considered above the balanced aspect or violet ray manifestation of an entity in regarding harvestability; for those entities which are unbalanced, especially as to the primary rays, will not be capable of sustaining the impact of the love and light of intelligent infinity to the extent necessary for harvest.

**Ra, 41.18**

Questioner: You mentioned in the last session the concept of fasting for removing unwanted thought-forms. Can you expand on this process and explain a little bit more about how this works?

Ra: I am Ra. This, as all healing techniques, must be used by a conscious being; that is, a being conscious that the ridding of excess and unwanted material from the body complex is the analogy to the ridding of mind or spirit of excess or unwanted material. Thus the one discipline or denial of the unwanted portion as an appropriate part of the self is taken through the tree of mind down through the trunk to subconscious levels where the connection is made and thus the body, mind, and spirit, then in unison, express denial of the excess or unwanted spiritual or mental material as part of the entity.

All then falls away and the entity, while understanding, if you will, and appreciating the nature of the rejected material as part of the greater self, nevertheless, through the action of the will purifies and refines the mind/body/spirit complex, bringing into manifestation the desired mind complex or spirit complex attitude.

**Ra, 41.20**

Questioner: Then would this be like a conscious reprogramming of catalyst? For instance, for some entities catalyst is programmed by the Higher Self to create experiences so that the entity can release itself from unwanted biases. Would this be analogous then to the entity consciously programming this release and using fasting as the method of communication to itself?

Ra: I am Ra. This is not only correct but may be taken further. The self, if conscious to a great enough extent of the workings of this catalyst and the techniques of programming, may through concentration of the will and the faculty of faith alone cause reprogramming without the analogy of the fasting, the diet, or other analogous body complex disciplines.

**Ra, 41.21**

Questioner: I am going to make a statement and ask you to comment on its degree of accuracy. I am assuming that the balanced entity would not be swayed either towards positive or negative emotions by any situation which he might confront. By remaining unemotional in any situation, the balanced entity may clearly discern the appropriate and necessary responses in harmony with the Law of One for each situation. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is an incorrect application of the balancing which we have discussed. The exercise of first experiencing feelings and then consciously discovering their antitheses within the being has as its objective not the smooth flow of feelings both positive and negative while remaining unswayed but rather the objective of becoming unswayed. This is a simpler result and takes much practice, shall we say.



The catalyst of experience works in order for the learn/teachings of this density to occur. However, if there is seen in the being a response, even if it is simply observed, the entity is still using the catalyst for learn/teaching. The end result is that the catalyst is no longer needed. Thus this density is no longer needed. This is not indifference or objectivity but a finely tuned compassion and love which sees all things as love. This seeing elicits no response due to catalytic reactions. Thus the entity is now able to become co-Creator of experiential occurrences. This is the truer balance.

**Ra, 42.1**

Questioner: Would a perfectly balanced entity feel any emotional response in being attacked by the other-self?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct. The response is love.

**Ra, 42.3**

Questioner: In the illusion that we now experience it is difficult to maintain this response especially if the attack results in physical pain, but I assume that this response should be maintained even through physical pain or loss of life. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct and further is of a major or principle importance in understanding, shall we say, the principle of balance. Balance is not indifference but rather the observer not blinded by any feelings of separation but rather fully imbued with love.

**Ra, 42.4**

Questioner: I would like to try to make an analogy for third-density of this concept. Many entities here feel great compassion for relieving the physical problems of third-density other-selves by administering to them in many ways, with food if there is hunger as there is now in the African nations, by bringing them medicine if they feel that there is a need to minister to them medically, and being selfless in all of these services to a very great extent.

This is creating a vibration that is in harmony with green-ray or fourth-density but it is not balanced with the understanding of fifth-density that these entities are experiencing catalysts and a more balanced administration to their needs would be to provide them with the learning necessary to reach the state of awareness of fourth-density than it would be to minister to their physical needs at this time. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is incorrect. To a mind/body/spirit complex which is starving, the appropriate response is the feeding of the body. You may extrapolate from this.

On the other hand, however, you are correct in your assumption that the green ray response is not as refined as that which has been imbued with wisdom. This wisdom enables the entity to appreciate its contributions to the planetary consciousness by the quality of its being without regard to activity or behavior which expects results upon visible planes.

**Ra, 42.6**

Questioner: What is the difference in terms of energy center activation between a person who represses emotional responses to emotionally charged situations and the person who is balanced and, therefore, truly unswayed by emotionally charged situations?

Ra: I am Ra. This query contains an incorrect assumption. To the truly balanced entity no situation would be emotionally charged. With this understood, we may say the following: The repression of emotions depolarizes the entity in so far as it then chooses not to use the catalytic action of the space/time present in a

spontaneous manner, thus dimming the energy centers. There is, however, some polarization towards positive if the cause of this repression is consideration for other-selves. The entity which has worked long enough with the catalyst to be able to feel the catalyst but not find it necessary to express reactions is not yet balanced but suffers no depolarization due to the transparency of its experiential continuum. Thus the gradual increase in the ability to observe one's reaction and to know the self will bring the self ever closer to a true balance. Patience is requested and suggested, for the catalyst is intense upon your plane and its use must be appreciated over a period of consistent learn/teaching.

**Ra, 42.8**

Questioner: How can a person know when he is unswayed by an emotionally charged situation or if he is repressing the flow of emotions, or if he is in balance and truly unswayed?

Ra: I am Ra. We have spoken to this point. Therefore, we shall briefly iterate that to the balanced entity no situation has an emotional charge but is simply a situation like any other in which the entity may or may not observe an opportunity to be of service. The closer an entity comes to this attitude the closer an entity is to balance. You may note that it is not our recommendation that reactions to catalyst be repressed or suppressed unless such reactions would be a stumbling block not consonant with the Law of One to an other-self. It is far, far better to allow the experience to express itself in order that the entity may then make fuller use of this catalyst.

**Ra, 42.9**

Questioner: How can an individual assess what energy centers within its being are activated and in no immediate need of attention and which energy centers are not activated and are in need of immediate attention?

Ra: I am Ra. The thoughts of an entity, its feelings or emotions, and least of all its behavior are the signposts for the teaching/learning of self by self. In the analysis of one's experiences of a diurnal cycle an entity may assess what it considers to be inappropriate thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and emotions.

In examining these inappropriate activities of mind, body, and spirit complexes the entity may then place these distortions in the proper vibrational ray and thus see where work is needed.

**Ra, 42.10**

There is but one technique for this growing or nurturing of will and faith, and that is the focusing of the attention. The attention span of those you call children is considered short. The spiritual attention span of most of your peoples is that of the child. Thus it is a matter of wishing to become able to collect one's attention and hold it upon the desired programming.

This, when continued, strengthens the will. The entire activity can only occur when there exists faith that an outcome of this discipline is possible.

**Ra, 42.11**

In the less sensitized individual the choosing of personally inspirational images [for visualization] is appropriate whether this inspiration be the rose which is of perfect beauty, the cross which is of perfect sacrifice, the Buddha which is the All-being in One, or whatever else may inspire the individual.

**Ra, 42.14**

The entity, child or adult, as you call it, is not an instrument to be played. The appropriate teach/learning device of parent to child is the open-hearted being-ness of the parent and the total acceptance of the

beingness of the child. This will encompass whatever material the child entity has brought into the life experience in this plane.

There are two things especially important in this relationship other than the basic acceptance of the child by the parent. Firstly, the experience of whatever means the parent uses to worship and give thanksgiving to the One Infinite Creator, should if possible be shared with the child entity upon a daily basis, as you would say. Secondly, the compassion of parent to child may well be tempered by the understanding that the child entity shall learn the biases of service-to-others or service-to-self from the parental other-self. This is the reason that some discipline is appropriate in the teach/learning. This does not apply to the activation of any one energy center for each entity is unique and each relationship with self and other-self doubly unique. The guidelines given are only general for this reason.

**Ra, 42.19**

We have, many times now, spoken about the relative importance of balancing as opposed to the relative unimportance of maximal activation of each energy center. The reason is as you have correctly surmised. Thusly the entity is concerned, if it be upon the path of positive harvestability, with the regularizing of the various energies of experience. Thus the most fragile entity may be more balanced than one with extreme energy and activity in service-to-others due to the fastidiousness with which the will is focused upon the use of experience in knowing the self.

**Ra, 43.8**

You may consider all of these aforementioned aids [the Questioner presented a long list of aids] as those helpful to the stimulation of that which in actuality aids concentration, that being the will of the entity. This free will may be focused at any object or goal.

**Ra, 43.30**

Questioner: This is very revealing to us. Thank you. Each of us gets signals and dreams. I have been aware of clairaudient communication at least once in waking up. Can you suggest a method whereby we might be able, shall I say, to nullify the influence of that which we don't want of a negative source?

Ra: I am Ra. There are various methods. We shall offer the most available or simple. To share the difficult contact with the other-selves associated with this working and to meditate in love for these senders of images and light for self and other-selves is the most available means of nullifying the effects of such occurrences. To downgrade these experiences by the use of intellect or the disciplines of will is to invite the prolonging of the effects. Far better then to share in trust such experiences and join hearts and souls in love and light with compassion for the sender and armor for the self.

**Ra, 44.10**

Control is the key to negatively polarized use of catalyst. Acceptance is the key to positively polarized use of catalyst.

**Ra, 46.7**

The first acceptance, or control depending upon polarity, is of the self. Anger is one of many things to be accepted and loved as a part of self or controlled as a part of self, if the entity is to do work.

**Ra, 46.8**

Questioner: Then the positively oriented entity, rather than attempting repression of emotion, would balance the emotion as stated in an earlier contact. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct and illustrates the path of unity.

**Ra, 46.11**

The catalyst, and all catalyst, is designed to offer experience. This experience in your density may be loved and accepted or it may be controlled. These are the two paths. When neither path is chosen the catalyst fails in its design and the entity proceeds until catalyst strikes it which causes it to form a bias towards acceptance and love or separation and control. There is no lack of space/time in which this catalyst may work.

**Ra, 46.14**

We have used this particular term ["crystallized entity"] because it has a fairly precise meaning in your language. When a crystalline structure is formed of your physical material the elements present in each molecule are bonded in a regularized fashion with elements in each other molecule. Thus the structure is regular and, when fully and perfectly crystallized, has certain properties. It will not splinter or break; it is very strong without effort; and it is radiant, traducing light into a beautiful refraction giving pleasure of the eye to many.

**Ra, 47.7**

The audience brought about by Orion-type publicity is not seeded by seniority of vibration to a great extent. The audiences receiving teach/learnings without stimulus from publicity will be more greatly oriented towards illumination. Therefore, forget you the counting.

**Ra, 48.4**

The entity ruled by intuition and impulse is equal to the entity governed by rational analysis when polarity is considered. The lobes may both be used for service to self or service-to-others. It may seem that the rational or analytical mind might have more of a possibility of successfully pursuing the negative orientation due to the fact that in our understanding too much order is by its essence negative. However, this same ability to structure abstract concepts and to analyze experiential data may be the key to rapid positive polarization. It may be said that those whose analytical capacities are predominant have somewhat more to work with in polarizing.

The function of intuition is to inform intelligence. In your illusion the unbridled predominance of intuition will tend to keep an entity from the greater polarizations due to the vagaries of intuitive perception. As you may see, these two types of brain structure need to be balanced in order that the net sum of experiential catalyst will be polarization and illumination, for without the acceptance by the rational mind of the worth of the intuitive faculty the creative aspects which aid in illumination will be stifled.

**Ra, 49.4**

Like most scientific attempts at precision, it fails to take into account the unique qualities of each creation.

**Ra, 49.5**

The most important concept to grasp about the energy field is that the lower or negative pole will draw the universal energy into itself from the cosmos. Therefrom it will move upward to be met and reacted to by the positive spiraling energy moving downward from within. The measure of an entity's level of ray activity is the locus wherein the south pole outer energy has been met by the inner spiraling positive energy.

As an entity grows more polarized this locus will move upwards. This phenomenon has been called by your peoples the kundalini. However, it may better be thought of as the meeting place of cosmic and inner, shall we say, vibratory understanding. To attempt to raise the locus of this meeting without realizing the metaphysical principles of magnetism upon which this depends is to invite great imbalance.

**Ra, 49.5**

Questioner: What process would be the recommended process for correctly awakening the kundalini and of what value would that be?

Ra: I am Ra. The metaphor of the coiled serpent being called upwards is vastly appropriate for consideration by your peoples. This is what you are attempting when you seek. There are, as we have stated, great misapprehensions concerning this metaphor and the nature of pursuing its goal. We must generalize and ask that you grasp the fact that this in effect renders far less useful that which we share. However, as each entity is unique, generalities are our lot when communicating for your possible edification.

We have two types of energy. We are attempting then, as entities in any true color of this octave, to move the meeting place of inner and outer natures further and further along or upward along the energy centers. The two methods of approaching this with sensible method are first, the seating within one's self of those experiences which are attracted to the entity through the south pole. Each experience will need to be observed, experienced, balanced, accepted, and seated within the individual. As the entity grows in self-acceptance and awareness of catalyst the location of the comfortable seating of these experiences will rise to the new true color entity. The experience, whatever it may be, will be seated in red ray and considered as to its survival content and so forth.

Each experience will be sequentially understood by the growing and seeking mind/body/spirit complex in terms of survival, then in terms of personal identity, then in terms of social relations, then in terms of universal love, then in terms of how the experience may beget free communication, then in terms of how the experience may be linked to universal energies, and finally in terms of the sacramental nature of each experience.

Meanwhile the Creator lies within. In the north pole the crown is already upon the head and the entity is potentially a god. This energy is brought into being by the humble and trusting acceptance of this energy through meditation and contemplation of the self and of the Creator.

Where these energies meet is where the serpent will have achieved its height. When this uncoiled energy approaches universal love and radiant being the entity is in a state whereby the harvestability of the entity comes nigh.

**Ra, 49.6**

Those aware of evolution and desirous in the very extreme of attaining the heart of love and the radiance which gives understanding no matter what the lessons programmed: they have to do with other-selves, not with events: they have to do with giving, not receiving, for the lessons of love are of this nature both for positive and negative. Those negatively harvestable will be found at this time endeavoring to share their love of self.

**Ra, 50.5**

There is no entity without help, either through self-awareness of the unity of creation or through guardians of the self which protect the less sophisticated mind/body/spirit from any permanent separation from unity while the lessons of your density continue.

**Ra, 50.5**

The negatively oriented being will be one who feels that it has found power that gives meaning to its existence precisely as the positive polarization does feel.

**Ra, 50.6**

This negative entity will strive to offer these understandings to other-selves, most usually by the process of forming the elite, the disciples, and teaching the need and rightness of the enslavement of other-selves for their own good. These other-selves are conceived to be dependent upon the self and in need of the guidance and the wisdom of the self.

**Ra, 50.6**

Questioner: Can you expand on the concept which is that it is necessary for an entity, during incarnation in the physical as we know it, to become polarized or interact properly with other entities and why this isn't possible in between incarnations when the entity is aware of what he wants to do. Why must he come into an incarnation and lose conscious memory of what he wants to do and then act in a way in which he hopes to act?

Ra: I am Ra. Let us give the example of the man who sees all the poker hands. He then knows the game. It is but child's play to gamble, for it is no risk. The other hands are known. The possibilities are known and the hand will be played correctly but with no interest.

In time/space and in the true color green density, the hands of all are open to the eye. The thoughts, the feelings, the troubles, all these may be seen. There is no deception and no desire for deception. Thus much may be accomplished in harmony but the mind/body/spirit gains little polarity from this interaction.

Let us re-examine this metaphor and multiply it into the longest poker game you can imagine, a lifetime. The cards are love, dislike, limitation, unhappiness, pleasure, etc. They are dealt and re-dealt and re-dealt continuously. You may, during this incarnation begin—and we stress begin—to know your own cards. You may begin to find the love within you. You may begin to balance your pleasure, your limitations, etc. However, your only indication of other-selves' cards is to look into the eyes.

You cannot remember your hand, their hands, perhaps even the rules of this game. This game can only be won by those who lose their cards in the melting influence of love, can only be won by those who lay their pleasures, their limitations, their all upon the table face up and say inwardly: "All, all of you players, each other-self, whatever your hand, I love you." This is the game: to know, to accept, to forgive, to balance, and to open the self in love. This cannot be done without the forgetting, for it would carry no weight in the life of the mind/body/spirit being-ness totality.

**Ra, 50.7**

...the use of technology to manipulate that outside the self is far, far less of an aid to personal evolution than the disciplines of the mind/body/spirit complex resulting in the whole knowledge of the self in the microcosm and macrocosm.

To the disciplined entity, all things are open and free. The discipline which opens the universes opens also the gateways to evolution. The difference is that of choosing either to hitchhike to a place where beauty may be seen or to walk, step by step, independent and free in this independence to praise the strength to walk and the opportunity for the awareness of beauty.

The hitchhiker, instead, is distracted by conversation and the vagaries of the road and, dependent upon the whims of others, is concerned to make the appointment in time. The hitchhiker sees the same beauty but has not prepared itself for the establishment, in the roots of mind, of the experience.

**Ra, 52.2**

Questioner: Am I correct, then, in assuming that discipline of the personality, knowledge of self, and control in strengthening of the will would be what any fifth-density entity would see as those things of importance?

Ra: I am Ra. In actuality these things are of importance in third through early seventh densities. The only correction in nuance that we would make is your use of the word, control. It is paramount that it be understood that it is not desirable or helpful to the growth of the understanding, may we say, of an entity by itself to control thought processes or impulses except where they may result in actions not consonant with the Law of One. Control may seem to be a short-cut to discipline, peace, and illumination. However, this very control potentiates and necessitates the further incarnative experience in order to balance this control or repression of that self which is perfect.

Instead, we appreciate and recommend the use of your second verb in regard to the use of the will. Acceptance of self, forgiveness of self, and the direction of the will; this is the path towards the disciplined personality. Your faculty of will is that which is powerful within you as co-Creator. You cannot ascribe to this faculty too much importance. Thus it must be carefully used and directed in service-to-others for those upon the positively oriented path.

There is great danger in the use of the will as the personality becomes stronger, for it may be used even subconsciously in ways reducing the polarity of the entity.

**Ra, 52.7**

Questioner: Is there then, from the point of view of an individual who wishes to follow the service-to-others path, anything of importance other than disciplines of personality, knowledge of self, and strengthening of will?

Ra: I am Ra. This is technique. This is not the heart. Let us examine the heart of evolution.

Let us remember that we are all one. This is the great learning/teaching. In this unity lies love. This is a great learn/teaching. In this unity lies light. This is the fundamental teaching of all planes of existence in materialization. Unity, love, light, and joy; this is the heart of evolution of the spirit.

The second-ranking lessons are learn/taught in meditation and in service. At some point the mind/body/spirit complex is so smoothly activated and balanced by these central thoughts or distortions that the techniques you have mentioned become quite significant. However, the universe, its mystery unbroken, is one. Always begin and end in the Creator, not in technique.

**Ra, 52.11**

If there is fear and doom, the contact was quite likely of a negative nature. If the result is hope, friendly feelings, and the awakening of a positive feeling of purposeful service-to-others, the marks of Confederation contact are evident.

**Ra, 53.17**

Were there no potentials for misunderstanding and, therefore, understanding, there would be no experience.

**Ra, 54.7**

The mind/body/spirit complex is not a machine. It is rather what you might call a tone poem.

**Ra, 54.8**

We may suggest that in order to progress, a state of some dissatisfaction will be present, thus giving the entity the stimulus for further seeking. This dissatisfaction, nervousness, or angst, if you will, is not of itself useful. Thus its use is indirect.

**Ra, 54.3**

Questioner: OK. Then I assume that the first distortion is the motivator or what allows this blockage. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. We wish no quibbling but prefer to avoid the use of terms such as the verb, to allow. Free will does not allow, nor would predetermination disallow, experiential distortions. Rather the Law of Confusion offers a free reach for the energies of each mind/body/spirit complex. The verb, to allow, would be considered pejorative in that it suggests a polarity between right and wrong or allowed and not allowed. This may seem a minuscule point. However, to our best way of thinking it bears some weight.

**Ra, 54.13**

While it is a primary priority to activate or unblock each energy center, it is also a primary priority at that point to begin to refine the balances between the energies so that each tone of the chord of total vibratory being-ness resonates in clarity, tune, and harmony with each other energy. This balancing, tuning, and harmonizing of the self is most central to the more advanced or adept mind/body/spirit complex. Each energy may be activated without the beauty that is possible through the disciplines and appreciations of personal energies or what you might call the deeper personality or soul identity.

**Ra, 54.15**

Questioner: Let me make an analogy that I have just thought of. A seven-stringed musical instrument may be played by deflecting each string a full deflection and releasing it producing notes. instead of producing the notes this way the individual creative personality could deflect each string the proper amount in the proper sequence producing music. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct. In the balanced individual the energies lie waiting for the hand of the Creator to pluck harmony.

**Ra, 54.15**

The more advanced the entity, the more tenuous the connection between the sub-Logos and the perceived catalyst until, finally, all catalyst is chosen, generated, and manufactured by the self, for the self.

**Ra, 54.17**

Questioner: A positively oriented entity may select a certain narrow path of thinking and activities during an incarnation and program conditions that would create physical pain if this were not followed. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct.

**Ra, 54.20**

...the positively oriented entity will be transmuting strong red-ray sexual energy into green-ray energy transfers and radiation in blue and indigo and will be similarly transmuting selfhood and place in society into energy transfer situations in which the entity may merge with and serve others and then, finally, radiate unto others without expecting any transfer in return.

**Ra, 54.24**

The origin of all energy is the action of free will upon love. The nature of all energy is light. The means of its ingress into the mind/body/spirit complex is duple.

Firstly, there is the inner light which is Polaris of the self, the guiding star. This is the birthright and true nature of all entities. This energy dwells within.



The second point of ingress is the polar opposite of the North Star, shall we say, and may be seen, if you wish to use the physical body as an analog for the magnetic field, as coming through the feet from the earth and through the lower point of the spine. This point of ingress of the universal light energy is undifferentiated until it begins its filtering process through the energy centers. The requirements of each center and the efficiency with which the individual has learned to tap into the inner light determine the nature of the use made by the entity of these in-streamings.

**Ra, 54.26**

We have addressed the filtering process by which in-coming energies are pulled upwards according to the distortions of each energy center and the strength of will or desire emanating from the awareness of inner light. If we may be more specific, please query with specificity.

**Ra, 54.28**

We scan this instrument and find its distortion towards appreciation of each entity and each entity's caring, as you may call it. This atmosphere, shall we say, offers the greatest contrast to the discomfort of such psychic attacks, being the reciprocal, that is, the atmosphere of psychic support.

This each of you do as a subconscious function of true attitudinal, mental, emotional, and spiritual distortions towards this instrument. There is no magic greater than honest distortion toward love.

**Ra, 55.2**

This contact may be characterized as one typical of the Brothers and Sisters of Sorrow wherein those receiving the contact have attempted to prepare for such contact by sacrificing extraneous, self-oriented distortions in order to be of service.

The Ra social memory complex offers itself also as a function of its desire to serve. Both the caller and the contact are filled with gratitude at the opportunity of serving others.

We may note that this in no way presupposes that either the callers or those of our group in any way approach a perfection or purity such as was described in the bidding process. The calling group may have many distortions and the working with much catalyst, as may those of Ra. The overriding desire to serve others, bonded with the unique harmonics of this group's vibratory complexes, gives us the opportunity to serve as one channel for the One Infinite Creator.

Things come not to those positively oriented but through such beings.

**Ra, 55.7**

This instrument is under a most severe psychic attack. This instrument is bearing up well due to replenished vital energies and a distortion towards a sense of proportion which your peoples call a sense of humor.

**Ra, 57.1**

The inner light is that which is your heart of being. Its strength equals your strength of will to seek the light.

**Ra, 57.14**

It is to be noted that a strongly crystallized entity is, in effect, a portable King's Chamber position.

**Ra, 57.16**

...the concept of initiation and realize that it demands the centering of the being upon the seeking of the Creator. We have hoped to balance this understanding by enunciating the Law of One, that is, that all

things are One Creator. Thus seeking the Creator is done not just in meditation and in the work of an adept but in the experiential nexus of each moment.

The initiation of the Queen's Chamber has to do with the abandoning of self to such desire to know the Creator in full that the purified in-streaming light is drawn in balanced fashion through all energy centers, meeting in indigo and opening the gate to intelligent infinity. Thus the entity experiences true life or, as your people call it, resurrection.

**Ra, 57.24**

The space/time and time/space concepts are those concepts describing as mathematically as possible the relationships of your illusion, that which is seen to that which is unseen. These descriptive terms are clumsy. They, however, suffice for this work.

In the experiences of the mystical search for unity, [concepts of space and time] need never be considered, for they are but part of an illusory system. The seeker seeks the One. The One is to be sought, as we have said, by the balanced and self-accepting self aware, both of its apparent distortions and its total perfection. Resting in this balanced awareness, the entity then opens the self to the universe which it is. The light energy of all things may then be attracted by this intense seeking, and wherever the inner seeking meets the attracted cosmic prana, realization of the One takes place.

The purpose of clearing each energy center is to allow that meeting place to occur at the indigo ray vibration, thus making contact with intelligent infinity and dissolving all illusions. Service-to-others is automatic at the released energy generated by this state of consciousness.

**Ra, 57.33**

Contact with indigo ray need not necessarily show itself in any certain gift or guidepost, as you have said. There are some whose indigo energy is that of pure being and never is manifested, yet all are aware of such an entity's progress. Others may teach or share in many ways contact with intelligent energy. Others continue in unmanifested form, seeking intelligent infinity.

Thus the manifestation is lesser signpost than that which is sensed or intuited about a mind/body/spirit complex. This violet ray being-ness is far more indicative of true self.

**Ra, 58.22**

You may note that as one learns the, shall we say, understandings or disciplines of the personality each of these configurations of prana is available to the entity without the aid of this shape. One may view the pyramid at Giza as metaphysical training wheels.

**Ra, 60.13**

This is in common with each of your orthodox religious systems which have all become somewhat mixed in orientation, yet offer a pure path to the One Creator which is seen by the pure seeker.

**Ra, 60.18**

We of the Confederation are at the call of those upon your planet. If the call, though sincere, is fairly low in consciousness of the, shall we say, system whereby spiritual evolution may be precipitated, then we may only offer that information useful to that particular caller. This is the basic difficulty. Entities receive the basic information about the Original Thought and the means, that is meditation and service-to-others, whereby this Original Thought may be obtained.

Once this basic information is received it is not put into practice in the heart and in the life experience but instead rattles about within the mind complex distortions as would a building block which has lost its place and simply rolls from side to side uselessly, yet still the entity calls. Therefore, the same basic information is repeated. Ultimately the entity decides that it is weary of this repetitive information. However, if an entity puts into practice that which it is given, it will not find repetition except when needed.

**Ra, 60.27**

This is not a dimension of knowing, even subjectively, due to the lack of overview of cosmic and other in-pourings which affect each and every situation which produces catalyst. The subjective acceptance of that which is at the moment and the finding of love within that moment is the greater freedom.

That known as the subjective knowing without proof is, in some degree, a poor friend for there will be anomalies no matter how much information is garnered due to the distortions which form third-density.

