

1974-1022-Case-Western-Reserve-Cleveland

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Contents

- 1 Data Template
- 2 Announcement
- 3 Transcription
- 4 Part 1
- 5 Part 2
- 6 Part 3
- 7 Part 4

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Announcement

Discovered June 15, 2024. Newspapers.com: Cleveland Plain Dealer: "Richard Rose, who has done a study on Zen Buddhism and heads a Zen Buddhist community near Wheeling WV will speak ... Student Union at Case Western."

Need to reactivate subscription to get clipping.

Transcription

This is published in TAT Forum as Zen, Spiritual Steps & Spiritual Systems

November 2005 - Part 1: <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2005-11.htm#1>

December 2005 - Part 2: <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2005-12.htm#1>

January 2006 - Part 3: <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2006-01.htm#1>

February 2006 - Part 4: <http://tatfoundation.org/forum2006-02.htm#1>

Rose mentions recently having discovered Ramana Maharshi, that he's going to send away for more copies.

Bob Martin pops off a couple times.

Part 1

<http://tatfoundation.org/forum2005-11.htm#1>

Zen, Spiritual Steps & Spiritual Systems

From a 1974 talk in Cleveland, Ohio—Part 1 of 4

There are several things that I want to discuss tonight. To those who have done some digging in Zen, you'll find that it's difficult to talk on Zen—because the majority of it more or less gives you the impression that you shouldn't even be talking, and even action is rather foolish if you're aiming at the discovery of a universe that is illusory. You get this little hint if you read on Zen.

There are many other ideas that are associated with Zen. At a lecture in Pittsburgh, I found several people very disappointed because I knew nothing of Zen archery or tea ceremony, or Zen poetry, or Zen art.

As Augie said [in the introduction] we're here to find ourselves, not pictures. Or not objective experimentation. I don't care to evaluate in depth too many authorities on Zen, although I can't escape some sort of comparison; you all come from somewhere if you've read Zen. But I think if you've dug into it deeply enough, you'll find

that there is a universal objective. And the main objective of a life of Zen is to find definition