**Ra, 61.19**

These distortions remove the focus from the One Infinite Source of love and light of which we are all messengers, humble and knowing that we, of ourselves, are but the tiniest portion of the Creator, a small part of a magnificent entirety of infinite intelligence.

**Ra, 62.23**

Continue in love and praise and thanksgiving to the Creator. Examine previous material. Love is the great protector.

**Ra, 63.5**

The vital energy may be seen to be that deep love of life or life experiences such as the beauty of creation and the appreciation of other-selves and the distortions of your co-Creators' making which are of beauty.

Without this vital energy the least distorted physical complex will fail and perish. With this love or vital energy or elán the entity may continue though the physical complex is greatly distorted.

**Ra, 63.7**

Wanderers are third-density activated in mind/body/spirit and are subject to the forgetting which can only be penetrated with disciplined meditation and working.

**Ra, 63.17**

The principle behind any ritual of the white magical nature is to so configure the stimuli which reach down into the trunk of mind that this arrangement causes the generation of disciplined and purified emotion or love which then may be both protection and the key to the gateway to intelligent infinity.

**Ra, 64.3**

Let it be said that any entity or group may create the most splendid harmony in any outer atmosphere. Ra's experiences are no more than your own. Yours is the dance at this space/time in third-density harvest.

**Ra, 64.7**

If the entity is polarized towards service-to-others, analysis properly proceeds along the lines of consideration of which path offers the most opportunity for service-to-others.

For the negatively polarized entity the antithesis is the case.

For the unpolarized entity the considerations are random and most likely in the direction of the distortion towards comfort.

**Ra, 64.15**

...when faced with a hole in the curtain, an entity's eyes may well peer for the first time through the window beyond.

**Ra, 65.2**

There are many Wanderers whose dysfunction with regard to the planetary ways of your peoples have caused, to some extent, a condition of being caught up in a configuration of mind complex activity which, to the corresponding extent, may prohibit the intended service.

**Ra, 65.3**

Consider the shopper entering the store to purchase food with which to furnish the table for the time period you call a week. Some stores have some items, others a variant set of offerings. We speak of these possibility/probability vortices when asked with the understanding that such are as a can, jar, or portion of goods in your store.

It is unknown to us as we scan your time/space whether your peoples will shop hither or yon. We can only name some of the items available for the choosing. The, shall we say, record which the one you call Edgar read from is useful in that same manner. There is less knowledge in this material of other possibility/probability vortices and more attention paid to the strongest vortex. We see the same vortex but also see many others. Edgar's material could be likened unto one hundred boxes of your cold cereal, another vortex likened unto three, or six, or fifty of another product which is eaten by your peoples for breakfast. That you will breakfast is close to certain. The menu is your own choosing.

The value of prophecy must be realized to be only that of expressing possibilities. Moreover, it must be, in our humble opinion, carefully taken into consideration that any time/space viewing, whether by one of your time/space or by one such as we who view the time/space from a dimension, shall we say, exterior to it will have a quite difficult time expressing time measurement values. Thus prophecy given in specific terms is more interesting for the content or type of possibility predicted than for the space/time nexus of its supposed occurrence.

**Ra, 65.9**

It was the aim of Wanderers to serve the entities of this planet in whatever way was requested and it was also the aim of Wanderers that their vibratory patterns might lighten the planetary vibration as a whole, thus ameliorating the effects of planetary disharmony and palliating any results of this disharmony.

Specific intentions such as aiding in a situation not yet manifest are not the aim of Wanderers. Light and love go where they are sought and needed, and their direction is not planned aforesaid.

**Ra, 65.11**

You may, at this time, note that as with any entities, each Wanderer has its unique abilities, biases, and specialities so that from each portion of each density represented among the Wanderers come an array of pre-incarnative talents which then may be expressed upon this plane which you now experience so that each Wanderer, in offering itself before incarnation, has some special service to offer in addition to the doubling effect of planetary love and light and the basic function of serving as beacon or shepherd.

Thus there are those of fifth-density whose abilities to express wisdom are great. There are fourth and sixth-density Wanderers whose ability to serve as, shall we say, passive radiators or broadcasters of love and love/light are immense. There are many others whose talents brought into this density are quite varied.

Thus Wanderers have three basic functions once the forgetting is penetrated, the first two being basic, the tertiary one being unique to that particular mind/body/spirit complex.\

**Ra, 65.12**

We may note at this point while you ponder the possibility/probability vortices that although you have many, many items which cause distress and thus offer seeking and service opportunities, there is always one container in that store of peace, love, light, and joy. This vortex may be very small, but to turn one's back upon it is to forget the infinite possibilities of the present moment. Could your planet polarize towards harmony in one fine, strong, moment of inspiration? Yes, my friends. It is not probable; but it is ever possible.

**Ra, 65.12**

The ability to polarize positively requires a certain degree of self determination.

**Ra, 65.14**

In your space/time you and your peoples are the parents of that which is in the womb. The Earth, as you call it, is ready to be born and the delivery is not going smoothly. When this entity has become born it will be instinct with the social memory complex of its parents which have become fourth-density positive. In this density there is a broader view.

**Ra, 65.17**

One meets the self in the center or deeps of the being. The so-called resonating chamber may be likened unto the symbology of the burial and resurrection of the body wherein the entity dies to self and through this confrontation of apparent loss and realization of essential gain, is transmuted into a new and risen being.

**Ra, 65.20**

Questioner: Could I make the analogy of in this apparent death of losing the desires that are the illusory, common desires of third-density and gaining desires of total service-to-others?

Ra: I am Ra. You are perceptive. This was the purpose and intent of this chamber as well as forming a necessary portion of the King's Chamber position's effectiveness.

**Ra, 65.21**

Only in so far as the healer has become balanced may it be a channel for the balancing of an other-self. The healing is first practiced upon the self, if we may say this, in another way.

**Ra, 66.8**

The healer does not heal. The crystallized healer is a channel for intelligent energy which offers an opportunity to an entity that it might heal itself.

In no case is there an other description of healing. Therefore, there is no difference as long as the healer never approaches one whose request for aid has not come to it previously. This is also true of the more conventional healers of your culture and if these healers could but fully realize that they are responsible only for offering the opportunity of healing, and not for the healing, many of these entities would feel an enormous load of misconceived responsibility fall from them.

**Ra, 66.10**

Perhaps the greatest healer is within the self and may be tapped with continued meditation as we have suggested.

The many forms of healing available to your peoples ... each have virtue and may be deemed appropriate by any seeker who wishes to alter the physical complex distortions or some connection between the various portions of the mind/body/spirit complex thereby.

**Ra, 66.12**

Questioner: I have observed many activities known as psychic surgery in the area of the Philippine Islands. It was my assumption that these healers are providing what I would call a training aid or a way of creating a reconfiguration of the mind of the patient to be healed as the relatively naive patient observes the action of the healer in seeing the materialized blood, etc. and reconfigures the roots of mind to believe, you might say, the healing is done and, therefore, heals himself. Is this analysis that I have made correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct.

**Ra, 66.13**

...the crystallized healer has no will. It offers an opportunity without attachment to the outcome, for it is aware that all is one and that the Creator is knowing Itself.

**Ra, 66.15**

Questioner: Then the desire must be strong in the mind/body/spirit complex who seeks healing to be healed in order for the healing to occur? Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct on one level or another. An entity may not consciously seek healing and yet subconsciously be aware of the need to experience the new set of distortions which result from healing. Similarly an entity may consciously desire healing greatly but within the being, at some level, find some cause whereby certain configurations which seem quite distorted are, in fact, at that level, considered appropriate.

**Ra, 66.16**

...meditation is always an aid to knowing the self.

**Ra, 66.18**

Catalyst is offered to the entity. If it is not used by the mind complex it will then filter through to the body complex and manifest as some form of physical distortion. The more efficient the use of catalyst, the less physical distortion to be found.

**Ra, 66.34**

Consider, if you will, that you have no ability not to serve the Creator since all is the Creator. In your individual growth patterns appear the basic third-density choice. Further, there are overlaid memories of the positive polarizations of your home density. Thus your particular orientation is strongly polarized towards service to others and has attained wisdom as well as compassion.

You do not have merely two opposite requests for information or lack of information from this source if you listen careful to those whose voices you may hear. This is all one voice to which you resonate upon a certain frequency. This frequency determines your choice of service to the One Creator. As it happens this group's vibratory patterns and those of Ra are compatible and enable us to speak through this instrument with your support. This is a function of free will.

A portion, seemingly of the Creator, rejoices at your choice to question us regarding the evolution of spirit. A seemingly separate portion would wish for multitudinous answers to a great range of queries of a specific nature. Another seemingly separate group of your peoples would wish this correspondence through this instrument to cease, feeling it to be of a negative nature. Upon the many other planes of existence there are those whose every fiber rejoices at your service and those such as the entity of whom you have been speaking which wish only to terminate the life upon the third-density plane of this instrument. All are the Creator. There is one vast panoply of biases and distortions, colors and hues, in an unending pattern. In the case of those with whom you, as entities and as a group, are not in resonance, you wish them love, light, peace, joy, and bid them well. No more than this can you do for your portion of the Creator is as it is and your experience and offering of experience, to be valuable, needs be more and more a perfect representation of who you truly are. Could you, then, serve a negative entity by offering the instrument's life? It is unlikely that you would find this a true service. Thus you may see in many cases the loving balance being achieved, the love being offered, light being sent, and the service of the service-to-self oriented entity gratefully acknowledged while being rejected as not being useful in your journey at this time. Thus you serve One Creator without paradox.

**Ra, 67.11**

The light would work instantly upon an untuned individual by suggestion, that is the stepping out in front of the traffic because the suggestion is that there is no traffic. This entity, as each in this group, is enough disciplined in the ways of love and light that it is not suggestible to any great extent.

**Ra, 67.13**

Questioner: Then there is no other service at this time that we can offer that fifth-density entity of the Orion group who is constantly with us. As I see it now from your point of view there is nothing that we can do for him? Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct. There is great humor in your attempt to be of polarized service to the opposite polarity. There is a natural difficulty in doing so since what you consider service is considered by this entity non-service. As you send this entity love and light and wish it well it loses its polarity and needs to regroup.

Thus it would not consider your service as such. On the other hand, if you allowed it to be of service by removing this instrument from your midst you might perhaps perceive this as not being of service. You have here a balanced and polarized view of the Creator; two services offered, mutually rejected, and in a state of equilibrium in which free will is preserved and each allowed to go upon its own path of experiencing the One Infinite Creator.

**Ra, 67.26**

We perceive that we have not been able to clarify your service versus its desire for service. You need, in our humble opinion, to look at the humor of the situation and relinquish your desire to serve where no service is requested. The magnet will attract or repel. Glory in the strength of your polarization and allow others of opposite polarity to similarly do so, seeing the great humor of this polarity and its complications in view of the unification in sixth-density of these two paths.

**Ra, 67.27**

Free will does not mean that there will be no circumstances when calculations will be awry. This is so in all aspects of the life experience. Although there are no mistakes, there are surprises.

**Ra, 69.15**

Questioner: Then each entity is of a path that leads to one destination. This is like many, many roads that travel through many, many places but eventually merge into one large center. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct but somewhat wanting in depth of description. More applicable would be the thought that each entity contains within it all of the densities and sub-densities of the octave so that in each entity, no matter whither its choices lead it, its great internal blueprint is one with all others. Thusly its experiences will fall into the patterns of the journey back to the original Logos. This is done through free will but the materials from which choices can be made are one blueprint.

**Ra, 71.13**

...to aid the self in polarization towards love and light is to aid the planetary vibration.

**Ra, 71.16**

Questioner: The change in consciousness should result in a greater distortion towards service-to-others, towards unity with all, and towards knowing in order to serve. Is this correct, and are there any other desired results?

Ra: I am Ra. These are commendable phrases. The heart of white magic is the experience of the joy of union with the Creator. This joy will of necessity radiate throughout the life experience of the positive adept. It is for this reason that sexual magic is not restricted solely to the negatively oriented polarizing adepts but when most carefully used has its place in high magic as it, when correctly pursued, joins body, mind, and spirit with the One Infinite Creator.

Any purpose which you may frame should, we suggest, take into consideration this basic union with the One Infinite Creator, for this union will result in service-to-others of necessity.

**Ra, 71.17**

Questioner: We have here, I believe, a very important principle with respect to the Law of One. You have stated that the attitude of the individual is of paramount importance for the Orion entity to be able to be effective. Would you please explain how this mechanism works with respect to the Law of One and why the attitude of the entity is of paramount importance and why this allows for action by the Orion entity?

Ra: I am Ra. The Law of Confusion or Free Will is utterly paramount in the workings of the infinite creation. That which is intended has as much intensity of attraction to the polar opposite as the intensity of the intention or desire.

Thus those whose desires are shallow or transitory experience only ephemeral configurations of what might be called the magical circumstance. There is a turning point, a fulcrum which swings as a mind/body/spirit complex tunes its will to service. If this will and desire is for service-to-others the corresponding polarity will be activated. In the circumstance of this group there are three such wills acting as one with the instrument in the, shall we say, central position of fidelity to service. This is as it must be for the balance of the working and the continuance of the contact. Our vibratory complex is one-pointed in these workings also and our will to serve is also of some degree of purity. This has created the attraction of the polar opposite which you experience.

We may note that such a configuration of free will, one-pointed in service-to-others, also has the potential for the alerting of a great mass of light strength. This positive light strength, however, operates also under free will and must be invoked. We could not speak to this and shall not guide you, for the nature of this contact is such that the purity of your free will must, above all things, be preserved. Thus you wend your way through experiences discovering those biases which may be helpful.



Ra, 72.7

...that great conduit to the Creator, the will.

Ra, 72.10

Those who are upon the service-to-others path may call upon the light strength in direct proportion to the strength and purity of their will to serve. Those upon the service-to-self path may call upon the dark strength in direct proportion to the strength and purity of their will to serve.

Ra, 73.4

Questioner: Then will you speak of the difference between the spiraling light that enters through the feet and the light invoked through the crown chakra?

Ra: I am Ra. The action of the upward spiraling light drawn by the will to meet the inner light of the One Infinite Creator may be likened to the beating of the heart and the movement of the muscles surrounding the lungs and all the other functions of the parasympathetic nervous system. The calling of the adept may be likened to those nerve and muscle actions over which the mind/body/spirit complex has conscious control.

Ra, 73.8

You may note that in the ritual which we offered you to properly begin the Ra workings the first focus is upon the Creator. We would further note a point which is both subtle and of some interest. The upward spiraling light developed in its path by the will, and ultimately reaching an high place of mating with the inward fire of the One Creator, still is only preparation for the work upon the mind/body/spirit which may be done by the adept. There is some crystallization of the energy centers used during each working so that the magician becomes more and more that which it seeks.

More importantly, the time/space mind/body/spirit analog, which is evoked as the magical personality, has its only opportunity to gain rapidly from the experience of the catalytic action available to the third-density space/time mind/body/spirit. Thus the adept is aiding the Creator greatly by offering great catalyst to a greater portion of the creation which is identified as the mind/body/spirit totality of an entity.

Ra, 73.10

Questioner: Desire and will are the factors in this process. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. We would add one quality. In the magical personality desire, will, and polarity are the keys.

Ra, 73.11

Questioner: What was the orientation with respect to this type of communication for the one known as Jesus of Nazareth?

Ra: I am Ra. You may have read some of this entity's workings. It offered itself as teacher to those mind/body/spirit complexes which gathered to hear and even then spoke as through a veil so as to leave room for those not wishing to hear. When this entity was asked to heal, it oft times did so, always ending the working with two admonitions: firstly, that the entity healed had been healed by its faith, that is, its ability to allow and accept changes through the violet-ray into the gateway of intelligent energy; secondly, saying always, "Tell no one." These are the workings which attempt the maximal quality of free will while maintaining fidelity to the positive purity of the working.

Ra, 73.13

Infringement upon free will occurs in this circumstance [of healing or other magical working rendered by the adept] only if the entity doing the working ascribes the authorship of this event to its self or its own skills. He who states that no working comes from it but only through it is not infringing upon free will.

**Ra, 73.14**

We might note further that when the one wishing to be healed, though sincere, remains unhealed, as you call this distortion, you may consider pre-incarnative choices and your more helpful aid to such an entity may be the suggestion that it meditate upon the affirmative uses of whatever limitations it might experience. We would also note that in these cases the indigo-ray workings are often of aid.

**Ra, 73.18**

Questioner: It seems to me that the primary thing of importance for those on the service-to-others path is the development of an attitude which I can only describe as a vibration. This attitude would be developed through meditation, ritual, and the developing appreciation for the creation or Creator which results in a state of mind that can only be expressed by me as an increase in vibration or oneness with all. Could you expand and correct that statement?

Ra: I am Ra. We shall not correct this statement but shall expand upon it by suggesting that to those qualities you may add the living day by day and moment by moment, for the true adept lives more and more as it is.

**Ra, 73.19**

The second energy transfer of which we would speak is the sexual energy transfer. This takes place upon a non-magical level by all those entities which vibrate green ray active. It is possible, as in the case of this instrument which dedicates itself to the service of the One Infinite Creator, to further refine this energy transfer. When the other-self also dedicates itself in service to the One Infinite Creator, the transfer is doubled. Then the amount of energy transferred is dependent only upon the amount of polarized sexual energy created and released. There are refinements from this point onward leading to the realm of the high sexual magic.

The spiritual energy transfers are at the heart of all energy transfers as a knowledge of self and other-self as Creator is paramount, and this is spiritual work. The varieties of spiritual energy transfer include those things of which we have spoken this day as we spoke upon the subject of the adept.

**Ra, 73.21**

The disciplined personality, when faced with an other-self, has all centers balanced according to its unique balance. Thusly the other-self looks in a mirror seeing its self.

**Ra, 74.9**

Questioner: The disciplines of the personality are the paramount work of any who have become consciously aware of the process of evolution. Am I correct on that statement?

Ra: I am Ra. Quite.

**Ra, 74.10**

The general improvement of the place where the performance of the ritual of the purification is to be performed is known. We may note that the distortion towards love, as you call this spiritual/emotional complex which is felt by each for this entity, will be of aid whether this is expressed or unmanifest as there is no protection greater than love.

**Ra, 75.2**

The heart of the discipline of the personality is threefold. One, know your self. Two, accept your self. Three, become the Creator.

The third step is that step which, when accomplished, renders one the most humble servant of all, transparent in personality and completely able to know and accept other-selves. In relation to the pursuit of the magical working the continuing discipline of the personality involves the adept in knowing its self, accepting its self, and thus clearing the path towards the great indigo gateway to the Creator. To become the Creator is to become all that there is. There is, then, no personality in the sense with which the adept begins its learn/teaching. As the consciousness of the indigo ray becomes more crystalline, more work may be done; more may be expressed from intelligent infinity.

**Ra, 74.11**

When the entity Jehoshuah [2] decided to return to the location called Jerusalem for the holy days of its people it turned from work mixing love and wisdom and embraced martyrdom which is the work of love without wisdom.

**Ra, 75.14**

We do not imply that this course of unbridled compassion has any fault but affirm its perfection. It is an example of love which has served as beacon to many.

For those who seek further, the consequences of martyrdom must be considered, for in martyrdom lies the end of the opportunity, in the density of the martyr, to offer love and light. Each entity must seek its deepest path.

**Ra, 75.15**

There are many Wanderers whom you may call adepts who do no conscious work in the present incarnation. It is a matter of attention. One may be a fine catcher of your game sphere, but if the eye is not turned as this sphere is tossed then perchance it will pass the entity by. If it turned its eyes upon the sphere, catching would be easy. In the case of Wanderers which seek to recapitulate the degree of adeptness which each had acquired previous to this life experience, we may note that even after the forgetting process has been penetrated there is still the yellow activated body which does not respond as does the adept which is of a green- or blue-ray activated body. Thusly, you may see the inevitability of frustrations and confusion due to the inherent difficulties of manipulating the finer forces of consciousness through the chemical apparatus of the yellow-ray activated body.

**Ra, 75.24**

It is well for each to realize its self as the Creator. Thusly each may support each including the support of self by humble love of self as Creator.

**Ra, 75.25**

You may consider the concept of sympathetic resonance. When certain sounds are correctly vibrated, the creation sings.

**Ra, 75.27**

Questioner: Then would the adept use this resonant quality to become more one with the creation and, therefore, attain his objective in that way?

Ra: I am Ra. It would be perhaps more accurate to state that in this circumstance the creation becomes more and more contained within the practitioner. The balance of your query is correct.

**Ra, 75.29**

Questioner: May anyone in third density accomplish some degree of healing if they have the proper will, desire, and polarity, or is there a minimal balance of the energy centers of the healer that is also necessary?

Ra: I am Ra. Any entity may at any time instantaneously clear and balance its energy centers. Thus in many cases those normally quite blocked, weakened, and distorted may, through love and strength of will, become healers momentarily. To be a healer by nature one must indeed train its self in the disciplines of the personality.

**Ra, 75.35**

The three aspects of the magical personality, power, love, and wisdom, are so called in order that attention be paid to each aspect in developing the basic tool of the adept; that is, its self. It is by no means a personality of three aspects. It is a being of unity, a being of sixth density, and equivalent to what you call your Higher Self and at the same time is a personality enormously rich in variety of experience and subtlety of emotion.

The three aspects are given that the neophyte not abuse the tools of its trade but rather approach those tools balanced in the center of love and wisdom and thus seeking power in order to serve.

**Ra, 75.32**

Questioner: You made the statement in a previous session that the true adept lives more and more as it is. Will you explain and expand more upon that statement?

Ra: I am Ra. Each entity is the Creator. The entity, as it becomes more and more conscious of its self, gradually comes to the turning point at which it determines to seek either in service to others or in service to self. The seeker becomes the adept when it has balanced with minimal adequacy the energy centers red, orange, yellow, and blue with the addition of the green for the positive, thus moving into indigo work.

The adept then begins to do less of the preliminary or outer work, having to do with function, and begins to effect the inner work which has to do with being. As the adept becomes a more and more consciously crystallized entity it gradually manifests more and more of that which it always has been since before time; that is, the One Infinite Creator.

**Ra, 75.23**

...any thought is a form or symbol or thing that is an object seen in time/space reference.

**Ra, 76.3**

...to be encouraged is the... study of being. It is the being that informs the working, not the working that informs the being.

**Ra, 76.4**

The choice [of service to others vs. service to self] is, as you put it, the work of a moment but is the axis upon which the creation turns.

**Ra, 76.16**

The instrument was instructed to spend space/time contemplating its self as the Creator. This, done in a more determined fashion, would be beneficial at times when the mind complex is weakened by severe assaults upon the distortions of the body complex towards pain. There is no necessity for negative thought-forms regardless of pain distortions. The elimination of such creates the lack of possibility for negative

elementals and other negative entities to use these thought-forms to create the worsening of the mind complex deviation from the normal distortions of cheerfulness/anxiety.

**Ra, 77.6**

...each of the group may become aware of the will to a greater extent. We cannot instruct upon this but merely indicate, as we have previously, that it is a vital key to the evolution of the mind/body/spirit complex.

**Ra, 77.10**

The intensity of fourth density is that of the refining of the rough-hewn sculpture. This is, indeed, in its own way, quite intense causing the mind/body/spirit complex to move ever inward and onward in its quest for fuller expression. However, in third density the statue is forged in the fire. This is a type of intensity which is not the property of fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh densities.

**Ra, 77.15**

Each of the support group has an excess of love and light to offer the instrument during the working. Already each sends to the instrument love, light, and thoughts of strength of the physical, mental, and spiritual configurations. These sendings are forms. You may refine these sendings until the fullest manifestations of love and light are sent into the energy web of this entity which functions as instrument. Your exact sending is, in order to be most potent, the creature of your own making.

**Ra, 78.7**

...it is certainly through this faculty [of meditation] that catalyst is most efficiently used.

**Ra, 78.35**

Magical ability is the ability to consciously use the so-called unconscious.

**Ra, 79.32**

The heart of the mind complex is that dynamic entity which absorbs, seeks, and attempts to learn

**Ra, 79.36**

The less balanced the distortion by self-knowledge, the more adeptly the [discarnate negative] entity may accentuate such a distortion in order to mitigate against the smooth functioning and harmony of the group.

**Ra, 80.4**

The power of which you speak is a spiritual power. The powers of the mind, as such, do not encompass such works as these. You may, with some fruitfulness, consider the possibilities of moonlight. You are aware that we have described the Matrix of the Spirit as a Night. The moonlight, then, offers either a true picture seen in shadow or chimera and falsity. The power of falsity is deep as is the power to discern truth from shadow. The shadow of hidden things is an infinite depth in which is stored the power of the One Infinite Creator.

The adept, then, is working with the power of hidden things illuminated by that which can be false or true. To embrace falsity, to know it, and to seek it, and to use it gives a power that is most great. This is the nature of the power of your visitor and may shed some light upon the power of one who seeks in order to serve others as well, for the missteps in the night are oh! so easy.

**Ra, 80.8**

Questioner: The fifteenth archetype is the Matrix of the Spirit and has been called the Devil. Can you tell me why that is so?

Ra: I am Ra. We do not wish to be facile in such a central query, but we may note that the nature of the spirit is so infinitely subtle that the fructifying influence of light upon the great darkness of the spirit is very often not as apparent as the darkness itself. The progress chosen by many adepts becomes a confused path as each adept attempts to use the Catalyst of the Spirit. Few there are which are successful in grasping the light of the sun. By far, the majority of adepts remain groping in the moonlight and, as we have said, this light can deceive as well as uncover hidden mystery. Therefore, the melody, shall we say, of this matrix often seems to be of a negative and evil, as you would call it, nature.

It is also to be noted that an adept is one which has freed itself more and more from the constraints of the thoughts, opinions, and bonds of other-selves. Whether this is done for service to others or service to self, it is a necessary part of the awakening of the adept. This freedom is seen by those not free as what you would call evil or black. The magic is recognized; the nature is often not.

**Ra, 80.10**

Questioner: Could I say, then, that implicit in the process of becoming adept is the seeming polarization towards service to self because the adept becomes disassociated with many of his kind?

Ra: I am Ra. This is likely to occur. The apparent happening is disassociation whether the truth is service to self and thus true disassociation from other-selves or service-to-others and thus true association with the heart of all other-selves and disassociation only from the illusory husks which prevent the adept from correctly perceiving the self and other-self as one.

**Ra, 80.11**

Questioner: Then you say that this effect of disassociation on the service-to-others adept is a stumbling block or slowing process in reaching that goal to which he aspires? Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is incorrect. This disassociation from the miasma of illusion and misrepresentation of each and every distortion is a quite necessary portion of an adept's path. It may be seen by others to be unfortunate.

**Ra, 80.12**

Even the most unhappy of experiences, shall we say, which seem to occur in the Catalyst of the adept, seen from the viewpoint of the spirit, may, with the discrimination possible in shadow, be worked with until light equaling the light of brightest noon descends upon the adept and positive or service-to-others illumination has occurred. The service-to-self adept will satisfy itself with the shadows and, grasping the light of day, will toss back the head in grim laughter, preferring the darkness.

**Ra, 80.15**

The Significator of the Spirit is that living entity which either radiates or absorbs the love and the light of the One Infinite Creator, radiates it to others or absorbs it for the self.

**Ra, 80.17**

That which you call the Sarcophagus in your system may be seen to be the material world, if you will. This material world is transformed by the spirit into that which is infinite and eternal. The infinity of the spirit is an even greater realization than the infinity of consciousness, for consciousness which has been disciplined by will and faith is that consciousness which may contact intelligent infinity directly. There are many things which fall away in the many, many steps of adepthood. We, of Ra, still walk these steps and praise the One Infinite Creator at each transformation.

**Ra, 80.20**

...intelligent energy which is the Universe or, as you have called it somewhat provincially, the World.  
**Ra, 80.21**

...contact with intelligent energy, for this energy is the energy of the Logos, and thus it is the energy which heals, builds, removes, destroys, and transforms all other-selves as well as the self.

The contact with intelligent infinity is most likely to produce an unspeakable joy in the entity experiencing such contact.  
**Ra, 80.2**

...each moment and certainly each diurnal period of the bodily incarnation offers death and rebirth to one which is attempting to use the catalyst which is offered it.  
**Ra, 81.13**

We have opened our hearts in radiation of love to the entire creation. Approximately 90 percent of the creation is at some level aware of the sending and able to reply. All of the infinite Logoi are one in the consciousness of love. This is the type of contact which we enjoy rather than travel.  
**Ra, 81.23**

...to one whose personality or mind/body/spirit complex has been crystallized the universe is one place and there is no bar upon travel  
**Ra, 81.27**

Much of what you call creation has never separated from the One Logos of this octave and resides within the One Infinite Creator. Communication in such an environment is the communication of cells of the body. That which is learned by one is known to all.  
**Ra, 81.23**

The One Original Thought is the harvest of all previous, if you would use this term, experience of the Creator by the Creator. As It decides to know Itself It generates Itself, into that plenum full of the glory and the power of the One Infinite Creator which is manifested to your perceptions as space or outer space. Each generation of this knowing begets a knowing which has the capacity, through free will, to choose methods of knowing Itself. Therefore, gradually, step by step, the Creator becomes that which may know Itself, and the portions of the Creator partake less purely in the power of the original word or thought. The Creator does not properly create as much as It experiences Itself.  
**Ra, 82.10**

Consider, if you will, the tendency of those who are divinely happy, as you call this distortion, to have little urge to alter or better their condition. Such is the result of the mind/body/spirit which is not complex [that is, those entities existing prior to the experiment of the veil]. There is the possibility of love of other-selves and service to other-selves, but there is the overwhelming awareness of the Creator in the self. The connection with the Creator is that of the umbilical cord. The security is total. Therefore, no love is terribly important; no pain terribly frightening; no effort, therefore, is made to serve for love or to benefit from fear.  
**Ra, 82.22**

...without the need to understand, understanding would forever be left undone.  
**Ra, 82.24**

Each incarnation is intended to be a course in the Creator knowing Itself.  
**Ra, 82.25**

Let us continue the metaphor of the schooling but consider the scholar as being an entity in your younger years of the schooling process. The entity is fed, clothed, and protected regardless of whether or not the schoolwork is accomplished. Therefore, the entity does not do the homework but rather enjoys playtime, mealtime, and vacation. It is not until there is a reason to wish to excel that most entities will attempt to excel.

**Ra, 82.28**

The faculty of faith or will needs to be understood, nourished, and developed in order to have an entity which seeks past the boundary of third density. Those entities which do not do their homework, be they ever so amiable, shall not cross.

**Ra, 82.29**

...the veiling is a primary cause of the value of dreams and is also the single door against which the Higher Self must stand awaiting entry.

**Ra, 83.3**

It is true that the nature of time/space is such that a lifetime may be seen whole as a book or record, the pages studied, riffled through, and re-read. However, the value of review is that of the testing as opposed to the studying. At the testing, when the test is true, the distillations of all study are made clear.

During the process of study, which you may call the incarnation, regardless of an entity's awareness of the process taking place, the material is diffused and over-attention is almost inevitably placed upon detail.

The testing upon the cessation of the incarnative state is not that testing which involves the correct memorization of many details. This testing is, rather, the observing of self by self, often with aid as we have said. In this observation one sees the sum of all the detailed study; that being an attitude or complex of attitudes which bias the consciousness of the mind/body/spirit.

**Ra, 83.7**

The third density is, by its very fiber, a societal one. There are societies wherever there are entities conscious of the self and conscious of other-selves and possessed with intelligence adequate to process information indicating the benefits of communal blending of energies. The structures of society before as after veiling were various. However, the societies before veiling did not depend in any case upon the intentional enslavement of some for the benefit of others, this not being seen to be a possibility when all are seen as one. There was, however, the requisite amount of disharmony to produce various experiments in what you may call governmental or societal structures.

**Ra, 83.9**

At the present space/time the conditions of well-meant and unintentional slavery are so numerous that it beggars our ability to enumerate them.

**Ra, 83.11**

Questioner: I would say that a very high percentage of the laws and restrictions within what we call our legal system are of a nature of enslavement of which I just spoke. Would you agree with this?

Ra: I am Ra. It is a necessary balance to the intention of law, which is to protect, that the result would encompass an equal distortion towards imprisonment. Therefore, we may say that your supposition is correct. This is not to denigrate those who, in green and blue-ray energies, sought to free a peaceable people



from the bonds of chaos but only to point out the inevitable consequences of codification of response which does not recognize the uniqueness of each and every situation within your experience

**Ra, 83.13**

Questioner: Is the veil supposed to be what I would call semi-permeable?

Ra: I am Ra. The veil is indeed so.

**Ra, 83.14**

Questioner: What techniques and methods of penetration of the veil were planned and are there any others that have occurred other than those planned?

Ra: I am Ra. There were none planned by the first great experiment. As all experiments, this rested upon the nakedness of hypothesis. The outcome was unknown. It was discovered, experientially and empirically, that there were as many ways to penetrate the veil as the imagination of mind/body/spirit complexes could provide. The desire of mind/body/spirit complexes to know that which was unknown drew to them the dreaming and the gradual opening to the seeker of all of the balancing mechanisms leading to adepthood and communication with teach/learners which could pierce this veil.

The various unmanifested activities of the self were found to be productive in some degree of penetration of the veil. In general, we may say that by far the most vivid and even extravagant opportunities for the piercing of the veil are a result of the interaction of polarized entities.

**Ra, 83.15**

Questioner: Could you expand on what you mean by that interaction of polarized entities in piercing the veil?

Ra: I am Ra. We shall state two items of note. The first is the extreme potential for polarization in the relationship of two polarized entities which have embarked upon the service-to-others path or, in some few cases, the service-to-self path. Secondly, we would note that effect which we have learned to call the doubling effect. Those of like mind which together seek shall far more surely find.

**Ra, 83.16**

Questioner: Specifically, by what process would, in the first case, two polarized entities attempt to penetrate the veil, whether they be positively or negatively polarized? By what technique would they penetrate the veil?

Ra: I am Ra. The penetration of the veil may be seen to begin to have its roots in the gestation of green-ray activity, that all-compassionate love which demands no return. If this path is followed the higher energy centers shall be activated and crystallized until the adept is born. Within the adept is the potential for dismantling the veil to a greater or lesser extent that all may be seen again as one. The other-self is primary catalyst in this particular path to the piercing of the veil, if you would call it that.

**Ra, 83.17**

Questioner: In some cases it seems that this use of catalyst is almost in a runaway condition for some entities in that they are experiencing much more pain than they can make good use of as far as catalytic nature would be considered. Could you comment on that?

Ra: I am Ra. This shall be the last query of this working of a full length. You may see, in some cases, an entity which, either by pre-incarnative choice or by constant reprogramming while in incarnation, has developed an esurient program of catalyst. Such an entity is quite desirous of using the catalyst and has

determined to its own satisfaction that what you may call the large board needs to be applied to the forehead in order to obtain the attention of the self. In these cases it may indeed seem a great waste of the catalyst of pain and a distortion towards feeling the tragedy of so much pain may be experienced by the other-self. However, it is well to hope that the other-self is grasping that which it has gone to some trouble to offer itself; that is, the catalyst which it desires to use for the purpose of evolution. May we ask if there are any brief queries at this time?

**Ra, 83.26**

We may ... suggest that it is a grand choice that each may make to, by desire, collect the details of the day or, by desire, seek the keys to unknowing.

**Ra, 84.7**

The awareness of all as Creator is that which opens the green energy center.

**Ra, 84.9**

The energy transfer occurs in one releasing of the potential difference. This does not leap between green and green energy centers but is the sharing of the energies of each from red ray upwards. In this context it may be seen to be at its most efficient when both entities have orgasm simultaneously. However, it functions as transfer if either has the orgasm and indeed in the case of the physically expressed love between a mated pair which does not have the conclusion you call orgasm there is, nonetheless, a considerable amount of energy transferred due to the potential difference which has been raised as long as both entities are aware of this potential and release its strength to each other by desire of the will in a mental or mind complex dedication. You may see this practice as being used to generate energy transfers in some of your practices of what you may call other than Christian religious distortion systems of the Law of One.

**Ra, 84.13**

If both entities are well polarized and vibrating in green-ray love any orgasm shall offer equal energy to both.

**Ra, 84.16**

You may see that some information is necessarily shrouded in mystery by our desire to preserve the free will of the adept. The great key to blue, indigo, and finally, that great capital of the column of sexual energy transfer, violet energy, transfers, is the metaphysical bond or distortion which has the name among your peoples of unconditional love. In the blue-ray energy transfer the quality of this love is refined in the fire of honest communication and clarity; this, shall we say, normally speaking in general, takes a substantial portion of your space/time to accomplish although there are instances of matings so well refined in previous incarnations and so well remembered that the blue-ray may be penetrated at once. This energy transfer is of great benefit to the seeker in that all communication from this seeker is, thereby, refined and the eyes of honesty and clarity look upon a new world. Such is the nature of blue-ray energy and such is one mechanism of potentiating and crystallizing it.

As we approach indigo-ray transfer we find ourselves in a shadowland. We cannot give you information straight out or plain, for this is seen by us to be an infringement. We cannot speak at all of violet ray transfer as we do not, again, desire to break the Law of Confusion.

We may say that these jewels, though dearly bought, are beyond price for the seeker and might suggest that just as each awareness is arrived at through a process of analysis, synthesis, and inspiration, so should the seeker approach its mate and evaluate each experience, seeking the jewel.

**Ra, 84.20**

Questioner: Is there any way to tell which ray the transfer was for an individual after the experience?

Ra: I am Ra. There is only a subjective yardstick or measure of such. If the energies have flowed so that love is made whole, green-ray transfer has taken place. If, by the same entities' exchange, greater ease in communication and greater sight has been experienced, the energy has been refined to the blue-ray energy center. If the polarized entities, by this same energy transfer experience, find that the faculties of will and faith have been stimulated, not for a brief while but for a great duration of what you call time, you may perceive the indigo-ray transfer. We may not speak of the violet-ray transfer except to note that it is an opening to the gateway of intelligent infinity. Indeed, the indigo-ray transfer is also this but, shall we say, the veil has not yet been lifted.

**Ra, 84.21**

...the service-to-self choice is one which denies the very center of the spectrum; that being universal love. Therefore, all that is built upon the penetration of the light of harvestable quality by such entities is based upon an omission.

**Ra, 85.11**

The primary veiling was of such significance that it may be seen to be analogous to the mantling of the Earth over all the jewels within the Earth's crust; whereas previously all facets of the Creator were consciously known. After the veiling, almost no facets of the Creator were known to the mind. Almost all was buried beneath the veil.

**Ra, 85.19**

The so-called dreaming contains a great deal which, if made available to the conscious mind and used, shall aid it in polarization to a great extent.

**Ra, 85.19**

Perhaps the most important and significant function that occurred due to the veiling of the mind from itself is not in itself a function of mind but rather is a product of the potential created by this veiling. This is the faculty of will or pure desire.

**Ra, 85.19**

Your language is not overstrewn with non-emotional terms for the functional qualities of what is now termed unconscious mind. ...

The nature of the unconscious is of the nature of concept rather than word. Consequently, before the veiling the use of the deeper mind was that of the use of unspoken concept. You may consider the emotive and connotative aspects of a melody. One could call out, in some stylized fashion, the terms for the notes of the melody. One could say, quarter note A, quarter note A, quarter note A, whole note F. This bears little resemblance to the beginning of the melody of one of your composer's most influential melodies, that known to you as a symbol of victory.

This is the nature of the deeper mind. There are only stylized methods with which to discuss its functions. Thusly our descriptions of this portion of the mind, as well as the same portions of body and spirit, were given terms such as "far-seeing," indicating that the nature of penetration of the veiled portion of the mind may be likened unto the journey too rich and exotic to contemplate adequate describing thereof.

**Ra, 86.6**

Dreaming is an activity of communication through the veil of the unconscious mind and the conscious mind. The nature of this activity is wholly dependent upon the situation regarding the energy center blockages, activations, and crystallizations of a given mind/body/spirit complex.

In one who is blocked at two of the three lower energy centers dreaming will be of value in the polarization process in that there will be a repetition of those portions of recent catalyst as well as deeper held blockages, thereby giving the waking mind clues as to the nature of these blockages and hints as to possible changes in perception which may lead to the unblocking.

**Ra, 86.7**

The activity of dreaming is an activity in which there is made a finely wrought and excellently fashioned bridge from conscious to unconscious. In this state the various distortions which have occurred in the energy web of the body complex, due to the misprision with which energy influxes have been received, are healed. With the proper amount of dreaming comes the healing of these distortions. Continued lack of this possibility can cause seriously distorted mind/body/spirit complexes.

**Ra, 86.12**

Let us deal with the sexual energy transfer. Before the veiling such a transfer was always possible due to there being no shadow upon the grasp of the nature of the body and its relationship to other mind/body/spirits in this particular manifestation. Before the veiling process there was a near total lack of the use of this sexual energy transfer beyond green ray.

This also was due to the same unshadowed knowledge each had of each. There was, in third density then, little purpose to be seen in the more intensive relationships of mind, body, and spirit which you may call those of the mating process, since each other-self was seen to be the Creator and no other-self seemed to be more the Creator than another.

After the veiling process it became infinitely more difficult to achieve green-ray energy transfer due to the great areas of mystery and unknowing concerning the body complex and its manifestations. However, also due to the great shadowing of the manifestations of the body from the conscious mind complex, when such energy transfer was experienced it was likelier to provide catalyst which caused a bonding of self with other-self in a properly polarized configuration.

From this point it was far more likely that higher energy transfers would be sought by this mated pair of mind/body/spirit complexes, thus allowing the Creator to know Itself with great beauty, solemnity, and wonder. Intelligent infinity having been reached by this sacramental use of this function of the body, each mind/body/spirit complex of the mated pair gained greatly in polarization and in ability to serve.

**Ra, 86.20**

Upon the negative path the wisdom density is one in which power over others has been refined until it is approaching absolute power. Any force such as the force your group and those of Ra offer which cannot be controlled by the power of such a negative fifth-density mind/body/spirit complex then depolarizes the entity which has not controlled other-self.

It is not within your conscious selves to stand against such refined power but rather it has been through the harmony, the mutual love, and the honest calling for aid from the forces of light which have given you the shield and buckler.

**Ra, 87.6**

The fourth-density habit is that of offering temptations and of energizing preexisting distortions. Fourth-density entities lack the subtlety and magical practice which the fifth-density experience offers.

**Ra, 87.9**

The fourth-density negative entity has made the choice available to each at third-density harvest. It is aware of the full array of possible methods of viewing the universe of the One Creator and it is convinced that the ignoring and non-use of the green-ray energy center will be the method most efficient in providing harvestability of fourth density. Its operations among those of third density which have not yet made this choice are designed to offer to each the opportunity to consider the self-serving polarity and its possible attractiveness.

**Ra, 87.11**

We ask that you, who have been our friends... regard such as another opportunity to, as the adept must, be yourselves and offer that which is in and with you without pretense of any kind.

**Ra, 88.12**

As each planetary influence enters the energy web of your sphere those upon the sphere are moved much as the moon which moves about your sphere moves the waters upon your deeps. Your own nature is water in that you as mind/body/spirit complexes are easily impressed and moved. Indeed, this is the very fiber and nature of your journey and vigil in this density: to not only be moved but to instruct yourself as to the preferred manner of your movement in mind, body, and spirit.

**Ra, 88.23**

In and of themselves, the Major Arcana have no rightful place in divination but, rather, are tools for the further knowledge of the self by the self for the purpose of entering a more profoundly, acutely realized present moment.

**Ra, 88.23**

Questioner: What was the attitude prior to harvest of those harvestable entities of Ra with respect to those who were obviously unharvestable?

Ra: I am Ra. Those of us which had the gift of polarity felt deep compassion for those who seemed to dwell in darkness. This description is most apt as ours was a harshly bright planet in the physical sense. There was every attempt made to reach out with whatever seemed to be needed. However, those upon the positive path have the comfort of companions and we of Ra spent a great deal of our attention upon the possibilities of achieving spiritual or metaphysical adeptness or work in indigo ray through the means of relationships with other-selves. Consequently, the compassion for those in darkness was balanced by the appreciation of the light.

**Ra, 89.29**

Questioner: Would Ra have the same attitude toward the unharvestable entities or would it be different at this nexus than at the time of harvest from the third density?

Ra: I am Ra. Not substantially. To those who wish to sleep we could only offer those comforts designed for the sleeping. Service is only possible to the extent it is requested. We were ready to serve in whatever way we could. This still seems satisfactory as a means of dealing with other-selves in third density. It is our feeling that to be each entity which one attempts to serve is to simplify the grasp of what service is necessary or possible.

**Ra, 89.30**

About [the negatively polarizing entities on Venus] were soon gathered those who found it easy to believe that a series of specific knowledges and wisdoms would advance one towards the Creator.

**Ra, 89.35**

Questioner: By what means do these particular fourth-density entities get from their origin to our position?

Ra: I am Ra. The mechanism of calling has been previously explored. When a distortion which may be negatively connotated is effected, this calling occurs. In addition, the light of which we have spoken, emanating from attempts to be of service to others in a fairly clear and lucid sense, is another type of calling in that it represents that which requires balance by temptation. Thirdly, there have been certain avenues into the mind/body/spirit complexes of this group which have been made available by your fifth-density friend.

**Ra, 90.3**

Questioner: Then what you are saying is that once the path is recognized, either the positive or the negative polarized entity can find hints along his path as to the efficiency of that path. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. That which you say is correct upon its own merits, but is not a repetition of our statement. Our suggestion was that within the experiential nexus of each entity within its second-density environment and within the roots of mind there were placed biases indicating to the watchful eye the more efficient of the two paths. Let us say, for want of a more precise adjective, that this Logos has a bias towards kindness.

**Ra, 90.21**

We came to your peoples to enunciate the Law of One. We wished to impress upon those who wished to learn of unity that in unity all paradoxes are resolved; all that is broken is healed; all that is forgotten is brought to light.

**Ra, 90.29**

Questioner: Thank you. You have stated previously that the foundation of our present illusion is the concept of polarity. I would like to ask, since we have defined the two polarities as service-to-others and service-to-self, is there a more complete or eloquent or enlightening definition of these polarities or any more information that we don't have at this time that you could give on the two ends of the poles that would give us a better insight into the nature of polarity itself?

Ra: I am Ra. It is unlikely that there is a more pithy or eloquent description of the polarities of third density than service-to-others and service-to-self due to the nature of the mind/body/spirit complexes' distortions towards perceiving concepts relating to philosophy in terms of ethics or activity. However, we might consider the polarities using slightly variant terms. In this way a possible enrichment of insight might be achieved for some.

One might consider the polarities with the literal nature enjoyed by the physical polarity of the magnet. The negative and positive, with electrical characteristics, may be seen to be just as in the physical sense. It is to be noted in this context that it is quite impossible to judge the polarity of an act or an entity, just as it is impossible to judge the relative goodness of the negative and positive poles of the magnet.

Another method of viewing polarities might involve the concept of radiation/absorption. That which is positive is radiant; that which is negative is absorbent.

**Ra, 93.3**

All uses of catalyst by the mind are those consciously applied to catalyst. Without conscious intent the use of catalyst is never processed through mediation, ideation, and imagination.

**Ra, 93.10**

All that assaults your senses is catalyst.

**Ra, 93.11**

The sphere of spiritual power is an indication indeed that each opportunity is pregnant with the most extravagant magical possibilities for the far-seeing adept.

**Ra, 93.18**

We may indicate that the crux ansata is a part of the concept complexes of the archetypical mind, the circle indicating the magic of the spirit, the cross indicating that nature of manifestation which may only be valued by the losing. Thus the crux ansata is intended to be seen as an image of the eternal in and through manifestation and beyond manifestation through the sacrifice and the transformation of that which is manifest.

**Ra, 93.24**

The figure [in Arcanum #4] is expressing the nature of experience by having its attention caught by what may be termed the left-hand catalyst. Meanwhile, the power, the magic, is available upon the right-hand path.

The nature of experience is such that the attention shall be constantly given varieties of experience. Those that are presumed to be negative, or interpreted as negative, may seem in abundance. It is a great challenge to take catalyst and devise the magical, positive experience. That which is magical in the negative experience is much longer coming, shall we say, in the third density.

**Ra, 94.19**

Questioner: Then I am guessing that the crossed legs of the entity in Card Four have a meaning similar to the crux ansata. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is correct. The cross formed by the living limbs of the image signifies that which is the nature of mind/body/spirit complexes in manifestation within your illusion. There is no experience which is not purchased by effort of some kind, no act of service-to-self or others which does not bear a price, to the entity manifesting, commensurate with its purity. All things in manifestation may be seen in one way or another to be offering themselves in order that transformations may take place upon the level appropriate to the action.

**Ra, 94.25**

There is much of blessing in the gardening and the care of surroundings, for when this is accomplished in love of the creation the second-density flowers, plants, and small animals are aware of this service and return it.

**Ra, 95.11**

Questioner: What I meant to say was that the entity is guarded along the right-hand path, once it has chosen this path, from effects of the material illusion that are of the negative polarity. Would Ra comment on that?

Ra: I am Ra. This is an accurate perception of our intent, O student. We may note that the great cat guards in direct proportion to the purity of the manifestations of intention and the purity of inner work done along this path.

**Ra, 95.23**

Questioner: From that statement I interpret the following. If the Experience of the Mind has sufficiently chosen the right-hand path, and as total purity is approached in the choosing of the right-hand path, then total imperviousness from the effect of the left-hand catalyst is also approached. Is this correct?

Ra: I am Ra. This is exquisitely perceptive. The seeker which has purely chosen the service-to-others path shall certainly not have a variant apparent incarnational experience. There is no outward shelter in your illusion from the gusts, flurries, and blizzards of quick and cruel catalyst.

However, to the pure, all that is encountered speaks of the love and the light of the One Infinite Creator. The cruelest blow is seen with an ambiance of challenges offered and opportunities to come. Thusly, the great pitch of light is held high above such an one so that all interpretation may be seen to be protected by light.

**Ra, 95.24**

Questioner: I have often wondered about the action of random and programmed catalyst with respect to the entity with the very strong positive or negative polarization. Would either polarity be free to a great extent from random catalyst such as great natural catastrophes or warfare or something like that which generates a lot of random catalyst in the physical vicinity of a highly polarized entity? Does this great cat, then, have an effect on such random catalyst on the right-hand path?

Ra: I am Ra. In two circumstances this is so. Firstly, if there has been the pre-incarnative choice that, for instance, one shall not take life in the service of the cultural group, events shall fall in a protective manner. Secondly, if any entity is able to dwell completely in unity the only harm that may occur to it is the changing of the outward physical, yellow-ray vehicle into the more light-filled mind/body/spirit complex's vehicle by the process of death. All other suffering and pain is as nothing to one such as this.

We may note that this perfect configuration of the mind, body, and spirit complexes, while within the third-density vehicle, is extraordinarily rare.

**Ra, 95.25**

The observation of the right angles and their transformational meaning is most perceptive, O student. Each of the images leading to the Transformations of Mind, Body, and Spirit and ultimately to the great transformative Choice has the increasing intensity of increasing articulation of concept; that is to say, each image in which you find this angle may increasingly be seen to be a more and more stridently calling voice of opportunity to use each resource, be it experience as you now observe or further images, for the grand work of the adept which builds towards transformation using the spirit's bountiful shuttle to intelligent infinity. Please ask any brief queries at this space/time.

**Ra, 95.27**

The domicile in question has already been offered a small amount of blessing by this group through its presence and, as we have previously stated, each of your days spent in love, harmony, and thanksgiving will continue transforming the dwelling.

**Ra, 96.4**

May we note that just as each entity strives in each moment to become more nearly one with the Creator but falls short, just so is physical spotlessness striven for but not achieved. In each case the purity of intention and thoroughness of manifestation are appreciated. The variance between the attempt and the goal is never noted and may be considered unimportant.

**Ra, 96.4**

To put this into perspective we must gaze then at the stunning mystery of the One Infinite Creator. The archetypical mind does not resolve any paradoxes or bring all into unity. This is not the property of any source which is of the third-density. Therefore, may we ask the student to look up from inward working and



behold the glory, the might, the majesty, the mystery, and the peace of oneness. Let no consideration of bird or beast, darkness or light, shape or shadow keep any which seeks from the central consideration of unity.

**Ra, 97.9**

The flow of power, just as the flow of love or wisdom, is enabled not by the chary\* conserver of its use but by the constant user.

**Ra, 99.5**

The principle which moves in accordance with the dynamics of teach/learning with most efficiency is constancy.

**Ra, 99.6**

Many use the trunk and roots of mind as if that portion of mind were a badly used, prostituted entity. Then this entity gains from this great storehouse that which is rough, prostituted, and without great virtue. Those who turn to the deep mind, seeing it in the guise of the maiden, go forth to court it. The courtship has nothing of plunder in its semblance and may be protracted, yet the treasure gained by such careful courtship is great. The right-hand and left-hand transformations of the mind may be seen to differ by the attitude of the conscious mind towards its own resources as well as the resources of other-selves.

**Ra, 99.8**

The free will of third-density entities is far stronger than the rather mild carryover from second-density DNA encoding and it is not part of the conscious nature of many of your mind/body/spirit complexes to be monogamous due to the exercise of free will. However, as has been noted there are many signposts in the deep mind indicating to the alert adept the more efficient use of catalyst. As we have said, the Logos of your peoples has a bias towards kindness.

**Ra, 99.10**

In this image of Transformation of Mind, then, each of the females points the way it would go, but is not able to move, nor are the two female entities striving to do so. They are at rest. The conscious entity holds both and will turn itself one way or the other or, potentially, backwards and forwards, rocking first one way then the other and not achieving the transformation. In order for the Transformation of Mind to occur, one principle governing the use of the deep mind must be abandoned.

**Ra, 100.4**

The entity which is given constant and unremitting approval by those surrounding it suffers from the loss of the mirroring effect of those which reflect truthfully rather than unquestioningly. This is not a suggestion to reinstate judgment but merely a suggestion for all those supporting instruments; that is, support, be harmonious, share in love, joy, and thanksgiving, but find love within truth, for each instrument benefits from this support more than from the total admiration which overcomes discrimination.

**Ra, 101.8**

We may note that the instrument has remained centered upon the Creator at a percentage exceeding ninety. This is the key. Continue in thanksgiving and gratitude for all things.

**Ra, 102.2**

Each entity must, in order to completely unblock yellow ray, love all which are in relationship to it, with hope only of the other selves' joy, peace, and comfort.

**Ra, 102.11**

We salute the opening of compassion circuitry in the questioner but note that that which is being experienced by this group is being experienced within an healing atmosphere. The healing hands of each have limited use when the distortion has so many metaphysical layers and mixtures. Therefore, look not to a healing but to the joy of companionship, for each is strong and has its feet set upon the way. The moon casts its shadows. What shall you see? Link hands and walk towards the sun. In this instance this is the greatest healing. For the physical vehicle we can suggest far less than you had hoped.

**Ra, 102.21**

As to the instrument, the journey from worth in action to worth in esse is arduous. The entity has denied itself in order to be free of that which it calls addiction\*. This sort of martyrdom, and here we speak of the small but symbolically great sacrifice of the clothing, causes the entity to frame a selfhood in poorness which feeds unworthiness unless the poverty is seen to be true richness. In other words, good works for the wrong reasons cause confusion and distortion. We encourage the instrument to value itself and to see that its true requirements are valued by the self. We suggest contemplation of true richness of being.

**Ra, 103.8**

It is the way of distortion that in order to balance a distortion one must accentuate it.

**Ra, 104.2**

I am Ra. We leave you in appreciation of the circumstances of the great illusion in which you now choose to play the pipe and timbrel and move in rhythm. We are also players upon a stage. The stage changes. The acts ring down. The lights come up once again. And throughout the grand illusion and the following and the following there is the undergirding majesty of the One Infinite Creator. All is well. Nothing is lost. Go forth rejoicing in the love and the light, the peace and the power of the One Infinite Creator. I am Ra. Adonai.

**Ra, 104.26**

Within third-density, not to build into the physical vehicle its ending would be counterproductive to the mind/body/spirit complexes therein residing, for within the illusion it seems more lovely to be within the illusion than to drop the garment which has carried the mind/body/ spirit complex and move on.

**Ra, 105.20**

Therefore look you to your love and thanksgiving for each other and join always in fellowship, correcting each broken strand of that affection with patience, comfort, and quietness.

**Ra, 105.22**

Perceive the group as here, a location in time/space. Within this true home, keep the light touch. Laugh together, and find joy in and with each other.

**Ra, 106.20**

We suggest the nature of all manifestation to be illusory and functional only in so far as the entity turns from shape and shadow to the One.

**Ra, 106.23**

**The Nature of Service: Humility, Reciprocity, Power, and Ego**  
Supplemental Materials

From Cat, with love despite the brutal nature of it all

“...The key to balance may then be seen in the unstudied, spontaneous, and honest response of entities toward experiences, thus using experience to the utmost, then applying the balancing exercises and achieving the proper attitude for the most purified spectrum of energy center manifestation in violet ray. This is why the brilliance or rotational speed of the energy centers is not considered above the balanced aspect or violet-ray manifestation of an entity in regarding harvestability; for those entities which are unbalanced, especially as to the primary rays, will not be capable of sustaining the impact of the love and light of intelligent infinity to the extent necessary for harvest.”

- Ra, 41.19

## Table of Contents

	Introduction	2
	and a note on the readings	
Hazrat Inayat Khan	Be a Lion Within	5
	From Volume 8, <i>The Privilege of Being Human</i>	
Walt Whitman	Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking	6
	From <i>Leaves of Grass</i>	
Walt Whitman	The Sleepers	13
	From <i>Leaves of Grass</i>	
Charles Baudelaire	To the Reader	22
	From <i>Fleurs du Mal (Flowers of Evil)</i>	
Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī	Rumi VI	24
	From <i>One-Handed Basket Weaving</i>	
Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī	A Star Without a Name	27
	Coleman Barks Translation	
NIV	Luke 4:23-30	28
	On Elijah	
Joseph Campbell	The Hero With A Thousand Faces	29
	Excerpts from "Return"	
Jean Shinoda Bolen	Transitions as Liminal & Archetypal Situations	34
	"Mythic Passages"	
Julien Smith	The Flinch	50

# Introduction

---

Cat Dartez

My employment involves service in its most basic form. I work with nonprofits, public service agencies, professors, students, and government entities to establish mutually beneficial relationships and projects. The emphasis falls on “mutually beneficial.” The benefits of engaging in service cannot be denied regardless of one’s philosophical subscription. Individuals who are consistent volunteers have a higher rate of life satisfaction, longer average lifespans, a sense of purpose and community, a stronger social and professional network, an increase in opportunities through referrals and recommendations, and a higher rate of desirable employment. Whether a volunteer is motivated by a sense of duty or a sense of personal reward is irrelevant: being of service is not a purely selfless act. Service is a tool of the polar right (much like a flashlight in the pitch) that encourages movement towards a positive polarization through the reexamination of personal experiences while incorporating recognition for the experiences of others. A simplified example of this process can be seen through a fictional character I will call Jane. Jane has never experienced financial instability. Jane volunteers at a nonprofit that views cyclical poverty as a complex result of emotional conditioning from birth, social constructs, environmental damage, economic wastelands, poor transportation access, racial barriers, vocabulary deficits, etc. Jane begins to incorporate these factors that perpetuate poverty into her perception of poor folk, and she abandons the, “pull one’s self up by one’s boot straps” mentality.

If service is a tool that moves us across the spectrum of the polarized field, then we are always in the process of becoming. “The Nature of Service: Humility, Reciprocity, Power and Ego”(what I’m presenting on) evaluates this process. It is an exploration of how we view our intrinsic personality traits in relationship to our talents, the conditions we face during the act of striving, and how our *becoming* is synonymous with being of service<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> “...*becoming* is synonymous with being of service.” This statement is oversimplified, but additional qualifications would have muddled the whole of the text. There are two trajectories of *becoming*: hoarding and disseminating. Taking and giving. Left and right. Good and evil. I am focusing on dissemination.

Becoming a well-tuned conduit of service is no easy task. Seizing one's personal power while honing the skill with which one wields her/his/zir<sup>2</sup> gifts is an act of defiance. The path is adversarial and will present obstacles designed to lift the veil between awareness and dissonance. The metaphor of this universal experience is found in every adventure tale. Poets write of their rebirth in the pursuit of their craft. Religious texts command the death of the self in order to be renewed. The movers and shakers of history consistently show a marked refusal to quell their passion at the demand of their opponents. The fortitude to follow your inner voice amidst familial, social, and financial fallout leads to life becoming a series of sacrifices followed by triumphs, and these personal triumphs are the foundation for a life of service.

\*

The following materials are not required for the presentation. The selected works meet one or more of the following criteria for inclusion:

- The work is referenced in or is relevant to the presentation.
- The work nourishes the reader with warm and fuzzy sensations.
- The work is cathartic, gritty, and provides the reader with the opportunity to wallow.
- One work, Whitman's *The Sleepers*, has absolutely nothing to do with the presentation, but I ruled in favor of myself and the poem's inclusion *because I can*.

A brief introduction to each work is printed in *italics*. Truncated biographies are provided for some works, since I believe the conditions in which an author creates his/her craft, the author's actions in life, and historical context elevate levels of understanding, significance, and vivacity.

---

<sup>2</sup> Zir is a gender-neutral pronoun. I like using it even though "singular *they*" was word of the year.

Volume 8 *The Privilege of Being Human*: (30.)

## Be a Lion Within

---

Hazrat Inayat Khan

*Hazrat Inayat Khan was a musician and Sufi mystic who brought the spiritual teachings of The Sufi Order to the United States in the early 1900s. His primary message was of a divine unity.*

Life is such that if we lay our hand here, there is a stone, if we lay our hand there, there are thorns. We can rely upon no one, not upon a relation, nor upon a friend. Whether friend or relative, whether master or servant, husband or wife, they do not care how we fare, they want so much work done by us. Whether it is a friend or a brother, he wants his own benefit from us, however near he may be. How could we expect the contrary, when we cannot rely upon our own mind and our own body to be always the same? After many experiences a person learns this. It takes a long time, because hope always remains. Man always thinks, if I cannot rely upon this one, then upon that one, if not upon this friend, then on that other one.

Then, from a lion, man must become a sheep. In the world each one is a lion, and behind each lion there is a bigger lion, and a machine gun ready to devour him. Man becomes a sheep; he becomes humble, meek.

You might think, "The lion is greater than the sheep. Why, from a lion, should I become a sheep, from better become worse?" The lion is lion outside; to others he is a lion, in his own soul he is a sheep, because he has not the courage to fight his own passions. His anger rules him, he does not control his anger.

In order to be the lion of God you must be a lion within, towards yourself. Then you are brave enough to stand against any evil, any power, because there is no guilt, there is no weakness. Great humility is needed for this way.

Leaves of Grass

# Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking

Walt Whitman

*Most of us know of Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" to be one of the most influential and cherished of American literary works; however, his works were frowned upon by his fellow citizens during his lifetime for having no identifiable meter or rhyming scheme in his poetry and for being immoral. Whitman was pro-women's rights (property ownership) and openly wrote with admiration and detail about all colors of sexuality – especially homoeroticism. He abandoned his Quaker roots and wrote of the self as the root of religion. "Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touch'd from,/ The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer..." Whitman wrote in "Song of Myself." To be fair about the poem, Whitman's reference to himself was to capture the song of all Americans.*

*Whitman, who found himself amidst a cultural attitude of skepticism, cynicism, and paranoia, declared, "I stand for the sunny point of view." He was an idealist on what it could mean to be American, and his hope in the potential freedoms associated with the young democracy is reflected in his use of free verse. He had a love and openness towards all matter of self-expression, having found the presence of the unapologetic diversity to be the ultimate symbol of democratic freedom. Whitman tread between the lines of both Union and Confederate attitudes, expressing concern over the demise of the young, idealistic nation and democracy with the United States becoming more divided. When Civil War erupted, Whitman considered himself a "consulate" of the wounded. He left his home to volunteer in hospitals tending to wounded soldiers on both sides of the line. He dressed wounds, wrote letters for the disabled, advocated, distributed food and clothing, and read aloud.*

*Out Of The Cradle Endless Rocking is a poem about Whitman's discovery of his calling – poetry. In the poem, the universe calls to him to listen. His act of listening results in the death of how he defined himself to clear space for his 'becoming.'*

1

OUT of the cradle endlessly rocking,  
 Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,  
 Out of the Ninth-month midnight,  
 Over the sterile sands, and the fields beyond, where the child, leaving  
 his bed, wander'd alone, bare-headed, barefoot,  
 Down from the shower'd halo,  
 Up from the mystic play of shadows, twining and twisting as if they were  
 alive,

5



Out from the patches of briers and blackberries,  
 From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,  
 From your memories, sad brother—from the fitful risings and fallings I  
 heard,  
 From under that yellow half-moon, late-risen, and swollen as if with 10  
 tears,  
 From those beginning notes of sickness and love, there in the  
 transparent mist,  
 From the thousand responses of my heart, never to cease,  
 From the myriad thence-arous'd words,  
 From the word stronger and more delicious than any,  
 From such, as now they start, the scene revisiting, 15  
 As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,  
 Borne hither—ere all eludes me, hurriedly,  
 A man—yet by these tears a little boy again,  
 Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,  
 I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter, 20  
 Taking all hints to use them—but swiftly leaping beyond them,  
 A reminiscence sing.

2

Once, Paumanok,  
 When the snows had melted—when the lilac-scent was in the [air](#), and  
 the Fifth-month grass was growing,  
 Up this sea-shore, in some briers, 25  
 Two guests from Alabama—two together,  
 And their nest, and four light-green eggs, spotted with brown,  
 And every day the he-bird, to and fro, near at hand,  
 And every day the she-bird, crouch'd on her nest, silent, with bright  
 eyes,  
 And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them, 30  
 Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

3

*Shine! shine! shine!*  
*Pour down your warmth, great Sun!*  
*While we bask—we two together.*  
  
*Two together! 35*  
*Winds blow South, or winds blow North,*  
*Day come white, or night come black,*  
*Home, or rivers and mountains from home,*  
*Singing all time, minding no time,*  
*While we two keep [together](#). 40*

4

Till of a sudden,  
 May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,  
 One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,  
 Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,  
 Nor ever appear'd again. 45

And thenceforward, all summer, in the sound of the sea,  
 And at night, under the full of the moon, in calmer weather,  
 Over the hoarse surging of the sea,  
 Or flitting from brier to brier by day,  
 I saw, I heard at intervals, the remaining one, the he-bird, 50  
 The solitary guest from Alabama.

5

*Blow! blow! blow!*  
*Blow up, sea-winds, along Paumanok's shore!*  
*I wait and I wait, till you blow my mate to me.*

6

55

Yes, when the stars glisten'd,  
 All night long, on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,  
 Down, almost amid the slapping waves,  
 Sat the lone singer, wonderful, causing tears.

He call'd on his mate;  
 He pour'd forth the meanings which I, of all men, know. 60

Yes, my brother, I know;  
 The rest might not—but I have treasur'd every note;  
 For once, and more than once, dimly, down to the beach gliding,  
 Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,  
 Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights 65  
 after their sorts,  
 The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,  
 I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,  
 Listen'd long and long.

Listen'd, to keep, to sing—now translating the notes,  
 Following you, my brother. 70

7

*Soothe! soothe! soothe!  
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,  
And again another behind, embracing and lapping, every one close,  
But my love soothes not me, not me.*

*Low hangs the moon—it rose late;  
O it is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.* 75

*O madly the sea pushes, pushes upon the land,  
With love—with love.*

*O night! do I not see my love fluttering out there among the breakers?  
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?* 80

*Loud! loud! loud!  
Loud I call to you, my love!*

*High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves;  
Surely you must know who is here, is here;  
You must know who I am, my love.* 85

*Low-hanging moon!  
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?  
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!  
O moon, do not keep her from me any longer.*

*Land! land! O land!  
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again, if  
you only would;  
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.* 90

*O rising stars!  
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.*

*O throat! O trembling [throat](#)!  
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!  
Pierce the woods, the earth;  
Somewhere listening to catch you, must be the one I want.* 95

*Shake out, carols!  
Solitary here—the night's carols!  
Carols of lonesome love! Death's carols!  
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!  
O, under that moon, where she droops almost down into the sea!  
O reckless, despairing carols.* 100

*But soft! sink low; 105*  
*Soft! let me just murmur;*  
*And do you wait a moment, you husky-noised sea;*  
*For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,*  
*So faint—I must be still, be still to listen;*  
*But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me. 110*

*Hither, my love!*  
*Here I am! Here!*  
*With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you;*  
*This gentle call is for you, my love, for you.*

*Do not be decoy'd elsewhere! 115*  
*That is the whistle of the wind—it is not my voice;*  
*That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray;*  
*Those are the shadows of leaves.*

*O darkness! O in vain!*  
*O I am very sick and sorrowful. 120*

*O brown halo in the sky, near the moon, drooping upon the sea!*  
*O troubled reflection in the sea!*  
*O throat! O throbbing heart!*  
*O all—and I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.*

*Yet I murmur, murmur [on](#)! 125*  
*O murmurs—you yourselves make me continue to sing, I know not why.*

*O past! O life! O songs of [joy](#)!*  
*In the air—in the woods—over fields;*  
*Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!*  
*But my love no more, no more with [me](#)! 130*  
*We two together no more.*

8

*The aria sinking;*  
*All else continuing—the stars shining,*  
*The winds blowing—the notes of the bird continuous [echoing](#),*  
*With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly [moaning](#), 135*  
*On the sands of Paumanok's shore, gray and rustling;*  
*The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the*  
*sea almost touching;*  
*The boy extatic—with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the*  
*atmosphere dallying,*

The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously  
 bursting,  
 The aria's meaning, the ears, the Soul, swiftly depositing, 140  
 The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,  
 The colloquy there—the trio—each uttering,  
 The undertone—the savage old mother, incessantly crying,  
 To the boy's Soul's questions sullenly timing—some drown'd secret  
 hissing,  
 To the outsetting bard of love. 145

## 9

Demon [or](#) bird! (said the boy's soul,)  
 Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it mostly to me?  
 For I, that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping,  
 Now I have heard you,  
 Now in a moment I know what I am for—I awake, 150  
 And already a thousand singers—a thousand songs, clearer, louder and  
 more sorrowful than yours,  
 A thousand warbling echoes have started to life within me,  
 Never to die.

O you singer, [solitary](#), singing by yourself—projecting me;  
 O solitary me, listening—nevermore shall I cease perpetuating you; 155  
 Never more shall I escape, never more the reverberations,  
 Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent from me,  
 Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was before what there, in  
 the night,  
 By the sea, under the yellow and sagging moon,  
 The messenger there [arous'd](#)—the fire, the sweet hell within, 160  
 The unknown want, the destiny of me.

O give me the [clew](#)! (it lurks in the night here somewhere;)  
 O if I am to have so much, let me have more!  
 O a word! O what is my destination? (I fear it is henceforth chaos;)  
 O how joys, dreads, convolutions, human shapes, and all shapes, spring 165  
 as from graves around me!  
 O phantoms! you cover all the land and all the sea!  
 O I cannot see in the dimness whether you smile or frown upon me;  
 O vapor, a look, a word! O well-beloved!  
 O you dear women's and men's phantoms!

A word then, (for I will conquer it,) 170  
 The word final, superior to all,  
 Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;  
 Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea-waves?

Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

10

175

[Where](#)to answering, the sea,  
 Delaying not, hurrying not,  
 Whisper'd me through the night, and very plainly before day-break,  
 Lisp'd to [me](#) the low and delicious word DEATH;  
 And again Death—ever Death, Death, Death,  
 Hissing melodious, neither like the bird, nor like my arous'd child's heart, 180  
 But edging near, as privately for me, rustling at my feet,  
 Creeping thence steadily up to my ears, and laving me softly all [over](#),  
 Death, Death, Death, Death, Death.

Which I do not forget,  
 But fuse the song of my dusky demon and [brother](#), 185  
 That he sang to [me](#) in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,  
 With the thousand responsive songs, at random,  
 My own songs, awaked from that hour;  
 And with them the key, the word up from the waves,  
 The word of the sweetest song, and all songs, 190  
 That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet,  
 The sea whisper'd me.

Leaves of Grass

# The Sleepers

Walt Whitman

*Whitman's The Sleepers is regarded as one of his most ambiguous works. Perhaps the various interpretations are why I love it so much. Some say it is a literal poem about the dream state and the subtle, flashing images and emotions that bubble up when we sleep. Others say it is a metaphor for the complexities and diversity of American democracy. It is neither of these things for me.*

*Do not look for its relationship to the presentation: you will not find one. I have included this poem for no other reason than (for me) it is dressing on a wound, a reminder of how everything will be alright, a textual embrace served with warm tomato bisque and oversized blankets. You might call this poem my 'mother.' When I tire of brooding or wish to cease despairing at the state of the world, I seek The Sleepers for snuggles.*

1

I WANDER all night in my vision,  
Stepping with light feet, swiftly and noiselessly stepping and stopping,  
Bending with open eyes over the shut eyes of sleepers,  
Wandering and confused, lost to myself, ill-assorted, contradictory,  
Pausing, gazing, bending, and stopping. 5

How solemn they look there, stretch'd and still!  
How quiet they breathe, the little children in their cradles!

The wretched features of ennuyés, the white features of corpses, the livid  
faces of drunkards, the sick-gray faces of onanists,  
The gash'd bodies on battle-fields, the insane in their strong-door'd  
rooms, the sacred idiots, the new-born emerging from gates, and the  
dying emerging from gates,  
The night pervades them and infolds them. 10

The married couple sleep calmly in their bed—he with his palm on the  
hip of the wife, and she with her palm on the hip of the husband,  
The sisters sleep lovingly side by side in their bed,  
The men sleep lovingly side by side in theirs,  
And the mother sleeps, with her little child carefully wrapt.

The blind sleep, and the deaf and dumb sleep, 15

The prisoner sleeps well in the prison—the run-away son sleeps;  
 The murderer that is to be hung next day—how does he sleep?  
 And the murder'd person—how does he sleep?

The female that loves unrequited sleeps,  
 And the male that loves unrequited sleeps, 20  
 The head of the money-maker that plotted all day sleeps,  
 And the enraged and treacherous dispositions—all, [all](#) sleep.

## 2

I stand in the dark with drooping eyes by the worst-suffering and the  
 most [restless](#),  
 I pass my hands soothingly to and fro a few inches from them,  
 The restless sink in their beds—they fitfully sleep. 25

Now I pierce the darkness—new beings [appear](#),  
 The earth recedes from me into the night,  
 I saw that it was beautiful, and I see that what is not the earth is  
 beautiful.

I go from bedside to bedside—I sleep close with the other sleepers, each  
 in turn,  
 I dream in my dream all the dreams of the other dreamers, 30  
 And I become the other dreamers.

## 3

I am a dance—Play up, there! the fit is whirling me fast!

I am the ever-laughing—it is new moon and twilight,  
 I see the hiding of douceurs—I see nimble ghosts whichever way I look,  
 Cache, and cache again, deep in the ground and sea, and where it is 35  
 neither ground or sea.

Well do they do their jobs, those journeymen divine,  
 Only from me can they hide nothing, and would not if they could,  
 I reckon I am their boss, and they make me a pet besides,  
 And surround me and lead me, and run ahead when I walk,  
 To lift their cunning covers, to signify me with stretch'd arms, and 40  
 resume the way;  
 Onward we move! a gay gang of blackguards! with mirth-shouting  
 music, and wild-flapping pennants of joy!

## 4



I am the actor, the actress, the voter, the politician;  
 The emigrant and the exile, the criminal that stood in the box,  
 He who has been famous, and he who shall be famous after to-day,  
 The stammerer, the well-form'd person, the wasted or feeble person. 45

5

I am she who adorn'd herself and folded her hair expectantly,  
 My truant lover has come, and it is dark.

Double yourself and receive me, darkness!  
 Receive me and my lover too—he will not let me go without him.

I roll myself upon you, as upon a bed—I resign myself to the dusk. 50

6

He whom I call answers me, and takes the place of my lover,  
 He rises with me silently from the bed.

Darkness! you are gentler than my lover—his flesh was sweaty and  
 panting,  
 I feel the hot moisture yet that he left me.

My hands are spread forth, I pass them in all directions, 55  
 I would sound up the shadowy shore to which you are journeying.

Be careful, darkness! already, what was it touch'd me?  
 I thought my lover had gone, else darkness and he are one,  
 I hear the heart-beat—I follow, I fade away.

7

60

O hot-cheek'd and blushing! O foolish hectic!  
 O for pity's sake, no one must see me now! my clothes were stolen while  
 I was abed,  
 Now I am thrust forth, where shall I run?

Pier that I saw dimly last night, when I look'd from the windows!  
 Pier out from the main, let me catch myself with you, and stay—I will  
 not chafe you,  
 I feel ashamed to go naked about the world. 65

I am curious to know where my feet stand—and what this is flooding  
 me, childhood or manhood—and the hunger that crosses the bridge  
 between.

8

The cloth laps a first sweet eating and drinking,  
 Laps life-swelling yolks—laps ear of rose-corn, milky and just ripen'd;  
 The white teeth stay, and the boss-tooth advances in darkness,  
 And liquor is spill'd on lips and bosoms by touching glasses, and the 70  
 best liquor afterward.

9

I descend my western course, my sinews are flaccid,  
 Perfume and youth course through me, and I am their wake.

It is my face yellow and wrinkled, instead of the old woman's,  
 I sit low in a straw-bottom chair, and carefully darn my grandson's  
 stockings.

It is I too, the sleepless widow, looking out on the winter midnight, 75  
 I see the sparkles of starshine on the icy and pallid earth.

A shroud I see, and I am the shroud—I wrap a body, and lie in the  
 coffin,  
 It is dark here under ground—it is not evil or pain here—it is blank here,  
 for reasons.

It seems to me that everything in the light and air ought to be happy,  
 Whoever is not in his coffin and the dark grave, let him know he has 80  
 enough.

10

I see a beautiful gigantic swimmer, swimming naked through the eddies  
 of the sea,  
 His brown hair lies close and even to his head—he strikes out with  
 courageous arms—he urges himself with his legs,  
 I see his white body—I see his undaunted eyes,  
 I hate the swift-running eddies that would dash him head-foremost on  
 the rocks.

What are you doing, you ruffianly red-trickled waves? 85  
 Will you kill the courageous giant? Will you kill him in the prime of his  
 middle age?

Steady and long he struggles,  
 He is baffled, bang'd, bruise'd—he holds out while his strength holds out,

The slapping eddies are spotted with his blood—they bear him away—  
 they roll him, swing him, turn him,  
 His beautiful body is borne in the circling eddies, it is continually 90  
 bruised on rocks,  
 Swiftly and out of sight is borne the brave corpse.

11

I turn, but do not extricate myself,  
 Confused, a past-reading, another, but with darkness yet.

The beach is cut by the razory ice-wind—the wreck-guns sound,  
 The tempest lulls—the moon comes floundering through the drifts. 95

I look where the ship helplessly heads end on—I hear the burst as she  
 strikes—I hear the howls of dismay—they grow fainter and fainter.

I cannot aid with my wringing fingers,  
 I can but rush to the surf, and let it drench me and freeze upon me.

I search with the crowd—not one of the company is washed to us alive;  
 In the morning I help pick up the dead and lay them in rows in a barn. 100

12

Now of the older war-days, the defeat at Brooklyn,  
 Washington stands inside the lines—he stands on the intrench'd hills,  
 amid a crowd of officers,  
 His face is cold and damp—he cannot repress the weeping drops,  
 He lifts the glass perpetually to his eyes—the color is blanch'd from his  
 cheeks,  
 He sees the slaughter of the southern braves confided to him by their 105  
 parents.

The same, at last and at last, when peace is declared,  
 He stands in the room of the old tavern—the well-belov'd soldiers all  
 pass through,  
 The officers speechless and slow draw near in their turns,  
 The chief encircles their necks with his arm, and kisses them on the  
 cheek,  
 He kisses lightly the wet cheeks one after another—he shakes hands, 110  
 and bids good-by to the army.

13

Now I tell what my mother told me to-day as we sat at dinner together,

Of when she was a nearly grown girl, living home with her parents on the old homestead.

A red squaw came one breakfast time to the old homestead,  
On her back she carried a bundle of rushes for rush-bottoming chairs,  
Her hair, straight, shiny, coarse, black, profuse, half-envelop'd her face, 115  
Her step was free and elastic, and her voice sounded exquisitely as she spoke.

My mother look'd in delight and amazement at the stranger,  
She look'd at the freshness of her tall-borne face, and full and pliant limbs,  
The more she look'd upon her, she loved her,  
Never before had she seen such wonderful beauty and purity, 120  
She made her sit on a bench by the jamb of the fireplace—she cook'd food for her,  
She had no work to give her, but she gave her remembrance and fondness.

The red squaw staid all the forenoon, and toward the middle of the afternoon she went away,  
O my mother was loth to have her go away!  
All the week she thought of her—she watch'd for her many a month, 125  
She remember'd her many a winter and many a summer,  
But the red squaw never came, nor was heard of there again.

14

Now Lucifer was not dead—or if he was, I am his sorrowful terrible heir;  
I have been wrong'd—I am oppress'd—I hate him that oppresses me, 130  
I will either destroy him, or he shall release me.

Damn him! how he does defile me!  
How he informs against my brother and sister, and takes pay for their blood!  
How he laughs when I look down the bend, after the steamboat that carries away my woman!

Now the vast dusk bulk that is the whale's bulk, it seems mine;  
Warily, sportsman! though I lie so sleepy and sluggish, the tap of my flukes is [death](#). 135

15

A show of the summer softness! a contact of something unseen! an amour of the light and air!

I am jealous, and overwhelm'd with friendliness,  
And will go gallivant with the light and air myself,  
And have an unseen something to be in contact with them also.

O love and summer! you are in the dreams, and in me! 140  
Autumn and winter are in the dreams—the farmer goes with his thrift,  
The droves and crops increase, and the barns are well-fill'd.

16

Elements merge in the night—ships make tacks in the dreams,  
The sailor sails—the exile returns home,  
The fugitive returns unharm'd—the immigrant is back beyond months 145  
and years,  
The poor Irishman lives in the simple house of his childhood, with the  
well-known neighbors and faces,  
They warmly welcome him—he is barefoot again, he forgets he is well off;  
The Dutchman voyages home, and the Scotchman and Welshman  
voyage home, and the native of the Mediterranean voyages home,  
To every port of England, France, Spain, enter well-fill'd ships,  
The Swiss foots it toward his hills—the Prussian goes his way, the 150  
Hungarian his way, and the Pole his way,  
The Swede returns, and the Dane and Norwegian return.

17

The homeward bound, and the outward bound,  
The beautiful lost swimmer, the ennuyé, the onanist, the female that  
loves unrequited, the money-maker,  
The actor and actress, those through with their parts, and those waiting  
to commence,  
The affectionate boy, the husband and wife, the voter, the nominee that 155  
is chosen, and the nominee that has fail'd,  
The great already known, and the great any time after to-day,  
The stammerer, the sick, the perfect-form'd, the homely,  
The criminal that stood in the box, the judge that sat and sentenced  
him, the fluent lawyers, the jury, the audience,  
The laughter and weeper, the dancer, the midnight widow, the red  
squaw,  
The consumptive, the erysipelite, the idiot, he that is wrong'd, 160  
The antipodes, and every one between this and them in the dark,  
I swear they are averaged now—one is no better than the other,  
The night and sleep have liken'd them and restored them.

I swear they are all beautiful;  
Every one that sleeps is beautiful—everything in the dim light is 165

beautiful,  
The wildest and bloodiest is over, and all is peace.

18

Peace is always beautiful,  
The myth of heaven indicates peace and night.

The myth of heaven indicates the Soul;  
The Soul is always beautiful—it appears more or it appears less—it 170  
comes, or it lags behind,  
It comes from its embower'd garden, and looks pleasantly on itself, and  
encloses the world,  
Perfect and clean the genitals previously jetting, and perfect and clean  
the womb cohering,  
The head well-grown, proportion'd and plumb, and the bowels and joints  
proportion'd and plumb.

19

The Soul is always beautiful,  
The universe is duly in order, everything is in its place, 175  
What has arrived is in its place, and what waits is in its place;  
The twisted skull waits, the watery or rotten blood waits,  
The child of the glutton or venerealee waits long, and the child of the  
drunkard waits long, and the drunkard himself waits long,  
The sleepers that lived and died wait—the far advanced are to go on in  
their turns, and the far behind are to [come](#) on in their turns,  
The diverse shall be no less diverse, but they shall flow and unite—they 180  
unite now.

20

The sleepers are very beautiful as they lie unclothed,  
They flow hand in hand over the whole earth, from east to west, as they  
lie unclothed,  
The Asiatic and African are hand in hand—the European and American  
are hand in hand,  
Learn'd and unlearn'd are hand in hand, and male and female are hand  
in hand,  
The bare arm of the girl crosses the bare breast of her lover—they press 185  
close without lust—his lips press her neck,  
The father holds his grown or ungrown son in his arms with  
measureless love, and the son holds the father in his arms with  
measureless love,  
The white hair of the mother shines on the white wrist of the daughter,

The breath of the boy goes with the breath of the man, friend is inarm'd  
 by friend,  
 The scholar kisses the teacher, and the teacher kisses the scholar—the  
 wrong'd is made right,  
 The call of the slave is one with the master's call, and the master salutes 190  
 the slave,  
 The felon steps forth from the prison—the insane becomes sane—the  
 suffering of sick persons is reliev'd,  
 The sweatings and fevers stop—the throat that was unsound is sound—  
 the lungs of the consumptive are resumed—the poor distress'd head is  
 free,  
 The joints of the rheumatic move as smoothly as ever, and smoother  
 than ever,  
 Stiflings and passages open—the paralyzed become supple,  
 The swell'd and convuls'd and congested awake to themselves in 195  
 condition,  
 They pass the invigoration of the night, and the chemistry of the night,  
 and awake.

## 21

I too pass from the night,  
 I stay a while away, O night, but I return to you again, and love you.

Why should I be afraid to trust myself to you?  
 I am not afraid—I have been well brought forward by you; 200  
 I love the rich running day, but I do not desert her in whom I lay so  
 long,  
 I know not how I came of you, and I know not where I go with you—but I  
 know I came well, and shall go well.

I will stop only a time with the night, and rise betimes;  
 I will duly pass the day, O my mother, and duly return to [you](#).

*Fleurs du Mal (Flowers of Evil)*

## To the Reader

Charles Baudelaire - translated by Robert Lowell, from Marthiel & Jackson Mathews, eds., *The Flowers of Evil* (NY: New Directions, 1963)

*While Whitman was shunned for his gentle, loving form of openness, Baudelaire was considered a disgrace for his direct offensiveness. He was found guilty of crimes against public decency for his book of poetry, *Fleurs du Mal*. His collection was censored, he was fined by the courts, and he died relatively young, poor, and indignantly. Baudelaire's misery did have company in a fellow writer, Flaubert, who suffered the same fallout for *Madam Bovary*—the story of a woman who had an extramarital affair because she was bored.*

*You will quickly discover that Baudelaire's calling had no trace of "the light touch." Baudelaire's gift was in both his bite and the fervor with which he was willing to offend a pious populous. The first poem is a letter introducing readers to his works aptly titled To the Reader.*

*Just so you know, France reversed the judgement against Baudelaire nearly a century after his death.*

Infatuation, sadism, lust, avarice  
possess our souls and drain the body's force;  
we spoonfeed our adorable remorse,  
like whores or beggars nourishing their lice.

Our sins are mulish, our confessions lies;  
we play to the grandstand with our promises,  
we pray for tears to wash our filthiness;  
importantly pissing hogwash through our stytes.

The devil, watching by our sickbeds, hissed  
old smut and folk-songs to our soul, until  
the soft and precious metal of our will  
boiled off in vapor for this scientist.

Each day his flattery makes us eat a toad,  
and each step forward is a step to hell,  
unmoved, through previous corpses and their smell  
asphyxiate our progress on this road.

Like the poor lush who cannot satisfy,  
we try to force our sex with counterfeits,



die drooling on the deliquescent tits,  
mouthing the rotten orange we suck dry.

Gangs of demons are boozing in our brain —  
ranked, swarming, like a million warrior-ants,  
they drown and choke the cistern of our wants;  
each time we breathe, we tear our lungs with pain.

If poison, arson, sex, narcotics, knives  
have not yet ruined us and stitched their quick,  
loud patterns on the canvas of our lives,  
it is because our souls are still too sick.

Among the vermin, jackals, panthers, lice,  
gorillas and tarantulas that suck  
and snatch and scratch and defecate and fuck  
in the disorderly circus of our vice,

there's one more ugly and abortive birth.  
It makes no gestures, never beats its breast,  
yet it would murder for a moment's rest,  
and willingly annihilate the earth.

It's BOREDOM. Tears have glued its eyes together.  
You know it well, my Reader. This obscene  
beast chain-smokes yawning for the guillotine —  
you — hypocrite Reader — my double — my brother!

One-Handed Basket Weaving

## Rumi VI

Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

*Per Wikipedia (for simplicity): “**Rumi** (1207 – 17 December 1273), was a 13th-century [Persian](#)<sup>[1][8]</sup> poet, jurist, [Islamic scholar](#), theologian, and [Sufi mystic](#).<sup>[9]</sup> Rumi's influence transcends national borders and ethnic divisions... His poems have been widely translated into many of the world's languages and transposed into various formats. Rumi has been described as the "most popular poet"<sup>[11]</sup> and the "best selling poet" in the United States.”*

*Rumi's spiritual attitude postulates that all things have been in union with the Beloved, and that all striving on Earth stems from the desire to rejoin the unity of the Beloved.*

*About the poem selection: We cannot escape the themes of death when we think about ‘becoming.’ Whether we are stretched across Procrustes’ Bed or Tyler Durden has put a gun in our mouth, we cannot ‘become’ something new when the space (our energy, property, mental capacity, emotional resources, etc.) is filled to the max with our previous attachments. The void is frightening because it contains the unknown and the illusion of endlessness; however, the emptiness is waiting for us to fill it with our gifts.*

I've said before that every craftsman  
searches for what's not there  
to practice his craft.

A builder looks for the rotten hole  
where the roof caved in. A water-carrier  
picks the empty pot. A carpenter  
stops at the house with no door.

Workers rush toward some hint  
of emptiness, which they then  
start to fill. Their hope, though,  
is for emptiness, so don't think  
you must avoid it. It contains  
what you need!  
Dear soul, if you were not friends  
with the vast nothing inside,  
why would you always be casting you net  
into it, and waiting so patiently?

This invisible ocean has given you such abundance,  
but still you call it "death",  
that which provides you sustenance and work.

God has allowed some magical reversal to occur,  
so that you see the scorpion pit  
as an object of desire,  
and all the beautiful expanse around it,  
as dangerous and swarming with snakes.

This is how strange your fear of death  
and emptiness is, and how perverse  
the attachment to what you want.

Now that you've heard me  
on your misapprehensions, dear friend,  
listen to Attar's story on the same subject.

He strung the pearls of this  
about King Mahmud, how among the spoils  
of his Indian campaign there was a Hindu boy,  
whom he adopted as a son. He educated  
and provided royally for the boy  
and later made him vice-regent, seated  
on a gold throne beside himself.

One day he found the young man weeping..  
"Why are you crying? You're the companion  
of an emperor! The entire nation is ranged out  
before you like stars that you can command!"

The young man replied, "I am remembering  
my mother and father, and how they  
scared me as a child with threats of you!  
'Uh-oh, he's headed for King Mahmud's court!  
Nothing could be more hellish!' Where are they now  
when they should see me sitting here?"

This incident is about your fear of changing.  
You are the Hindu boy. Mahmud, which means  
Praise to the End, is the spirit's  
poverty or emptiness.

The mother and father are your attachment  
to beliefs and blood ties  
and desires and comforting habits.

Don't listen to them!  
They seem to protect  
but they imprison.

They are your worst enemies.  
They make you afraid  
of living in emptiness.

Some day you'll weep tears of delight in that court,  
remembering your mistaken parents!

Know that your body nurtures the spirit,  
helps it grow, and gives it wrong advise.

The body becomes, eventually, like a vest  
of chain mail in peaceful years,  
too hot in summer and too cold in winter.

But the body's desires, in another way, are like  
an unpredictable associate, whom you must be  
patient with. And that companion is helpful,  
because patience expands your capacity  
to love and feel peace.

The patience of a rose close to a thorn  
keeps it fragrant. It's patience that gives milk  
to the male camel still nursing in its third year,  
and patience is what the prophets show to us.

The beauty of careful sewing on a shirt  
is the patience it contains.

Friendship and loyalty have patience  
as the strength of their connection.

Feeling lonely and ignoble indicates  
that you haven't been patient.

Be with those who mix with God  
as honey blends with milk, and say,

"Anything that comes and goes,  
rises and sets, is not  
what I love." else you'll be like a caravan fire left  
to flare itself out alone beside the road.

Coleman Barks Translation

## A Star Without a Name

---

Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

*One more for its simplicity and good measure. With love.*

When a baby is taken from the wet nurse,  
it easily forgets her  
and starts eating solid food.

Seeds feed awhile on ground,  
then lift up into the sun.

So you should taste the filtered light  
and work your way toward wisdom  
with no personal covering.

That's how you came here, like a star  
without a name. Move across the night sky  
with those anonymous lights.

NIV

## Luke 4:23-30

---

*This passage mirrors Rumi's words about parents in Rumi VI. Perhaps your gifts are welcomed by your family and your hometown without strings. If you reside with those who gave you rules as a child but who give you rules no longer, you have received a gift in the form of life-long community. Many of us must forge the gift of a non-possessive community through a series of encounters that embolden us to our own offerings.*

**23** Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”

**24** “Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. **25** I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. **26** Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. **27** And there were many in Israel with leprosy<sup>9</sup> in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

**28** All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. **29** They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. **30** But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Excerpts from the Chapter “Return”

## The Hero With A Thousand Faces

---

Joseph Campbell

*Joseph Campbell is no stranger among lovers of literature, psychology, and – more pointedly – connoisseurs of comparative mythology and religion. This section features a series of excerpts from the chapter covering the various perils heroes (aka: the enlightened) experience when they return to the originating point of their journey. The point of Campbell’s comparison of thousands of myths and his conclusions drawn in the following sections is to highlight the human experience. When we become, we change. The attempt to force together the new self with the previous environment is unlikely to succeed, but there are exceptions.*

This brings us to the final crisis of the round, to which the whole miraculous excursion has been but a prelude—that, namely, of the paradoxical, supremely difficult threshold-crossing of the hero's return from the mystic realm into the land of common day. Whether rescued from without, driven from within, or gently carried along by the guiding divinities, he has yet to re-enter with his boon the long-forgotten atmosphere where men who are fractions imagine themselves to be complete. He has yet to confront society with his ego-shattering, life-redeeming elixir, and take the return blow of reasonable queries, hard resentment, and good people at a loss to comprehend...

---

### Refusal of the Return

WHEN the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source, or through the grace of some male or female, human or animal, personification, the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy. The full round, the norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of wisdom, the Golden Fleece, or his sleeping princess, back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the renewing of the community, the nation, the planet, or the ten

thousand worlds. But the responsibility has been frequently refused. Even the Buddha, after his triumph, doubted whether the message of realization could be communicated, and saints are reported to have passed away while in the supernal ecstasy. Numerous indeed are the heroes fabled to have taken up residence forever in the blessed isle of the unaging Goddess of Immortal Being.

### The Magic Flight

If the hero in his triumph wins the blessing of the goddess or the god and is then explicitly commissioned to return to the world with some elixir for the restoration of society, the final stage of his adventure is supported by all the powers of his supernatural patron. On the other hand, if the trophy has been attained against the opposition of its guardian, or if the hero's wish to return to the world has been resented by the gods or demons, then the last stage of the mythological round becomes a lively, often comical, pursuit. This flight may be complicated by marvels of magical obstruction and evasion.

### Rescue from Without

The hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say, the world may have to come and get him. For the bliss of the deep abode is not lightly abandoned in favor of the self-scattering of the wakened state. "Who having cast off the world," we read, "would desire to return again? He would be only there." And yet, in so far as one is alive, life will call. Society is jealous of those who remain away from it, and will come knocking at the door. If the hero—like Muchukunda—is unwilling, the disturber suffers an ugly shock; but on the other hand, if the summoned one is only delayed—sealed in by the beatitude of the state of perfect being (which resembles death)—an apparent rescue is effected, and the adventurer returns.

### The Crossing of the Return Threshold

The two worlds, the divine and the human, can be pictured only as distinct from each other—different as life and death, as day and night. The hero adventures out of the land we know into darkness; there he accomplishes his



adventure, or again is simply lost to us, imprisoned, or in danger; and his return is described as a coming back out of that yonder zone. Nevertheless—and here is a great key to the understanding of myth and symbol — the two kingdoms are actually one. The realm of the gods is a forgotten dimension of the world we know. And the exploration of that dimension, either willingly or unwillingly, is the whole sense of the deed of the hero. The values and distinctions that in normal life seem important disappear with the terrifying assimilation of the self into what formerly was only otherness. As in the stories of the cannibal ogresses, the fearfulness of this loss of personal individuation can be the whole burden of the transcendental experience for unqualified souls. But the hero-soul goes boldly in —and discovers the hags converted into goddesses and the dragons into the watchdogs of the gods. There must always remain, however, from the standpoint of normal waking consciousness, a certain baffling inconsistency between the wisdom brought forth from the deep, and the prudence usually found to be effective in the light world. Hence the common divorce of opportunism from virtue and the resultant degeneration of human existence. Martyrdom is for saints, but the common people have their institutions, and these cannot be left to grow like lilies of the field; Peter keeps drawing his sword, as in the garden, to defend the creator and sustainer of the world. The boon brought from the transcendent deep becomes quickly rationalized into nonentity, and the need becomes great for another hero to refresh the word. How teach again, however, what has been taught correctly and incorrectly learned a thousand thousand times, throughout the millenniums of mankind's prudent folly? That is the hero's ultimate difficult task. How render back into light-world language the speech-defying pronouncements of the dark? How represent on a two-dimensional surface a three-dimensional form, or in a three-dimensional image a multi-dimensional meaning? How translate into terms of "yes" and "no" revelations that shatter into meaninglessness every attempt to define the pairs of opposites? How communicate to people who insist on the exclusive evidence of their senses the message of the all-generating void? Many failures attest to the difficulties of this life-affirmative threshold. The first problem of the returning hero is to accept as real, after an experience of the soul-satisfying vision of fulfillment, the passing joys and sorrows, banalities and noisy obscenities life. Why re-enter such a world? Why attempt to make plausible, or even interesting, to men and women consumed with passion, the experience of transcendental bliss"? As dreams that were momentous by night may seem simply silly in the

light of day, so the poet and the prophet can discover themselves playing the idiot before a jury of sober eyes. The easy thing is to commit the whole community to the devil and retire again into the heavenly rock-dwelling, close the door, and make it fast. But if some spiritual obstetrician has meanwhile drawn the shimenawa across the retreat, then the work of representing eternity in time, and perceiving in time eternity, cannot be avoided.

### Master of the Two Worlds

Freedom to pass back and forth across the world division, from the perspective of the apparitions of time to that of the causal deep and back—not contaminating the principles of the one with those of the other, yet permitting the mind to know the one by virtue of the other—is the talent of the master. The Cosmic Dancer, declares Nietzsche, does not rest heavily in a single spot, but gaily, lightly, turns and leaps from one position to another. It is possible to speak from only one point at a time, but that does not invalidate the insights of the rest. The myths do not often display in a single image the mystery of the ready transit. Where they do, the moment is a precious symbol, full of import, to be treasured and contemplated. Such a moment was that of the Transfiguration of the Christ.

### Freedom to Live

What, now, is the result of the miraculous passage and return"? The battlefield is symbolic of the field of life, where every creature lives on the death of another. A realization of the inevitable guilt of life may so sicken the heart that, like Hamlet or like Arjuna, one may refuse to go on with it. On the other hand, like most of the rest of us, one may invent a false, finally unjustified, image of oneself as an exceptional phenomenon in the world, not guilty as others are, but justified in one's inevitable sinning because one represents the good. Such self-righteousness leads to a misunderstanding, not only of oneself but of the nature of both man and the cosmos. The goal of the myth is to dispel the need for such life ignorance by effecting a reconciliation of the individual consciousness with the universal will. And this is affected through a realization of the true relationship of the passing phenomena of time to the imperishable life that lives and dies in all. "Even as a person casts off worn-out clothes and

puts on others that are new, so the embodied Self casts off worn-out bodies and enters into others that are new. Weapons cut It not; fire burns It not; water wets It not; the wind does not wither It. This Self cannot be cut nor burnt nor wetted nor withered. Eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, immovable, the Self is the same for ever." Man in the world of action loses his centering in the principle of eternity if he is anxious for the outcome of his deeds, but resting them and their fruits on the knees of the Living God he is released by them, as by a sacrifice, from the bondages of the sea of death. "Do without attachment the work you have to do. . . . Surrendering all action to Me, with mind intent on the Self, freeing yourself from longing and selfishness, fight—unperturbed by grief." Powerful in this insight, calm and free in action, elated that through his hand should flow the grace of Viracocha, the hero is the conscious vehicle of the terrible, wonderful Law, whether his work be that of butcher, jockey, or king.

Mythic Passages

# Transitions as Liminal and Archetypal Situations

Jean Shinoda Bolen, M.D.

*Jean Shinoda Bolen provides her own introduction to her content...*

My topic is about transitions or the stuff out of which life is made, liminal and archetypal situations. The word “liminal” refers to being over the threshold but not through to the other side. It comes from the Latin word “limen” meaning that place “in between.” When you’re in a transition zone, you’re neither who you used to be before you got into this transition, nor have you crossed over that threshold to where you will be settled next. Sometimes those transitions are very long, as when people talk about being in dark tunnels and taking a long time to even see the light at the end of the tunnel. There is always an ending of one phase of your life in order to develop and grow into another phase.

I’ve been interested to pick up along the way what people are saying about transitions. The cocoon is a place where the caterpillar totally dissolves; it is *insolutio* in the alchemical model of dissolving into the water, or the emotional side of life. Then it moves on, and from that beginning a butterfly forms in the chrysalis – that “in between” place that is neither caterpillar nor butterfly. I’d like to examine that whole notion of the middle phase. You don’t know whether it is the ending or the beginning. You don’t know whether it is a womb or a tomb. This is the whole image of the return to the earth. In the beginning is the end and the whole cycle.

Every time there is a major transition in your life, and you are in that in between place, you are in the chrysalis and you haven’t yet emerged into the next place. What is interesting to me is how you gather those pieces together when you are *insolutio*. What you chose to keep and what you chose to leave has a lot to do with what pieces form and move into the next stage with you.

There’s a very simple myth that applies to all of us at every major stage of life (when we want to be approved of, to be accepted, to have the right friends, or get into that right club or degree program, etc.) Whenever we have an idea of goal, whenever we have a feeling, it’s about *destination* and not about *journey*. Then we encounter and live out the myth of Procrustes and his bed – a very short myth.



In ancient Greece, if you wanted to be famous or creative, to have influence or power, or to be where all the interesting people were

doing and writing and acting or what have you, then you were certainly on the road to Athens (which is obviously a symbol of where all the action was.) In the myth of Procrustes, you had to pass by his bed in order to keep on the road. He put you on the bed and whatever part of you did not fit, he just cut off. Whack! So much for that piece! It's not going to be with you on the way to Athens. Whatever it was about you that needed to fit into what was accepted got stretched to fit the bed. So you got processed on the road to Athens.

Who among us has not been processed and reprocessed over and over again? What was acceptable to your family? What was acceptable to your significant other? What was success? What did you have to cut off and, in many cases, deny that was a significant part of you or a potential part of you?

Often there are gifts that emerge in childhood, only they're not the kind of gifts or abilities that your particular parents wanted you to have – and you got them. When people who are important mirror us, they focus on that which they find pleasing, and they cast a negative light on that which they find undesirable in us. We pick up the cues very early. And very early on our road to Athens, on the road to acceptability, we cut off that which was not supported, that which was not mirrored positively. We stretch those kinds of gifts that made us pleasing. It might have been our personality, a certain quality of charm. It might have been our brains or athletic ability – whatever was acceptable in our particular beginnings on the road to Athens.

The road to Athens is played out over and over and over again, and at every step along the way. New school: what's acceptable? New profession: from what do you have to cut yourself off? Sometimes in order to fit the mold, you have to do a major job of repressing your past in order to pass Procrustes' bed. In order to look like, to act like you belong in that fraternity or sorority or profession, you cut off and don't talk about certain historical parts of yourself that you deny.

Very often, when childhood was far from beautiful and included some very painful things, what is cut off is actively repressed and forgotten on that first road to Athens – and the second, and the third, and the fourth road to Athens. There are psychic elements about whatever we cut off, potential elements in our personality. Nothing we cut off dies; it just goes into the underworld. There we reconnect with that which we cut off from ourselves, but only in times of transition, and sometimes through major descents.

Sometimes that which we denied in ourselves meets us as Fate. We are in a transition because we were attracted to someone who carried that which we repressed in ourselves, and we're drawn to it. Very often major attractions begin transitions. We are attracted to that part of another person that we have denied in ourselves, and yet is our growing edge. By falling in love with that woman, that man, that guru, that capacity, something of our old form gives way. We are attracted by the projection, drawn towards something else that disrupts our old form and often cracks it, destroys it. We are in this "in between" period of chrysalis, and we don't know what will happen next.

The reality of metaphor is that death and new life happens often. For example, when you are in transition you may have a dream that someone is dying. Your first reaction is to think that it is a little precognition dream. It could be; that's not out of the question. Much more usual is that



something is dying about that particular relationship as an external event, or that particular part of you represented by that person, that character in your dream. Dying puts you on notice that a transition is taking place. Your dream life often knows that some transition is happening before you consciously acknowledge it.

Transitions are often referred to as midlife transitions, but they happen when they happen. Sometimes transitions are described as a crisis (midlife crisis, late life crisis, menopausal crisis, whatever crisis) because they can shake things up so. The Chinese pictograph for the word *Crisis* is comprised of two different characters: *Danger* and *Opportunity*. That is what the chrysalis looks like. Is it a womb or is it a tomb? Is it going to kill something? Is it going to kill you in some fashion? Are you going to despair? Are you going to give up that life has meaning? Or is this going to be a new opportunity to truly grow and enter the next phase of your life? And you don't know "in between."



The image of the snake is one of the major symbols that you might be drawn to. It may show up in a dream about transformation and transition. Human beings once lived much closer to all kinds of animals and very much close to nature. We observed certain behaviors. There's something about the snake that we project on. It is archetypal because it touches a symbolic layer of the psyche from which dreams come. It is comprised of those latent patterns and images that humans recognize and give form to when they are activated.

It's like a chemistry experiment. You pour a compound into a beaker of water, some of this, some of that. You stir it up and it is cloudy for a while and then becomes clear. You keep doing this and doing this, and it stays clear until it reaches a critical mass...or a critical amount of whatever this energy of the sauce that you now brought to the solution entered the solution. When a critical amount enters, a crystalline structure precipitates out. Now you can see the form that was latently there all the time. This is one of the metaphors of an activated archetype.

Another way of talking about an activated archetype is that it is like the seed of a potential. You have this little seed in your hand. Only when it is put into the earth, and watered, and enough time goes by, do you actually see what grows from it. That plant always becomes what was present in that particular seed. So there are seeds (or archetypes) in our soil (the archetypal layer of the collective unconscious) that we all have. Given circumstance and possibilities of birth, it is born with emotion and image together.

I liked what Michael Meade said this morning. He wasn't talking directly about transition, but he also was. Something is born that has both form and sound together. Michael Meade's comments moved my thoughts into the whole idea of womb/tomb and birth. Humankind has observed routinely and, at times, numinously the major transition and liminal experience of new life emerging from the body of a pregnant woman. The pregnant woman who carries this new life is herself the cocoon, the carrier of that fluidity out of which grows a whole new life. The time comes when the new life is able to live outside of the mother. In the timing of birth there is the movement, shifting, labor pains, the cervix that held all the fluid stretches and unblocks. The waters break and labor is initiated.

Well, labor is something that almost all of us have gone through. Cesarean section births cut short that usual process, but there is this experience that we've archetypally actually all lived out. Most of us came through labor, delivery, birth canal. There is a moment in the birth process which is called transition, and it is the most dangerous time of the delivery for both the baby and the mother. The head of the baby must pass underneath the pubic arch of the mother and enter the world. If this is going to work, if this baby is going to come out of the mother into the world, it has to go through that danger moment. This is often the most painful part of the labor for the mother. Mother and child go through this transition, which is a crisis, danger and opportunity. Then there is a new being that has never existed on earth before, but that has just come through the birth canal to the other side.

One of the fascinating things about the creative process and actually giving birth is that, not only have you brought something new into the world that wasn't there before, but when you go through this, you are changed. It affects you. Once you have delivered a baby you are no longer in the mother/maiden/crone archetypal form that women can go through physiologically. Your body has changed. You now have given birth to this child. Out of the darkness of your own creative process, out of the unconsciousness of your process but out of your labor has come new life.

Any artist, any writer, anyone who has birthed a business, who has had a vision of something new that can come into the world, knows that they must be willing to commit to whatever time it takes. A baby takes nine months; an elephant takes two years. Businesses usually take twice as long and twice as much capital to return half as much as predicted. Maybe that's true about children, too. (Laughter.) But anyway, there is this commitment that changes. An eternal adolescent, or in Jungian terms a *puer* (the eternal young man) or a *puella* (the eternal maiden), is transformed by making a commitment that changes her or changes him through the pain of laboring to produce something. You experience the commitment to bring it through, the pain of the production, and also that period when you don't know whether it's going to work. You don't know whether you have spent nine months of your life or even years of your life on something that is not going to survive. That you accomplish it is one of the most maturing things that we have all experienced. If we're talking about being a mother, it's not enough just to do something biologically. You can be a biological mother *and* the Mother archetype of commitment and caretaking, which is part of raising this child.

So, after the birth comes the raising, but this is true of most creative processes as well. If you want to take your book that you have written out into the world, you can't just write it and say it's done. Or you can finish a painting and put it away in a closet, but if you have something to bring out into the world, then you now have a responsibility to it. Whether it is the child or the business or the painting or the book that you are offering to the world, you do have to bring it out into the world. The next phase of it is that you've committed to raising it in some fashion. This is a maturing part of most of our lives. In making that commitment we often cut ourselves off from other possibilities in another way. It's not a Procrustean bed in terms of, "I have to cut myself off from this in order to be on the road to Athens." It's much more. "For now, in terms of time and commitment, I have to let go of certain parts of myself that I cannot give life to any more because I have this other something that I brought into the world. I am committed to bringing it into the world. I'm going to devote my energies to this task."



What I'm talking about now are, in one form or another, mostly experiences in the first half of life. But these days people are doing different things in different phases of life. Let's say that, in the first half of your life, you made a commitment to a relationship. You made a promise to bring something new, whether it was a family or a business or a creative idea, into the world. By doing that, you left others of your gifts behind. They sort of languished in the underworld of potential. What often happens next is that we are successful at what we set out to do, which is always a mixed bag. If you are praised for whatever you do so well, it is like stretching you on that Procrustean bed. One part of you now has this energy and form. Everybody has expectations that this is who you are. A transition occurs when you break that agreement that you are going to stay the same. That's what causes major crises in the relationship over and over again. One person grows and the other person says, "You're not the same person I love. You are somebody different."

What happens often when there are major choices on one's own personal integrity versus the collective? Somewhere around midlife, and yet more than just once, are crises of integrity, where you have to choose to either stay with the group or break with the group and be expelled. This is something that is especially hard for men, for whom the brotherhood of the corporation, the fraternity, the gang, matters a great deal. We learn from the work of people like Deborah Tannen that conversation differs between men and women as a general rule. Young women learn and continue to converse as a means of bonding, actually as a means of reducing stress.

When I was in medical school, the understanding was that under stress we all exhibited flight or fight. Recent research at UCLA came from watching women whose department happened to be studying stress and happened to have both men and women in it. What they noticed was that men and women behaved differently. Men as a group went into flight mode; that is, they withdrew. As stress rises, men are concerned about their jobs; men are concerned about how things are going to work out. In that moment men do not feel very powerful or in control. The two ways of expressing this stress reaction are flight (watch television, go to the basement, withdraw) or fight (anger, road rage). Women in this study noticed that their male companions as researchers did seem to withdraw, where the women reacted in a different manner. Women ended up talking to each other a lot about the stresses the department was going through. Then they started to examine whether men and women physiologically behave differently. It led to the research that said that women talk under stress, reducing the stress level. Oxytocin levels rise, which is the friendship and maternal bonding hormone. Oxytocin is enhanced by estrogen. Men experience flight or fight because adrenalin levels rise. Adrenalin is enhanced by testosterone. So, men and women react to what happens to us when we are stressed in this different way.

If, for example, there is this individuation experience where life looks like you're doing pretty well, you're part of the group, you're successful. Then you break the form either because you fall in love, or because you have a crisis of integrity over what the relationship you're in is about. It takes a lot of courage for men to break from the group or blow the whistle in the hierarchy because it's such an acculturation. Deborah Tannen talked about how men use conversation not only for information purposes, but also to find out, "Am I 'one up' or am I 'one down'?" Who is the more alpha?



If you're a boy, in order to get along and know your place within a group you've got to have your antenna out to learn how and what kind of indications mean more alpha/less alpha. Usually you can rank an alpha in casual conversations. "So how's business?" is not really about how is business. Now, women asking, "How is business?" want to commiserate over the worst news. "Business is terrible, really." By talking about the vulnerabilities, there is a reduction of stress and a sense of support. Women don't support winners as well, actually. There's much more of a bonding that happens if women share vulnerability.

If you do it as a guy, you're automatically 'one down', and men don't want to do that. It takes courage. Let's say that you are on your path, and life is moving along. Rituals develop as a matter of form. You always do this at every holiday. You're expected to behave in a certain way. At first it was who you were growing into being. Later you begin to feel constricted by everybody's expectations (including your own) that you'll always do Thanksgiving this way, you'll always do holidays that way, you're always the person who speaks up, or you're always the person who doesn't say a word. Then something happens in which new life threatens the old form. This is when transitions happen.

As an example, someone decides to blow the whistle on something that's going on in the company. Someone decides to speak up and challenge others in some kind of form saying, in effect, "I don't want to go along with how we've been doing it." If the idea isn't put out there and consciously worked through as a process, then what often happens is repression. The potential whistle blower says, "Oh well, I don't want to rock the boat." The potential challenger says, "I don't want to have the discussion. I don't want to talk about my vulnerabilities or my irritations because he/she/they will react negatively, so I'll stuff it." Jung pointed out that what we truly suppress is likely to encounter us as Fate. So, there we are, unconsciously drawn to that person who carries that which we have repressed in ourselves. We have a crisis between who we used to be and who we are in our current situation.

As most of you know, psyche is the Greek word for soul. It's also the Greek word for butterfly. If you have a protagonist in a story whose name is Psyche you might expect that she will go through a major transition and crisis. Will she survive it? Will she come through and be transformed, or will she die? That's one way of looking at the Psyche myth. Those of you who heard Robert Bly's *White Bear* story on the first day of this conference heard a variation of the Eros and Psyche myth.

The form that Psyche broke was the understanding with her unseen lover who came every night. The piece of the story I want to focus on is what happens in an unconscious relationship when it is broken. Psyche was the third most beautiful princess. She was considered so beautiful that she was worshipped rather than sought as a partner. Her father the king seeks to know whether his beloved daughter Psyche will ever find a husband. He goes to the Oracle at Delphi. You know, if you go ask the Delphic Oracle for advice, you are bound to fulfill the advice, so be careful. Don't ask for the advice unless you are prepared to really do what you are told to do.

The Oracle tells the king that he must abandon his daughter on a mountain top to meet her fate – an inhuman bridegroom. And so, with death is the beginning of the next stage, Psyche is dressed as for a funeral. All the people of the kingdom grieve. Undoubtedly the king must have had

second thoughts of, “Why did I ever ask?” The kingdom then mourned beautiful Psyche, left her on the highest crag, abandoned and wailing.

As it turned out, Psyche was wafted down this wonderful, magical valley where all her needs are cared for. All day long she wanders the valley, enjoying this wonderful home that has all the conveniences and provides for everything. Every night her bridegroom comes through the window, makes love to her, and leaves by morning, so she never sees him. In some ways this sounds a little like the suburban idyllic gated community. (Laughter). This goes on and it’s fine for a long time. In Robert Bly’s version of the *White Bear* it may have gone on for hundreds of years before anything changes.

Psyche’s older sisters, who thought their youngest sister dead, came to the crag to mourn and cry at her loss. And so Psyche beseeches her unseen bridegroom, asking him to let her see her sisters. She cries...and he tries to persuade her that this isn’t what she really wants. And she cries. Eventually, he gives in, only agreeing “as long as you do not tell the secret.” And he tells her, “Psyche, you’re pregnant. The child you are carrying will be a god if you keep my secret. It will be a mortal if you reveal it.” Then he leaves and allows that the sisters come down, which they do on two occasions.

In coming down and raising questions, the sisters reminded Psyche that she was supposed to wed an inhuman bridegroom. They stirred up the idea that “You must be married to a monster.” In her innocence Psyche thinks, “Oh, my God, what have I done? Maybe they’re right. What should I do?” And they say to her, “You must take a lantern and a knife. After your bridegroom comes to you at night, makes love, and falls asleep, take the lantern that you’ve hidden under this bushel basket. Lift it up over his head. If it should be a monster that you’re married to, take this knife and cut off his head.”

Now, those are the two symbols that really do matter to us: the lamp and the knife. If you are going to examine the relationship that you are in, you need both. The first step is the willingness to really take a look at the situation. You need the illumination of the lamp. This symbolizes your willingness to actually take a good look at the person you’re working with, or who you’re living with, or what you’re doing that is a question in your mind. “Who am I in relationship to this?” So the lamp is important.

But what good is the lamp if you don’t have the knife? This is a symbol that can discriminate, cut through the situation, end the relationship by severing its bonds. What good is knowing that you are in a very dysfunctional relationship, if you haven’t the capacity...that is the symbol of the knife...to draw boundary, to discriminate, to cut it off, to end the relationship if it turns out that what you see really is negative?

In this part of the story, Psyche takes both symbols in her hand. As you know, when she raises the lamp and sees her unseen lover, her unknown bridegroom, he turns out to be the immature god of love, Eros. Immature in that he was carrying on this secret affair. He had promised his mother, the goddess Aphrodite, that he would punish Psyche who was so identified with the goddess because of her beauty that the goddess’s shrines were ignored. People were worshipping a human girl as if she was a goddess, and the goddess plotted revenge for what



psychologically is true. If you identify with an archetype, you lose your humanity, your individuality. You get inflated by it. You get taken over by it. You do get Aphrodite's revenge.

In this case Aphrodite had told her son Eros to aim his arrows at Psyche in punishment so that she would fall in love with the vilest of men. This is the negative power of Aphrodite and Eros: to have Psyche fall in love with someone who would really be vile for her and her development. Instead Eros sees Psyche and falls in love with her himself. He decides to keep all that from Mother, and so he's been having this clandestine, hidden affair with Psyche.



Psyche betrays his admonishment, which was to really keep the form. ("Don't change anything. Stay unconscious about the basic agreement that we have.") She breaks it by lifting up the lamp. Then the lamp sputters, and a drop of oil falls and hits Eros' shoulder. He awakens, hurt and angry, blaming Psyche for destroying the situation as it was. He's got wings, this god, so he flies away and leaves her.

In this story we have a transition zone that begins with the end of the unconscious relationship. Pregnant Psyche is now abandoned, left on her own with no employable skills, as it were. When Eros leaves her, she feels so unable to cope that she throws herself in the river to drown and the river throws her back on the bank. It's like the river saying, "Your life force is too strong, honey. This isn't going to be the end of your story." Psyche then proceeds to go to the various temples of the goddesses, and they all say, "Ah, your issue is not with us. It's with Aphrodite." She's not who she used to be, but she must still confront the offended goddess.

Aphrodite gives her four tasks that she must learn to get through this particular zone. The story, then, is about her four tasks and her growth. As she learns each task, she grows beyond what she knew before. The first task is to sort all the seeds that are heaped up in this room. This is a wonderful metaphor for all of the possibilities, all of the emotions at the beginning of a transition period. Sorting the seed is really taking stock. What are all of the seeds of possibility in your psyche of your world? How much money do you have in the bank? How much energy do you have for this? How much talent do you have for this? What are you putting together out of all your possibilities? To plan to have a conference? If this is your particular dream, then you've got to sort out the seeds.

In this particular story, Psyche's first reaction to every single task is despair. It's more than she's ever done before, she's consciously not up to the task, and she wants to give up. Sort the seeds of possibility. At the beginning, she doesn't know how, and then the symbol comes to her. Ants. All the ants come sorting out the seeds, one seed at a time, so that by morning they've been sorted, each into its own kind, every one into its own stack.

Aphrodite comes back to find the task is done. The goddess doesn't seem to be at all pleased about it, so she then gives Psyche another task. The second task is to get some golden fleece from the rams of the sun, gather a small amount of it, and bring it to Aphrodite. So our young Psyche goes and looks at these ranging up and down the field, in this meadow, in that valley, all having a wonderful time. These rams are butting their heads up against each other, roughing

each other up. They've got a great deal of competitive power, but they're big and they've got the strength and they're doing fine. It's just a big game with them, this competitiveness.

Psyche looks at them and realizes that, if she goes out and tries to grab some fleece from the rams as they're charging and hitting each other and running up and down the field, she would be trampled. This does not seem to be the thing to do. So she goes down to the river again, and this time a reed tells her, "Psyche, you don't have to go out there and do it that way. They are energized by the sun. Wait until the sun goes down. Then you can go pick fleece that they have scraped off against the bushes and trees. Gather enough of it for your use and fulfill the task."

The reed that tells Psyche to bide her time has wisdom. It isn't just about attaining a certain amount of power, climbing to great heights or participating in competition. The wisdom of the reed tells you to listen to your own rhythms. It advises when and how you can gain the power that you need, but not have your soul destroyed in the acquisition. Listen and learn from the voice of the reed, which is organic and grows out of the water, the river.

The application here has something to do with the feminine psyche or soul, but it has to do with the soul of both men and women. When you are in a competitive game (and almost everything that is about outer commerce or outer success involves competition), you can be trampled if you get caught up in wanting to grab more and more and more golden fleece. The more you go out and take on the archetypes to play the game (because these are archetypes, these rams of the sun) if you should leave your soul behind or forget that you have a soul, it will be trampled.

The third task was the creative task: Psyche is told that she must fill a crystal flask with water from a stream that runs from the River Styx to the highest crag in a continual cycle. The great water of life, the water of creativity, cycles. It is archetypal. It moves and moves and moves, and yet each person needs to seize some of that fluidity and give it shape. Some of that is a conscious desire to capture archetypal energies, visions, emotions and give them shape through your own personality, which is relative to the great expanse of the archetypal world of gods and goddesses. It is symbolically fragile, and yet this is the task.



Again Psyche looks at the task. She sees this river that is carved into the side of the mountain. It goes down to the River Styx and then rises up through a spring to come up to the top again and down the face, etching its way into the mountain. If that isn't bad enough, there are snake-like dragons on either side warning, "Stay away! Stay away!" The water itself is hissing. Psyche again thinks, "Too much! I can't do it," when another symbol comes to her aid.

Now, this third task is supported by Zeus' eagle. Zeus is an archetype that succeeds very well as an entrepreneur in this world. After all, he is the Chief Executive Officer of Mount Olympus. He has lightening bolts. He can punish. His symbol, the eagle, has the ability to see what it wants and plunge from the sky to grab it in its talons. That ability to see the overall picture, to see the forest but not each individual tree, is a way of being in the world. If you're a man with Zeus as your innate archetype, then the world (especially capitalistic United States) rewards you



very well. An entrepreneurial woman with Zeus as an archetype finds it really helpful to see the overall picture, to not get emotional about losing a sale or being undercut in business. An eagle doesn't stop and have an emotional fit if that succulent mouse that he had his eye on suddenly follows intuition and runs under a rock. The eagle just flies up again and looks for another dinner somewhere else. That unemotional ability is very successful.

Of all the innate male air sign archetypes that have to do with the sky like Apollo and Hermes, Zeus succeeds very well in this world. Some people have more of them than others. If you are a man in this culture and you happen to have these archetypes, they will be stretched on that Procrustean bed to fill the picture. Those parts of you that have to do with creativity and emotionality are often ignored and, therefore, you are cut off from them.

Zeus' eagle now comes to this very personal Psyche giving her an overview of how to go after what you need, how you avoid the dangers, keep your eye on the prize, and go for it. The eagle takes the flask. It returns to give Psyche the flask, now filled with Stygian water that she was to get for task three. One would say that at each step Psyche has learned something new.

The fourth step is the first time that Psyche will end up accomplishing the task herself. As her very last task, Aphrodite commands that Psyche must go into the underworld, fill an empty box with beauty ointment from Persephone the goddess of the underworld, and return it to her. For the first time, Psyche thinks, "She must want me dead." The only way she knows to go into the underworld is to die. Psyche now climbs up the highest tower to throw herself off.. This time the tower talks to her saying, "Psyche, there is another way to finish this task. Go into the underworld via the Vent of Dis. Take coins with you for the ferryman. Take two cakes for the three-headed dog; one to let you into the underworld, and one to let you out again."

And then the tower warns her saying, "Three times you will be asked for help, Psyche. You must harden your heart to pity, refuse, and go on." And so Psyche does. Three times she is asked by very pathetic creatures or people to stop for a moment and help. Each time she remembers the advice. She says "no" and she walks on. She gives one of the coins to the ferryman who ferries her across. Even as she's going across the River Styx, a pathetic man says, "Just hold my hand and pull me across. I didn't have a coin." But she ignores his plea. There was one other piece of advice from the tower. "Psyche, once you get the beauty ointment in the box, DON'T OPEN THE BOX!" (Laughter)

Psyche enters the underworld, gives the three-headed dog one cake, fills the box with beauty, gives the three-headed dog another cake, comes back across the river because she has one more coin, and returns to the upper world.



All of the advice that the tower gave her was good. Psyche, having done exactly what the tower told her understands that, if she had stopped for help, she would have had to lend a hand. In each hand she had one cake and one coin. Had she lost what she was holding, she would not have had the means to return from the underworld.

People in the transition often have limited amounts of strength, health or energy as they go into the underworld. For example, the story of Psyche speaks to people living with cancer. They say, "Cancer was a cure for my co-dependency. Cancer was a way in which I could say to people 'I can't do that.'" The ability to say "no" is one of the challenges for a feeling man or the feminine psyche. When other people expect you to always be there for them, and you break form by saying "No," you create a crisis in a relationship. It may be that you need to not stay in the underworld of your own depression or your own addiction or your own whatever it is, it is there. Addiction, illness, and depression are images of the underworld that you need to get through in order to get out. This liminal period of transition is a very long one. The tasks to be done keep on growing. It's hard. It's scary. If you're going to make it through this transition to the new phase of your life in which you have integrated the new you, with all that you are for the next phase of your life, you've got to often learn to say "No." Otherwise the people who have expectations of you will use your energy. Say, "No" and they'll say, "You're selfish." Psyche manages to do all of that. She returns to the upper world. She's no longer in the underworld. She has made it through.

By now, you can imagine, she's very tired. She's pregnant, and she's been on this journey a long time. Because she is who she is, her archetypes are related to the relationship goddesses. That is, her archetype is she's the Mother. She started out the Maiden very much like Persephone.



She became a Lover, so she was like Aphrodite. She is pregnant, so she's like Demeter. And she wants to be reconnected with this bridegroom, so she's got the persistent energy of Hera.

For all that she has learned in mastering these good things, these are not strengths that she particularly feels deeply connected to as her meaning. What she wants most of all, after accomplishing all these tasks, is to be beautiful in order that Eros might love her and return. Psyche opens the box and death-like sleep envelopes her. She falls, like Snow White, as if dead. This is the point in the story where some people find fault with her decision. "Oh Psyche, after all this, did you have to become unconscious again?"

It is this action that calls Eros to her side, but Eros has been transformed as Psyche has grown through her ordeals. He used to be this child who ran home to mother, who hid things from mother. He felt betrayed because Psyche actually looked at him. It didn't matter that when she looked at him she actually consciously loved him. He was so wounded that she broke the form and disobeyed him. Now we see a very different Eros who comes to her side, wipes the death-like sleep off of her, and then takes her to Olympus. There, in front of all the gods and goddesses, Eros announces that this is the conscious relationship that he wants. The Olympians celebrate a grand wedding now, no longer a hidden affair, not this unconscious relationship of love and soul, because those are the names of these two folks.

What is really fascinating is that we know all along she was pregnant, which is the symbol of the journey. A new child is often present in dreams when you are growing into the next phase of your life. Sometimes the dreamer is actually pregnant, but more often the dreams I've listened to over the years show an exceptional, divine child (divine in the sense that it's exceptional; it's



little and it talks.) Something of this wonderful child is growing as a symbol in the person as they move into this new phase of life.

When it's announced on Mount Olympus that the marriage of Eros and Psyche is celebrated, she gives birth to the child that was forecast to be a god if she kept the secret and a mortal if she gave the secret away. The child is born, a girl, and her name is Joy. This is the first mortal in Greek mythology that is made an immortal. The soul (Psyche) is elevated and made divine as well, becoming part of the Olympian landscape. This is actually the archetypal world of the gods and goddesses in our psyches. She goes through this chrysalis phase. That's her name, after all: it is butterfly, it is Psyche, it is soul. Trust emerges when there is a willingness to die to the old, to be vulnerable and have faith. There is a time when you know that you have been taken only so far by your human abilities. Something else must come in to make the soul reconnect with Eros. And often when we start the transition journey there is a loss of love, or of our ability to love. We're depressed. We have had difficulties.



In a very similar way, womb or tomb is a story of Jesus. The short-form is that all kinds of people expect him to be the Messiah. He arrives on Palm Sunday with great hosannas, and by Good Friday he's crucified. On Saturday he is in the tomb. At that point in his story, Easter Sunday hasn't happened yet. Is this going to be a tomb? Or is it going to be a womb from which a new aspect is born out of suffering and dissent? Most of the myths that have to do with underworld have, as a story in our psyches, an implicit descent. There is the possibility of being like that caterpillar. In the cocoon stage, you enter into solution, and become vulnerable. You do not know whether this is a birthing place or whether it is an ending place.

I'm going back to the images of birth, of people who help others deliver babies living out the archetype of Hecate, the goddess of the crossroads, the goddess of twilight, the crone. Hecate was also the archetype of the Mid-wife/Healer. The first women who went to the stake in the Inquisition lived out of this archetype. As goddess of the crossroads, Hecate appeared at every major fork in the road where transition decisions are made. She sees where you are coming from and where the two paths will take you. At important forks in the road in ancient Greece, you'd see a little statue with three faces: one facing the direction you had come from, and the others facing two paths you might choose. This is the archetype of people who act as midwives to other people. It is also the archetypal observer in ourselves who has seen us through many descents and many transitions. This observer has an overview of the pain and the joy, the suffering and the changes.



This is the archetype of the midwife who is a therapist, because every therapist is a midwife. People come to therapists at times of transition and crisis. The Hecate in us can see where they came from. We have some idea of where their choices might take them. Patients stay with us

at the crossroad until they become clear which direction they will choose. The path that is most authentically them is about individuation. The choices often are to conform and go back to an old form, but one that other people are comfortable with as well as a part of themselves. Then there's the individuation path that does not promise that everyone will like you at all. Instead, this path promises that it will feel true as long as you do what Joseph Campbell says about living your personal myth.

Keith Thompson writes about how a man in his audience asked Dr. Campbell, "But how do I find my personal myth?" And Campbell answered with a question: "What gives your life bliss and harmony? Find it and follow it." Bliss is a strange word. It sounds too, too, too...actually (Laughter).

When you live from an archetype it means that you're in the world with the energy of whatever that role is that that archetype holds. That archetype is deeply rooted in the matrix of your self. There is a sense that when life is lived from an archetypal depth, that life has meaning. Someone else doing the same thing might feel like they were doing time. That's what it feels like when you've outgrown or chosen a path that is not deeply your own path but someone else's idea of who you should be. You're going through the motions. Life is okay if you can conform. When you live from an archetypal depth, then it may take suffering, but there's something worthy and true about who I am when I do it that is me. Living your personal myth, in fact, is all about the crises, the transitions, and the suffering. It is about integrating your personal myth into yourself as you move along the path. Those of us that are psychotherapists or artists or writers or anybody here who draws from the stuff of your own life, know that no experience you have ever gone through is wasted. You can use it in your art, in your therapy, in your compassion for or understanding of what comes through the suffering that you personally integrated into yourself. You can use the experience in your work, and nothing goes to waste.

As you get older, your path becomes increasingly a realization that you have moved in an authentic way along the journey. There are the archetypes in both men and women: goddesses in every woman, gods in every man. Had I known better, I would have written a big book called "Gods and Goddesses in Every Person." As I stand up here and talk about archetypes, I am not embodying a goddess archetype. I'm being Hermes, the messenger god, talking about entering the underworld and returning to the upperworld. Most men and women find that they're a mix of different archetypal energies, much as we are all mixes of human talents. Imagine if you had the gift of a Mozart and you never heard music. Then in the second half of your life you were introduced to music. You had a sense that said, "This is who I am!"

This individuation happens to people often in the second half of life. The middle-aged person has done that which was possible for them to do. You were either successful in fulfilling the educational career relationship patterns that first half of life is about or not. You either do it or you don't. And here you are. I wrote in my last book called "Crones Don't Whine" that the third phase of life is the actual real essence of being present to the path that you are on. Unless you can grieve for losses, let go of your sense of entitlement, you will stand at the gate, never get through that transition, never get under the pubic bone to the other side. If you sit at the gate whining, you're looking back at the past feeling that you, of all people, deserve better. Your kids should have turned out differently. Your marriage should have turned out better. The world



should have recognized you differently. You're whining about what happened or didn't happen to you. You have no perspective on the whole wide world experience of being human. For one thing, you don't understand the amount of suffering and pain and reality that exists if you're still here. You're standing at the gate into the individuation path of the Crone. The Crone, an archetype that both men and women draw from, is about wisdom, and compassion, and active action, and healing humor, and a lot of other good things. But it's an internal experience. The crone archetype exists in men and women who can change the world.

I see the metaphoric story about Psyche, the much more dramatic whistle-blower experience that Jesus represents. Did Jesus have a sense that what he was supposed to do would go against everybody's expectations, would scare everybody to death, and yet would involve him with great suffering? In the midst of the great suffering, he even felt that maybe he was wrong, that this was not what he was supposed to do at all. He did that. A number of people go against expectations, and they suffer as whistle-blowers. Or they make a choice that other people just didn't expect, and they experience anger and disappointment and crucifixion at some symbolic level. Once it happens, the old self dies.

We've returned to the symbology of death/rebirth. When you are no longer who you are, you're in a transition zone. You're learning something about who you are now, and what you have in terms of sorting seeds. You're giving form to your creativity. How much power do you have? Do you have the ability to put boundaries on your own energy? Then you can pass through into the next phase, a spiritual path, which may also demand of you that you now call upon something greater than yourself.

I've often said to look at us all as spiritual beings on a human path, rather than human beings who may or may not be on a spiritual path. At some level, think how absurd it is that an immortal soul comes into the dysfunctional lives we all have. An immortal soul has chosen to be human. Human path is very strange. At the beginning, most people seem to have their own version of dysfunctional family with lots of mistakes, and difficulties, and loves, and sufferings, and lessons along the way. Then it's over so soon. Nobody gets through without suffering. Now why would an immortal soul do that?

Yet, all of us intuitively would say, "I believe I have a soul." As soon as you do that, you assume that you are essentially a spiritual being in a human body for now. There must be something about this journey of vulnerability, of sharing it with others, of suffering, of learning, of trusting, of finding that sometimes grace comes in the form of love, and that Eros rescues us when we're unconscious again.

This is a story that resonates at many different levels and it's about us all. It's also about reconnecting with that which is in *solution*. We were caterpillars; we enter this solution in which everything got dissolved. Somehow, if we're fortunate, we reform and come out as a butterfly. In our transition times we travel down to the underworld, down to the unconscious, and reconnect with what mattered to us before. Or we uncover a talent that gives our life meaning, and we claim it consciously and bring it up. We make it part of what gets reformed when we break out of our cocoon into the next phase of our life.

As human beings and immortal souls in this life, the major metamorphosis for us all is just to know that the last metamorphosis is the great mystery. When we die and we leave this body, what of us continues on? What I find enormously heartening and fascinating on many different levels is how many people have had after-death communications from others who have gone on in many different forms. Sometimes there are visitation dreams. Sometimes there is a sense of presence. Sometimes there's actually a hearing or a seeing the person.

Recently, because I've had a number of people who are close to me who aren't here anymore but who I have had a real sense of presence. Now I'm going to tell you a story that was told publicly. I believe it because of my own other experiences.

I went to a memorial service for the son of two friends of mine. He had a head-on accident and died on the spot. It was a great loss. Jed was only 26 years old, and he had this wonderful soul and spirit. His sister was angry and weeping a day or two before the memorial service. She was really having trouble with it, and finally she just wanted to be by herself. So she said, "I'm just going to go for a walk." As she was walking, Jed appeared to her and walked along with her. He spoke to her saying, "I'm really okay, and I want you to be okay. I want you to hold my hand." The sister said, "People must have thought I was really dumb because they saw me holding his hand. I mean, I'm sure they couldn't see Jed, but there I was holding his hand."

Now, Jed was known for giving big hugs. It seemed to be his trade mark. Once he even got hit by a man who fell into a homosexual panic. The fellow moved toward Jed. Of course, Jed interpreted it as "He wants a big hug." And when Jed hugged him, the man felt threatened by that closeness and hit Jed. This is a guy who had this type of physical reputation, right?

This walk with Jed, which his sister said was 28 minutes long, calmed his sister down. At the end of the walk Jed asked, "Can I give you a hug?" and she said, "Sure." He gave her a big hug, and then he asked, "Can you feel it?" He was disembodied so, of course, she couldn't feel it. In her wisdom she said, "I can feel it in my heart."

The journey of spiritual beings on a human path holds major questions that have to do with the big picture at each major transition fork in the road. *What did I come to do? What is my purpose? What did I come to learn? Who did I come to love?* From a psychological viewpoint, those questions can only be answered from deep within. Nobody else can ever answer them for you. I see this all as having many incarnations, many important relationships that come and go, and many important experiences including this intensive conference to which the same questions could apply. *What did really I come here to do?* You may not find the answer to that question until the conference is over or almost over. *What did I come to learn, really? Who did I come to love? What did I come to love in myself, out here? What am I remembering and reconnecting by this emerging experience?* The journey continues. Whether it's a long weekend, or a marriage, or a career...whatever it is...if it did not go to waste, then it was part of your journey. There's something now to remember and learn about it in order to bring it into consciousness and have it in the full circle of who you are. You can reclaim those things from which you have cut yourself off because of shame. That's part of the learning experience: you might have compassion if you have compassion for yourself. You can then have compassion for others.



This is an amazing story, the personal myth business that we are all on. When that's said, I think it's an amazing story that we are in. We are here now. Humanity has the capacity to destroy this planet, the garden that we were given. I heard Robert Bly talk about the poem in which he presents men with the question: "What did you do with the garden I trusted you with?"

There has never been a generation of women the likes of which are in this room right now. The lives of 45 million American women over the age of 50 have been influenced by the Women's Movement. They have therefore had responsibility, the ability to have major choices, education, the birth control pill, and reproductive rights that may be taken from us. Here we are, this generation of conscious people, spiritual people, disoriented people who have possibly something to do with the fate of the earth. I think so.

Something that has grown out of my work is the notion of us needing to be in circle where the spiritual center is egalitarian in order to admit the feminine principle. This circle is necessary for men as well as women to be able to talk about vulnerability, share stories, and enjoy the strength, connection, and depth of being human with each other. Because I'm of the generation of the Women's Movement, I know that women together in conscious-raising groups have changed the world. It doesn't seem at all strange to me to think that we could create a critical mass of consciousness from the hypothetical millionth circle which grows out of the hypothetical hundredth monkey (which was a story that kept the anti-nuclear activists going.) It is, as Malcolm Gladwell says, "a tipping point." We should serve ourselves to have a support system of like-souled others who understand that the personal myth is something we are trying to live.

And so, I leave you with all of this as a transition because we are all in transition as a planet. We are in a transition as individuals. And we have a remarkable opportunity to make a difference. Every one of us who has gotten older and wiser can be a circle of influence in our nuclear extended families, our institutions and, really, the world. I think it matters a lot that we do spiritually oriented activism, political activism based not on anger and hate. Again, like the Beyond War people moved us with the anti-nuclear activist movement, it has to do with love of our potential and a wish not to destroy it. It may be, because we are born at this time and are here now, that we each have as part of our personal mythology to do something politically beginning now.

# The Flinch

---

Julien Smith

*The Flinch is widely used in beginners' speech courses in colleges. It is a guide to boosting confidence and faking it until you make it. Should you find yourself flinching at your path, I hope this helps.*

[https://raouldify.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/2011\\_1203-the-flinch.pdf](https://raouldify.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/2011_1203-the-flinch.pdf)

# THE FLINCH

by Julien Smith

© 2011 Julien Smith

The Domino Project

Published by Do You Zoom, Inc.

The Domino Project is powered by Amazon. Sign up for updates and free stuff at [www.thedominoproject.com](http://www.thedominoproject.com).

This is the first edition. If you'd like to suggest a riff for a future edition, please visit our website.

Smith, Julien, 1979

Flinch / Smith

p. cm.

ISBN 978-1-936719-22-8

Cover photo: Luca Pierro PHOTOGRAPHY/Getty Images

# THE FLINCH

By Julien Smith



## INTRODUCTION

There's this place near my house—a boxing gym called Hard Knox. Any day you want, you can go there, sit down, and watch people fight.

The sign above the door says “VIP ENTRANCE,” because anyone who enters can be a champion. But to become one, you have to learn how to get hit.

In a fight, there is a fundamental difference between boxers and everyone else. The guys who have trained are different. If you hit them, they don't flinch. It takes practice to get there, but if you want to fight, you have no choice. It's the only way to win.

This is a book about being a champion, and what it takes to get there. It's about decisions, and how to know when you're making the right ones. It's also about you: the current, present you; the potential, future you; and the one, single difference between them.

It's about an instinct—the flinch—and why mastering it is vital.

This book is about how to stop flinching. It's about facing pain.

\*\*\*

***flinch***: /flinCH/ - verb (used without object)

1. *to draw back or shrink, as from what is dangerous, difficult, or unpleasant.*
2. *to shrink under pain; wince.*

\*\*\*



## **THE OPPONENT**

Quitting smoking. Losing weight. Starting a business. Getting a date.

For anything you want to do, finding out how is easy. Do the research and make it happen—or so any book would have you believe. Yet every day, you smoke, gain weight, and stay at your old job. Every day, you do the exact opposite of what you plan to do. Why?

This is the Information Age. The steps to achieving any goal are easy to search for, come up with, write down on a napkin, and follow. But you're still not doing it. Part of the movie is missing. A page is torn out of the book. There's a big X in the equation. Do you know what it is?

The X is the flinch.

The flinch is your real opponent, and information won't help you fight it. It's behind every unhappy marriage, every hidden vice, and every unfulfilled life. Behind the flinch is pain avoidance, and dealing with pain demands strength you may not think you have.

The flinch is why the lazy actor never gets discovered—because she never really sweats to make it happen. It's why the monolithic company gets wiped out by a lean startup—because the big company culture avoids the hard questions. It's the reason you make the wrong decision, even though you may know what the right one is.

Behind every act you're unable to do, fear of the flinch is there, like a puppet master, steering you off course.

Facing the flinch is hard. It means seeing the lies you tell yourself, facing the fear behind them, and handling the pain that your journey demands—all without hesitation.

The flinch is the moment when every doubt you've ever had comes back and hits you, hard. It's when your whole body feels tense. It's an instinct that tells you to run. It's a moment of tension that happens in the body and the brain, and it stops everything cold.

When coming across something they know will make them flinch, most people have been trained to refuse the challenge and turn back. It's a reaction that brings up old memories and haunts you with them. It tightens your chest and makes you want to run.

It does whatever it must do to prevent you from moving forward. If the flinch works, you can't do the work that matters because the fear it creates is too strong.

Individuals have flinches, but so do organizations and cultures. They can invoke a fear of a certain kind of person, a kind of racism or xenophobia, or a fear of new technology or outside influences.

Whatever form it takes, the flinch is there to support the status quo. It whispers in your ear so you'll dismiss a good idea that requires a lot of change. It stops you from seeing an up-and-coming competitor as a threat. It's the reason most modern movies are remakes and most successful books are sequels. It hides under the guise of the hard-headed boss, the skeptical publisher, or the cautious friend.

But the problem with the flinch is that it's based in a brain that wants to protect you. It sees shadows as threats and creates blind spots. It's endemic to cultures that embrace the old, even though the old might not work anymore. Both individuals and groups must develop systems to handle the flinch, or they'll always fall prey to outside forces.

Everywhere your flinch avoidance hides, you have to find it, and face it. You need to take back control and stop the flinch, like the boxer in the ring, because you have a job to do—you have a fight you need to win.

For most of your life or your business's existence, the flinch has been there, guiding you. As you discovered your world and learned best practices from others, the flinch was learning too. It pushes you to judge some ideas as good and others as bad, guiding your behavior over time, until your decisions became streamlined.

Whatever you avoided, whatever you or authorities considered a threat, became a blind spot—it became something that could make you flinch.

The flinch has a complex history. It appears whether you want it to or not. Every day, you make decisions based on it. But you may not think much about it at all. But this is exactly what the flinch wants.

Facing the flinch is hard internal labor that comes with no up-front promise of reward. But one day, your world will change, maybe drastically, and it will do so without warning. On that day, you won't be prepared—unless you've fought the flinch before.

Do this work now, and your future self will thank you.

Finding the flinch reveals a secret passage, hiding in plain sight. It's why some people know how to sell, and others can't—because they see the flinch in others. It's why you can't quit your job or be the person you want to be—you can't see the flinch in yourself.

The flinch is why you don't do the work that matters, and why you won't make the hard decisions. It's why your organization isn't competing. It's why you don't lead the life you want.

Take this time to learn about it. It won't take long. Once you see it, it will be visible to you forever.

## **A LITTLE BACKGROUND**

Before the bicycle helmet, the seat belt, and the bulletproof vest, there was the flinch.

The flinch is like the Moro reflex, which protects infants from falling. Flinching guards you from the unexpected. It protects your eyes and neck. It's one of the few instincts you're born with, and keep, all your life.

In any accident, the most lacerated, damaged parts of a victim's body are the hands. This is because the flinch is your personal goalie. It protects you from a bear, a bully, or a baseball. Anytime it's needed, the flinch surfaces, using your hands to protect essential body parts from damage.

Car crashes. Bike accidents. Explosions. In moments like these, you need the flinch. It's why you survive the unexpected. If you've ever been jumped, you know this. Human beings need the flinch to live.

Or do they? In your daily life, you might never experience anything dangerous at all. Your life is safe—but you're flinching anyway. You don't flinch at bears, because there are none. But you do flinch at the prospect of speaking publicly or joining a gym. You flinch at the doctor's office. You even flinch for sitcom characters. Anytime there's potential change, there's a flinch, whether it's a threat or not.

You think the flinch is natural, and part of your life, which it is. But have you ever asked yourself why your stomach tenses up and you can't watch imaginary characters on a television screen do awkward, embarrassing things? You should.

## **YOUR DEFECTIVE ALARM SYSTEM**

Sitcoms are bad, but they're not dangerous. Neither is most of what makes you flinch. So you need to stop defending yourself. Focus your energy on the fight that matters.

Your world has a safety net. You aren't in freefall, and you never will be. You treat mistakes as final, but they almost never are. Pain and scars are a part of the path, but so is getting back up, and getting up is easier than ever.

Still feel like you're in danger? Look at it this way. Early man's lifespan was about 35 years. If you got injured, you were done. No modern medicine, so each encounter meant blood loss, infection, or death. You can't relate to this. Your lifespan is double that. Science and technology mean you can survive almost anything. It may be expensive to do so, but that's still a significant improvement over death from an infected cut.

But despite this safety net, your flinch is still there, in the back of your brain—still a goalie, but a goalie for things that are nowhere near as dangerous as they used to be.

Think of a bear. You see it, and you react, instantly. You know how to deal because your brain is built to help you survive it: you run, jump, fight, or hide. But that's not the world you're in, so instead, flinching happens at job interviews or when you're asking a girl to the prom. Those things get magnified. Your privileged-world problems become the bear, and you treat them that way.

What these encounters have in common with bears is that they're changes in the status quo. This used to mean danger, so that's how your flinch reflex sees them. It attempts to stop the changes from happening, using the same fight-or-flight mechanism it always has.

So your heart starts beating fast. Your palms get moist. Time distorts. Not for bears, but for hard conversations and quitting your job. But that reaction is backwards. You don't need adrenaline to get through those things—you just need to do them. Crossing these obstacles will put the flinch in its place.

Your flinch has become your worst enemy. It should be a summoning, a challenge to push forward. Instead, the challenge is getting refused.

Listen: new does not mean bears anymore. The world is changing faster than ever. Now, new means business. If you refuse to face the flinch, it means the fear is choking you.

## **A LIST OF YOUR TRUE FEARS**

Somewhere in the world, a lion wakes up every morning not knowing what it's going to eat. Every day, it finds food. The lion isn't worried—it just does what it needs to do.

Somewhere else, in a zoo, a caged lion sits around every day and waits for a zookeeper. The lion is comfortable. It gets to relax. It's not worried much, either.

Both of these animals are lions. Only one is a king.

You're dropped into a forest—alone—at night. Can you survive? Sure. Do you stop caring about your 401k? Definitely. Within 48 hours, you're left with the flinches that help you survive.

Everything but what's useful for survival drops away. The flinch is an ally again. This is what we're looking for—reprogramming.

Let's make a list of the fears you were born with: falling; abandonment; loud noises.... Yeah, that's about it. You were born with these fears because you need them to survive. These fears kept you safe.

The rest are just ghost stories that the flinch has taken over. They're signposts. Look for them. They point the way toward barriers you need to pass, to doors you need to open.

## **BUILDING THE PATTERN**

Go to a playground and watch kids play sometime. What do you see? No fear, and no flinch.

Some kids aren't afraid of scars. They take risks naturally. They don't worry about pain; they just deal with it. Watch kids fall down and you'll see fearlessness in action. They land, it hurts, and they cry. Then, like lots of other kids on the planet, they get up and go back to playing.

There are other kids, though. They sit on the sidelines. They watch others. They're careful. If you have kids, you can watch your own and see how they behave. You could probably also label yourself. Cautious? Adventurous? Nervous? Bold? Which were you?

If you watch the playground over an afternoon, you'll see some kids making a lot of mistakes, getting hurt, and learning a lot. They use trial and error—the basic way you learned to walk, jump, and ride a bike. The process of trial and error is inherent to life. It's simple, and it works if what you want is to understand your environment.

This curiosity is why kids touch burners. They want to know how things work. They're interested, and they're not spoiled by the flinch. They just do it. They test their environment, and stop when it hurts. The scars they get are medals they've won, not deformities they need to hide. They use the scars and the pain to understand how their world works—to grow and get more confident. For a while, these kids think they can do anything.

The kids who don't fall down—how do they learn? Watch: he'll want to touch the burner; he might even go for it, but when his parents say no, he stops cold. He takes their word for it. So in the end, there were no consequences, and nothing was really learned at all. It's as if the warning were read in a book; it's secondhand, like a bit of wisdom being passed down from one generation to the next. But no personal stories come from it—no lessons, and no scars. Over time, as these kids learn more, they get more careful. Instead of climbing trees, they watch other kids climb. They decide it isn't such a good idea.

Here's the thing: the lessons you learn best are those you get burned by. Without the scar, there's no evidence or strong memory. The event didn't actually happen or imprint itself on your brain—you just trusted those who know better. Adults know what's safe, so you listen. Over a lifetime, those who listen too much build a habit of trust and conformity. Unfortunately, as time goes on, that habit becomes unbreakable.

This is dangerous.

Usually, this process starts slowly, and with good intent. Maybe, when you were a kid, your parents didn't want you to get dirty, or you didn't like heights. Avoiding dirt or heights built a pattern of pain avoidance, which added to the habit of flinching. Your parents' fears became your fears, their lives became your life. They flinched for some things, so you began to do the same.

But behind every undiscovered flinch is a lesson. If you do everything your parents' way, you'll never discover the truth. You'll never discover the edge. You'll never get the lessons you need.

## **TESTING YOUR LIMITS**

Some things need to happen the hard way—but not all. You don't need to throw yourself into a fire to know it's bad. But most lessons aren't like this. They aren't fatal, and they'll make you stronger, not weaker. You should seek them out.

Forget secondhand learning. It leaves no scars. It doesn't provide the basic understanding that sits in the body as well as in the brain. There's no trace of its passing. It might as well have been a dream.

Firsthand knowledge, however, is visceral, painful, and necessary. It uses the conscious and the unconscious to process the lesson, and it uses all your senses. When you fall down, your whole motor system is involved. You can't learn this from books. It just doesn't work, because you didn't really fall. You need to feel it in your gut—and on your scraped hands and shins—for the lesson to take effect.

But if you're surrounded by padding, scar-free learning is all you have left. It defines who you are. It limits you, but those limits aren't actually yours—they're the limits of the men and women who came before you. But other people's limits will no longer do.

Outdated university degrees, old-boy networks, retirement packages—these things won't save you anymore. The world has changed. Your map needs to change with it.

*You can't settle for reaching other people's limits. You have to reach yours.*

If you don't test yourself, you don't actually grow to your own limits. For you to map out this new world, you need to test it, and test what you're capable of inside it. You need to make mistakes, resist the flinch, and feel the lessons that come with this process.

Kids naturally begin this way. It's why their world is always growing. They find hurdles, jump them, and get stronger. When they see they made it, they move on to bigger hurdles. If they fall down, they try again later. It's a basic cycle. It's how kids figure out they can eventually change the world, found a startup, or build a house—by experimenting, learning, suffering, and growing. It's a process. But for that growth to continue, they need to avoid listening too closely to what they're told. They need to stay open-minded.

But there's a problem: as you learn, you're also falling down and getting scars. The pain repels you. You flinch so much that you start fearing and predicting pain. You combine it with the lessons you learned from other people. Finally, you start to protect yourself from things that haven't even happened.

At the end of this path, you go on the defensive. You give up on hurdles. Your world starts getting smaller, instead of bigger. You don't adapt to what comes at you. You stop following your curiosity and you start being safe.

From the inside, this feels like getting wise, but it isn't. Avoiding the flinch withers you, like an old tree that breaks instead of bending in a storm. Unfortunately, this is where most adults end up.

But there's an antidote. You can make your world get bigger again. The instinct you have is the seed—you just have to cultivate it.

The anxiety of the flinch is almost always worse than the pain itself. You've forgotten that. You need to learn it again. You need more scars. You need to live.

## **THE FORGE**

Here's something you probably already know: the world is a furnace of constant, unrelenting pressure. Either you're crushed by it or it makes you into a diamond. Either you're burned by it, or it forges you into unbreakable steel.

However the world transforms you, it usually does it slowly, so you don't notice. You watch yourself the whole time, and you always think of this person as being you. But over the years, you change—so much, perhaps, that you don't get recognized by old friends anymore. You, yourself, don't see it either. You feel the same as you always have.

Ask yourself this: would your childhood self be proud of you, or embarrassed?

The world is a 7-billion-person final exam with little to no class time before it. You walk into the room, you're given a pencil, and you're told to take the test. Worse, the piece of paper you get is blank.

But passing the test—or not—isn't an accident. The test is largely about your flinch response; it's a challenge in which you are either beaten down and back away, or you hunker down and withstand it.

Whatever decision you make reinforces what you'll do next time. Then, whatever your habit is, you teach it to others. You convince them it's important. This is how strong fears can spread, creating diseased cultures inside of families, companies, or whole countries.

So, be careful what lessons you avoid and whom you listen to. Decide carefully what's dangerous.

Decide on your own.



## **BETWEEN YOU AND THE FIGHT**

All this is easy to agree with in theory, easy to say yes to right now. But now is not your problem. Change is easy in principle but hard in practice.

The flinch is a chasm, with a rope bridge attached to either side. Your body does not want you to cross. You cannot look down. Every muscle is fighting against you. You feel it viscerally, in your head and your stomach. It halts you in your path. Your brain cannot force you through.

As you cross, you'll want to scream, cry out, and quit, because it isn't a natural place to be. It feels dangerous, and you can't be there for long. The flinch amplifies everything—failure, success, joy, or pain. If you quit, you'll justify it later by saying you worked hard and it was “good enough,” but you'll be wrong. You'll have quit.

Remember: no one has a problem with the first mile of a journey. Even an infant could do fine for a while. But it isn't the start that matters. It's the finish line.

Look at the finish line now. It's far and it seems impossible. Maybe it's up in the clouds, and the journey is treacherous, or the mountain is too high. You imagine that you weren't meant for this. You think you're not strong enough. In a sense, you're right. You're quitting before the pain even sets in. You're quitting out of fear of the flinch.

What you're missing is that the path itself changes you. You're weak because you haven't stepped on the path. When you do, a process will begin. As you climb the mountain, you'll get stronger. Your plastic brain will be shaped by the path. You might think this path isn't for you, but it is—you'll just change along the way. The path itself will toughen you up for the end.

Right now, you just need to start.

## **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

Want a real, visceral example of what the flinch feels like? Try this.

When you're at home and have five minutes, go to your bathroom, walk up to your shower, and turn on the cold water. Wait a second; then test it to make sure it's as cold as possible.

Do you see what's coming?

If you do, you should tense up immediately. You should feel it in your chest. You might start laughing to release the tension—and you haven't even stepped inside. *You're predicting a flinch that hasn't happened yet.* You're already anxious about it—about something that hasn't happened and won't kill you—anxious about something that barely hurts at all.

Ok, do it. Now is the time to step in the shower.

As the cold water hits you, you might shout or squirm. But the discomfort lasts only a second. You quickly get used to it. You get comfortable with cold, instead of trying to avoid it. You put yourself in the path of the shower to speed up the adjustment process.

Remember your reaction. You can use this method for everything.

A moment before, the flinch seems so uncomfortable that you might talk yourself out of this. You convince yourself that it's pointless, but it isn't; it's training. You need to build a habit of seeing the flinch and going forward, not rationalizing your fear and stepping away.

Start doing the opposite of your habits. It builds up your tolerance to the flinch and its power.

Have you done the homework assignment? Good. Keep doing it, every morning, for the rest of the week.

Oh, and if you don't act—no matter the reason—let's be clear: you're flinching. This exercise has no consequences, physical or social. If you refuse to do it, ask yourself why.

Because the exercise is stupid, or pointless?

How will you know unless you've tried?

## **YOUR WORLD AS A CORRIDOR**

Straight-A student. Straight to college. Straight to work. Straight up the corporate ladder. Straight to the suburbs.

Damn, you've been scared straight.

Is this you? Corridors lead you from bed, to breakfast, to your car, to work, and then home. You have a cubicle you come to every day. You go to the same lunch place. You watch the same shows. You like the same food.

They could replace you with a small, predictable robot. And one day soon, they probably will.

Flinch avoidance means your everyday world becomes a corridor. Everything is on auto-pilot. Sure, you can live without being awake. There's more options available now than ever, but our habits are so ingrained that we don't explore at all. You're stuck in a hallway with a flinch behind every door. You can't turn corners or get surprised, so you just keep moving forward, in the same direction, until you die.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

Consider this: in your corridor, every flinch is a door you can open with a new scar and lesson behind it, the same way a kid learns by touching the burner. It's an experiment—an attempt at something new. Not all experiments hurt, but all of them are valuable—and if you don't open doors, you'll never get the scars or learn the lessons. Open doors mean expanded options. The flinch will block you, but once the door is open, the threat vanishes. A new path appears.

Opening new doors means confronting a possibility of getting lost. Lost feels like failure, something that might leave a scar or be embarrassing. So the flinch starts its work, and pushes you back into the familiar to distract you. Before you can stop it, you're back in the corridor.

But every door, every unmarked place on the map, is also a dare. It means the territory is unexplored—sometimes dangerous or painful— but also a challenge. It's why so many want to see the Antarctic, or space, but so few actually do it, because you don't know what you'll find there. It both frightens and compels you, even though there could be anything, even death.

But there's a secret here, too: getting lost is not fatal. Almost every time, it will make your world bigger. You can look at the edges of your map, the places you were unsure about. Old explorers even had a phrase for it: "Here be dragons."

Most people look at the map and see danger. They stay home. Do you?

Now, frontiers have changed. Those who explore find things in themselves just as often as in the outside world. They find their own dragons, like Saint George did. They face the flinch and conquer them. Their maps become clearer.

You need to clear up your map, too.

You need find your dragons, look them in the eye, and destroy them.

## **GREAT STORIES WITHOUT FLINCHES**

Guess what: there are none. If Luke Skywalker hadn't faced the flinch, there wouldn't have been a *Star Wars*. If Socrates hadn't faced it, most of Western philosophy never would have happened. Harry Potter without the flinch is just a sad kid in a basement.

"I saw her across the room at the dance, and she was very pretty. I was afraid. But I told myself I could do it, I went over there, and talked to her. We've been married 50 years." That, just then, was the flinch. Did you catch it? Every great relationship story has one.

Behind every moment of courage was a man or woman who faced a difficult internal struggle. When they face it, it becomes an amazing story. They become legends. But if they turn away from the flinch, their stories are unexceptional. They're like everyone else. They vanish.

Do you think that your great story is an exception to the rule? That you will get to the garden of delight without suffering as those who have passed before you? It never happens that way, because without those challenges, you have no resolve.

Samurai and their modern counterpart, kendo practitioners, say that fights are won internally, even before the killing blow is landed. They face an internal struggle before they ever face the enemy. So will you. Stop shying away from it.

## **FIGHTING THE FLINCH**

The fear of the flinch gets built over time, by parents, schools, and careful friends. Based on what it sees outside, it builds an impenetrable fortress. It sits there, like an alarm system, watching for dangerous behavior, and warning you when it happens.

Unfortunately, it's often wrong.

Sometimes, it feels like the flinch has a voice. "You're not going to stick to this diet. You never do." "You're not going to get this job, because you're not really qualified, are you?"

It uses your own voice against you. It uses your judgment—but decides based on an outdated biological imperative. It's a construct with no scar tissue. So you avoid the flinch whether there are consequences or not.

Listen to it and you'll get nowhere. You'll never get hurt. You'll never learn.

You might even be holding back right now—holding back in fear of the flinch. You might be persuading yourself that reading this isn't important. Make no mistake; you need to keep going.

Fact: You can just watch yourself flinch. Act anyway. Forget the internal voice and go forward. Just deal with the consequences as they come. This is rarely fatal, and often, it doesn't hurt at all.

Anytime you flinch, you'll hear the voice or feel the sting of judgment. But despite how strong the feeling is, no lightning strikes you down. No floods, locusts, or first-born deaths. Nothing actually happens at all.

The truth is that judgment and fear will never stop, but they don't actually do anything. There are no negative consequences for breaking the habit of flinching. Nothing will actually happen if you stop being afraid. You're free.

## **LEARN ITS SECRETS**

The fear of the flinch has been growing your whole life. It's made by every authority figure you know, so you've learned to obey it. It's natural. Its tactics work like a perfectly adapted animal inside you.

So how do you know when the fear means something, and when it's just pointless? How do you know when the flinch is protecting you?

There's a process for it. Here it is:

First, find a safe place to decide from. If you feel threatened by the man next to you on the subway, move away first. From this vantage point, a better decision can safely emerge. So your relationships, health, debt, everything—make sure none of them feel dangerous, because they are easy reasons to flinch. The less these situations provoke you, the more you can focus.

Then, once you're ready, listen to yourself. When you're facing the flinch, you use words like "stupid," "safe," "pointless," or anything else that is soft, judgmental, and blurry. The flinch thrives on making risks look worse than they are. So look for those words, act anyway, and judge from hindsight instead.

You'll know you've opened the right door when you feel a strong, irresistible impulse to do *something else, anything else*. This usually means that you're right at the threshold of something important, and you need to pay attention and keep going—*now*.

## **FIND THE CURE**

The kid who wants to take over the world is still inside you. He wants to come out again. She wants to learn and grow. He wants to do something amazing.

Unfortunately, you don't follow through. Still flinching.

When you feel the flinch, you can shut it up by talking out loud. Ask a clear, strong question: "What are you afraid of?" Say it whenever you're avoiding the flinch; then force yourself to answer. Or just call it out: "Flinching."

Verbalize your excuse. It's often ridiculous, paranoid, or obsessive-compulsive. You sound like a drowning sailor when, in fact, you aren't even near the water.

Calm down and move forward.

## **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT, PART 2**

You need more training. Let's take this further.

Ready? Go to the kitchen and grab a mug you don't like. Mug in hand, go to a place in your house with a hard floor. Hold the mug in front of you, in your outstretched hand. Say goodbye to it.

Now, drop the cup.

Whatever rationalization you're using right now is a weak spot for you. Flag it. You'll see it again and again.

Drop the damn cup.

Did you do it? If so, you'll notice one thing: breaking your programming requires a single moment of strength.

Now, clean up the mess. That wasn't so bad, was it?

If this was too easy, because a cup is simple to replace, try something harder, like your Blackberry. The strength you gain by letting go is more important than any object you own.

## **THE PARADOX**

If you don't flinch, you probably don't even know why. You think it's natural to go rock-climbing, do parkour, or meet new people all the time. You assume everyone is like you, but you're wrong.

If you're flinching all the time, you think that's natural, too. You think everyone is like you. The flinch is so innate you don't consider it a problem. But it is, and you're stuck with it unless you start to resist it.

The ability to withstand the flinch comes with the knowledge that the future will be better than the past. You believe that you can come through challenges and be just as good as you were before them. The more positive you are, the easier it is for you to believe this. You move forward and accept tough situations, so no matter the breakup, the job loss, or the injury, you believe you'll recover and end up fine. If you believe this, you're right.

If you don't have faith, you believe that every potential threat could be the end of you. You aren't sure about how to handle challenges, because you question your ability to overcome them. If you believe this, you're right, too.

This is a chicken-and-egg scenario, or in our case, an action-and-faith scenario. You don't know which one came first and made someone confident, but you can be sure of one thing—there is only one side of the equation you can control. You can't make yourself feel positive, but you can choose how to act, and if you choose right, it builds your confidence. Over time, this process becomes a positive cycle. It builds on itself, just as kids in the playground gain confidence as they climb higher and higher on the monkey bars. Next thing you know, your whole way of thinking has turned around.

## **HOW TO GET HURT**

In a fight, a good opponent watches for patterns and is waiting for you to flinch. It is the point at which he can hit the hardest.

In rugby, I was told, “Show me a guy who flinches and I’ll show you a guy who gets injured.”

In mountain biking, they say the best way to get hurt is to brake. Riding fast helps.

All of life is like this. You’re only as strong as your weakest moments. Learn to reinforce those weak spots before they cut you down.

## **HOW NOT TO BE BORING**

You don’t know anyone at the party, so you don’t want to go. You don’t like cottage cheese, so you haven’t eaten it in years. This is your choice, of course, but don’t kid yourself: it’s also the flinch.

Your personality is not set in stone. You may think a morning coffee is the most enjoyable thing in the world, but it’s really just a habit. Thirty days without it, and you would be fine. You think you have a soul mate, but in fact you could have had any number of spouses. You would have evolved differently, but been just as happy.

Krishnamurti, a great Indian sage, once said: “You can take a piece of wood that you brought back from your garden, and each day present it with a flower. At the end of a month you will adore it, and the idea of not giving it an offering will be a sin.” In other words, everything that you are used to, once done long enough, starts to seem natural, even though it might not be.

The flinch doesn’t want you to change. Its agenda is to keep you in status quo. It believes your identity is what’s kept you alive and stable, and that settling is better than dead. But it’s a trap, because almost none of the risks modern man takes are fatal at all.

Every time you give in, you actually make the wrong path easier to follow. But every time you go the right way, you get stronger. Eventually, the new habit becomes automatic. Bingo.

You can change what you want about yourself at any time. You see yourself as someone who can’t write or play an instrument, who gives in to temptation or makes bad decisions, but that’s really not you. It’s not ingrained. It’s not your personality. Your personality is something else, something deeper than just preferences, and these details on the surface, you can change anytime you like.

If it is useful to do so, you must abandon your identity and start again. Sometimes, it’s the only way.



### **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT, PART 3**

Perform this experiment whether you like it or not. Agree now, before reading the next sentence.

You are going to speak to the next stranger you come across.

Whether he looks interesting or not, whether you are attracted to or repelled by him, or whether you can think of anything to say—none of these things matter. Strike up a conversation, even if it's just for 15 seconds. Look the person in the eye as you do so. Smile.

Do this to test your ability to force yourself through discomfort.

As you perform this exercise, one of two things will happen. First, you may just start a conversation quickly. “Excuse me, which direction is this subway going?” You’ll notice that the faster you do this, the easier it is. That’s the trick—pass through the flinch quickly.

If you find it easy, try the exercise again with someone else.

What happens when you get to someone you cannot talk to—that you don’t want to talk to, or you intend to talk to but can’t? The feeling is actually quite primal—you feel that you *want* to talk to the person in front of you, but you literally *cannot*—as if a force is stopping you.

As this happens, watch carefully as your failure walks away from you. Don’t hide from it. Observe the missed opportunity as it walks away and leaves you alone with your inadequacy. Don’t turn away. Feel the anxiety in your chest as you watch the opportunity vanish, forever.

What the flinch just did to you, it will do to your whole life, until you stop it.

### **IN TIMES OF STRESS**

In times of stress, whatever pattern you’re used to taking emerges. If you’re used to running, you run. If you’re used to getting defensive, the same thing happens. It’s how you act under pressure. For ancient man, this tendency was a protective mechanism

that worked well for escaping bears. Reverting to workable patterns means faster decision making, which during a real threat is the difference between life and death.

But this reversion is also why an argument with your spouse can feel like a fight with your parents—because it is. Going back to your old pattern of arguing is easy, so you do it over and over again, the way water always flows in the same path down a mountain. In your brain, the grooves are already deeply embedded, so the behaviors are automatic. They're corridors.

Most of your flinches don't protect you from fire, bears, or death. Reverting to a fight-or-flight response, even when physical threats aren't present, isn't useful. This response defends you pointlessly, raising your blood pressure and cortisol levels for no reason, and maybe taking years off your life. It also prevents you from learning what's necessary to adapt.

So you need to start recognizing your fight-or-flight response. This is the real challenge—what you'll spend most of your time on—because it is such a strong instinct. Every alternative you develop is highly valuable because it opens your options dramatically.

Thankfully, you can train yourself into new patterns, and you're not the first to do so. New patterns can include learning things that are better adapted to certain situations, and will happen automatically when you're put under duress, whether that's martial arts or new ways of communicating with your spouse. The training isn't about fighting at all, but something more important: pattern-breaking.

The first step is to stop seeing everything as a threat. You can't will this to happen—it requires wider exposure. If you've been punched in the face, you won't worry as much about a mugger, for example. If you face the flinch in meditation, you don't worry about a long line at the bank. Build your base of confidence by having a vaster set of experiences to call upon, and you'll realize you can handle more than you used to. Doing the uncomfortable is key. It widens your circle of comfort.

Second, rework the pattern of threat response. Learn habits that move you out of a fight-or-flight choice and into another pattern that's more effective.

Start with the one below. It should help.

## **USE THE FLINCH**

Flinching cannot be eliminated. This is a basic fact.

No matter how strong you are, a butterfly in your field of vision will always startle you. This is biologically programmed. So flinching cannot be undone, but it can be transformed. Fighters train for years to learn. Here's how it's done.

In a state of fear, most people put their hands up to defend themselves. They back away—this is the flight response. But the real trick is to do what the professionals do. They use the speed of the flinch—they use its intensity—to their advantage.

Law enforcement officers, professional fighters, and members of the military—all of them learn systems that leverage the flinch. They use it to react faster than their opponents even realize. Instead of flinching back, they flinch forward—toward their opponent, and toward the threat.

When you flinch forward, you're using the speed of your instincts, but you don't back off. Instead, you move forward so fast—without thinking—that your opponent can't react. You use your upraised hands as weapons instead of shields. You use your fear to gain an advantage.

Imagine using this tactic against the schoolyard bully. Or the marketplace.

Train yourself to flinch forward, and your world changes radically. You respond to challenges by pushing ahead instead of shrinking back. You become bigger instead of smaller; you're more stable and more confident. Your world becomes a series of obstacles to overcome, instead of attacks you have to defend yourself from.

You go on offense instead of defense. You can change the world again, instead of protecting yourself from it.

## **USING YOUR ENVIRONMENT**

An acrobat isn't born walking on his hands. The process for learning is slow, and only later does it become effortless.

Flinching forward, like walking on your hands, is a test of your environment. Learning to balance means falling, and when the acrobat does it, he sees what's dangerous and what isn't—after the fact. As he gets better, he starts to understand the method. If his environment pushes back by making him fall, he begins to understand his limits. As he

practices, he gains ground and makes his world bigger. Eventually, he's doing handstands naturally.

Most people look at walking on their hands and think: "I can't do that," but they're wrong. You can use this same process to get anywhere you want to go. Those who learned did it by flinching forward—through the initial reaction—once, and then again and again, until it became second nature. You can do this with anything.

Flinch forward in nature, at home, in your workplace, anywhere. Try whatever you like or find interesting. Climb trees, eat new food, or learn to dance. All are provocations to the status quo that you use as stepping stones to larger explorations.

Start with small threats in safe environments. They'll build confidence for your larger jumps.

Eventually, you'll get used to it. You'll find yourself flinching forward toward everything, as a habit. It will be part of your process, the same way an acrobat can try a new move or a dancer can learn choreography.

Then, you're ready for any flinch. Then, you can get in the ring.

## **THE RING**

It's time you found out what you are made of.

It's time you made the world flinch, not the other way around.

Fact: Those who face the flinch make a difference. The rest do not.

Those who leave the corridors find new frontiers, avenues for growth and happiness that most never encounter, while the rest will be left in old deserts, like vultures picking on scraps.

Facing the flinch, and being willing to get the scars that come with it, is the only thing that divides your present from your future. Those who fight it are easily identified—you can see the fire in their eyes and the determination that practically courses through them. Their determination is like an aura; it can be felt just by being near them.

Those who are unwilling to face the flinch are obvious, too. Their eyes are dead. Their voices sound defeated. They have defensive body language. They're all talk. They see

obstacles as assailants instead of adversaries. Their flinch is the elephant in the room, and they don't want to hear about it.

Any fight you want to win, a habit of pushing past the flinch can make it happen. Once you have adjusted to the pressure, once you learn to flinch forward, you have the resolve to pass through the impassible. In fact, it becomes certain that you will—it's only a matter of time.

Then, you need to decide what to fight for.

## **GET IN THE RING**

Ready? Let's begin.

You say you want to be successful. You see yourself as a future Richard Branson, an Oprah, or a Bill Gates—someone the world will remember. Someone you can be proud of, who does work they love and changes the world.

You think you're working hard. You think all you need is your lucky break.

Wrong. You haven't done what's necessary at all.

You haven't made the sacrifices. You haven't put in the time. You haven't learned the lessons and you don't have the scars. Not for the fights that matter.

Look, there's a fight happening right now—quite a few, actually. You can turn on the TV and watch them on any channel. World hunger, AIDS, the next billion-dollar business, even in your own family—they're all there. You watch these fights all the time, but are you actually fighting right now?

Most people rarely get in the ring for what matters. Instead, the fight gets fought by other people, elsewhere. Everyone talks about it like they want to be involved, but it's just talk.

The truth is that they can't handle the pressure. They're not in the ring because they aren't ready to do what's necessary to win. They're not ready to fight for what matters.

Most people don't actually want to face the flinch; they just want to be in a movie about it. They want the glory, not the suffering. They don't want scars because they like being soft. They don't want to be humiliated; they want respect—they just don't want to *earn* it. They want the keys handed to them. But it doesn't work that way.

If you choose the ring, you're already better than most. Why? Because you chose to fight. You're a contender, and almost no one can say that about themselves.

The ring is different for everyone, but wherever yours is, it's where real risk happens and where the spoils are huge. It's where you the fight is won, yes—but it's also where can you lose everything. Inside, you'll face pain again and again with no promise of reward, but it doesn't matter, because in the ring, you'll know you can make a difference.

Stepping into the ring means you can call yourself a contender, maybe even a champion. It's where kings are made and where those who enter are forged, like weapons. Rich or poor, smart or slow, anyone can go, any time—no matter where or who they are.

Welcome to the ring. Enter those who dare, and let them share the spoils. Only they have earned it.

Will you win? The ring offers no promises. But one thing's for sure: unless you get in the ring today, you don't even stand a damn chance.

Decide what really matters, and get in the ring for it—*now*.

Today, right now, eliminate all excuses from your vocabulary. Refuse to mince words or actions. Refuse a scar-free life.

Choose the flinch. Choose what matters. Get in the ring.

## **CLEAR THE PATH**

The ring is different for everyone, but it's always made of places, people, and projects that are worth the flinch. Habits obscure it.

Open your eyes. Block all escape routes. Eliminate all noise.

The common will capture your attention as long as it's allowed in the room. Whatever you are used to, whether cigarettes, shopping, or Twitter, must be eliminated in the quest to get in the ring. You must make a sacrifice on the altar of greatness and be ready to perform acts that others will not.

*If you aren't willing to sacrifice your comfort, you don't have what it takes.*

Set fire to your old self. It's not needed here. It's too busy shopping, gossiping about others, and watching days go by and asking why you haven't gotten as far as you'd like. This old self will die and be forgotten by all but family, and replaced by someone who makes a difference.

Your new self is not like that. Your new self is the Great Chicago Fire—overwhelming, overpowering, and consuming everything that's in its path.

## **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT, PART 4**

Take a moment to breathe.

If you've gotten this far, you should appreciate the strength you've built. You should be more confident, more determined, and maybe even more outgoing. All of these are good things and more. Keep going.

The next homework assignment is simple. The next time someone asks for a volunteer, for anything whatsoever, say yes.

If a panhandler asks for change, give him the largest bill you have. If someone needs help moving out of his house, offer immediately. If you see an advertisement for a kids' help line, call the number from your phone. Do it as soon as you feel the flinch.

Don't wait until you can talk yourself out of it—you're too good at that already. Instead, act before your self-talk overpowers you. Get yourself into a position where you can no longer back out. Your old self would back away here—instead, burn your bridge so you can no longer retreat.

Flinch-breaking is all about eliminating the pointless, cowardly, and habitual, and choosing what's useful. But useful cannot be discovered in the abstract. It has to actually happen.

## **BEHIND DOOR NUMBER 1**

Behind every flinch is a fear or an anxiety—sometimes rational, sometimes not. Without the fear, there is no flinch. But wiping out the fear isn't what's important—facing it is. It shows you that you can handle the pressure and challenge of a new environment, putting the fear in its place—as an advisor, not a captain.

Sometimes what's behind the flinch hurts—like when you have “the talk” in your relationship. It might lead to a breakup, or big changes that you find uncomfortable. That's fine—you should probably have the talk anyway, even if it makes you squirm to do so. Other times, what's behind the flinch doesn't hurt, like when you have stage fright. You get on stage, do your acting or public speaking, and everything goes fine. The anxiety was just about the possibility of public embarrassment. No big deal.

Both of those flinches need to be faced. Whether there is pain behind the flinch doesn't matter. The only thing that does is the habit of crossing difficult internal terrain simply because it is tough to do. Judging the flinch beforehand, asking whether it's going to hurt or not, isn't the point. You can only judge from experience.

## **THE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH**

This pressure you feel—this flinch you encounter every day—there is no end to it. After you deal with one, another will come your way. The pressure increases as you go on. Whatever tension you can handle, the ring will provide just a little bit more than that.

Adjust to it. You will never be entirely comfortable. This is the truth behind the champion—he is always fighting something. To do otherwise is to settle.

Success works as a cycle—growth and contraction, balancing and unbalancing—all while you're encountering hurdles that get higher and higher over time. Before jumping a hurdle, you have to balance, then unbalance, which is the jump itself. Then you repeat for the next hurdle. This is what happens when you learn to walk as well. It's natural, but the uncomfortable part is necessary for progress.

This means that if you're heading the right way, the pressure will never entirely disappear. If it does, you're on the wrong path. You're in the corridor. It's that simple. You need to find a door again. You need a bigger fight.

## **A SURE-FIRE PATH TO FAILURE**

At this point in most books, the authors promise you that if you do what they say, you're sure to succeed.

In this case, you're sure to fail. To be rejected. To discover wrong paths. To see what humiliation is like, firsthand.



You're sure to live.

And then yes, maybe, you might reach your goals.

Would you have it any other way?

## **JOIN US**

Everyone in the ring feels alone. You want to change your company's culture, but it seems like no one will support you. No one wants to talk to you at a party, or so you believe, so you don't talk to anyone. No matter what the flinch is, you need to face it on your own. It can be lonely. This is a hard truth.

From the outside looking in, everyone looks like a conformist. But really, no one is; they're just waiting for another person to speak up.

The question is, why isn't it you? Do you feel like you'll be judged, or ostracized? Do you think you'll be ignored and humiliated? Do you feel impotent? The truth is likely quite different.

Everyone wants progress but very few want to lead. So a whole group waits for the first hand to go up before their hands go up, too. Suddenly, a vote goes from a unanimous NO to a unanimous YES. All it took was one voice of dissent—and suddenly, everything changed.

The secret to overcoming the flinch is that everyone wants you to succeed. People are looking for proof that you can be amazing so that they can be amazing, too. The Web is so great because you can see others being truly themselves, and succeeding at it. This diminishes the power of the consensus. The pressure diminishes. You can be who you like. Getting in the ring becomes easier because you have supporters.

So if you see no one like you, no one who agrees, don't worry. There are actually hundreds of people like you, and they're waiting for a leader. That person is you.

Stop flinching. Speak up. Join us.

## **100 KINDS**

There are a million ways to avoid the flinch, a million ways to do wrong by yourself in evading it. There are a hundred names for those people and behaviors: lazy, avoidant,

cynical, arrogant, and anything in between. All of these names convey attitudes that encourage you to avoid seeing what is right in front of you, all in a different way, and each of the people who has one of these attitudes defends it.

In contrast, there is only one way to do it right and to see the truth. It is to look at these ways of acting in yourself or others and cross through their verbal defenses, and not to believe them at all.

Every person has his own way of being avoidant and overly confident. It's impossible to name all the ways people do this. But the solution is always the same: ruthless yet compassionate honesty in the face of all the lies you tell yourself.

The flinch will keep you avoidant your whole life if you let it. You will see nothing of the magic or serendipity or incredible experiences that others have if you keep your blinders on. For this reason, taking them off may be the single most important challenge you ever face.

There are enough viewers. There are enough cheerleaders. There are enough coaches and enough commentators. What there isn't enough of are players.

Do not put this down and return to your normal life.

Fight. Don't flinch.

Don't ever be afraid again.

## **ABOUT ELLA**

Ella is a friend with an amazing story.

When Ella was four years old, she was happily cooking in the kitchen with her mother. Then, in an instant, everything changed.

Ella was curious about what was on the stove, and she reached up. By accident, she put her elbow in the pot, which was full of boiling water. It hurt her, so she pulled back, dragging the pot off the stove and pouring the water on top of her.

Ella had third-degree burns on over 30 percent of her body. Surgery needed to be done, with doctors cutting into her body again and again so she wouldn't lose mobility from all the scars.

Now, there's an intensity in Ella's eyes that you don't see in a lot of people. She's unashamedly political. She faces life with a courage that few people can understand. She didn't flinch about the life in front of her. She embraced it.

But this isn't about her story at all. It's about you.

Here's what happened next. Ella started doing fire performance. She embraced the thing that hurt her. She figured out how to use torches and alcohol to light parts of herself on fire as part of a show. She did this on stages all across Canada.

Think about it for a second. The girl who got burned at the age of four, with scars all over her body, turned fire into her weapon. It sounds like a movie.

But there are people like this. They're different. They've made a choice about where they want to go. Life teaches them lessons the rest of us don't have a chance to learn. They take paths that others don't.

You know what else? You can be one of them, if you want.

## **THE FLINCH, A CHECKLIST**

1. Challenge yourself by doing things that hurt, on purpose. Have a willpower practice, such as very hard exercise, meditation, endurance, or cold showers. Choose something that makes your brain scream with how hard it is, and try to tolerate it. The goal isn't just to get used to it. It's to understand that pain is something you can survive.
2. Remember things that are easy to forget. Upgrade your current relationships. Create un-birthdays for your friends and stick to them. Go through old text messages to rekindle dormant friendships. It can be awkward, but that's the point. You will make an impact by choosing to do what makes others nervous.
3. Read more. Not just current blog posts and tweets and Facebook updates online, but other sources that take more consideration than blog posts or news. Find thorough and in-depth analyses of subjects you find interesting, or irreverent stuff that makes you feel alive. Read things you disagree with. Read things that are too difficult for you to understand, and then overcome your discomfort by pushing yourself to understand them.

4. Get some scars by working with your hands. Try to understand how things in your world work, like your car, your stereo system, or even your kitchen. Have a garden or a dog to help you stay grounded in the real world.
5. Turn your mobile phone off for a few hours each day. Having nothing to do while you're waiting for a bus can be boring, but it's only when you're bored that the scary thoughts come to the surface. Use a dumb phone on the weekends to prevent yourself from checking your messages.
6. Find new friends who make you feel uncomfortable, either because they have done more than you or because they have done nothing that you have. Meet tattoo artists or homeless people, millionaires or best-selling authors. Host dinner parties for them. Serve them bizarre food. Why the hell not?
7. Renegotiate your work. If you achieve X, then will your employer do Y? Ask beforehand and deliver, or if you can't get permission, go for it anyway and ask for forgiveness. Create a new job title for yourself; then carve out the job.
8. Start dressing as if you had a very important job or meeting, or as if you were twenty years old again and thought you were the coolest person on Earth. What would you do differently? How would people treat you once you did?
9. Imagine that you have to leave a legacy, and everyone in the world will see the work you've done. Volunteer. Create something that lasts and that can exist outside of you, something that makes people wonder and gasp. Build a support structure for others. Devote some of your time or money to it.
10. Make something amazing, something that's terrifying to you. Stay uncomfortable. Fight the flinch wherever you see it. Leave no stone unturned.

## **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT, PART 5**

Congratulations. Almost no one knows their flinch this well, sees it as often, and fights it as often as you.

You know yourself better, and because of that, you know your world better. You can grow now without limit. You are a conqueror and a champion. But there's one more thing.

Fear of the flinch is still spreading. It's like a disease, traveling throughout society, through media and word of mouth. It's everywhere, and it infects everyone differently.

It's why parents refuse to vaccinate their kids, and why neighbors and family members don't talk to each other anymore.

They want safety. But you now know that safe is anything but.

We can't fix this alone. For this to make a difference, it needs to be a movement. The flinch is a virus, so learning about it needs to be a virus, too.

So your final assignment is to give this book to another person. Maybe choose the person who needs it most. Or choose a stranger. Choose the person who you think will really get it, or the person who's already in the ring and needs some help.

It doesn't matter where the book goes. But you need to abandon it. Forget your fear of loss. You've learned what you need to know—now, give someone else the chance to do the same.

That's why we made this book free.

So send it out. Spread it. Or tell us your story -- [stories@theflinch.com](mailto:stories@theflinch.com) -- and we'll do something cool with the best ones.

Go ahead. Do it right now.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julien Smith is a New York Times bestselling author and speaker who has been involved in organizing online communities for over 15 years, from early BBSes and flashmobs to the social web as we know it today.

Along with being the co-author of *Trust Agents*, one of the social web's most recognized books, he is a contributor to publications such as *GQ*, Sirius Satellite Radio, *Cosmopolitan*, the CBC, and more.

Julien's work is often about leaning into discomfort and pain, into self-examination and discipline, intending both to provoke and unbalance. The lessons from *The Flinch* came from self-defense professionals, security experts, weightlifters, parkour practitioners, and more.

You can learn more about Julien by visiting his [blog](#).

## ABOUT THE DOMINO PROJECT

What happens when a publisher has a tight, direct connection with readers, is able to produce intellectual property that spreads, and can do both quickly and at low cost? A new kind of publishing, the brainchild of [Seth Godin](#), and powered by Amazon.

The Domino Project is named after the domino effect—one powerful idea spreads down the line, pushing from person to person. The Project represents a fundamental shift in the way books (and digital media based on books) have always been published. Eventually consisting of a small cadre of stellar authors, this is a publishing house organized around a new distribution channel, one that wasn't even a fantasy when most publishers began.

We are reinventing what it means to be a publisher, and along the way, spreading ideas that we're proud to spread.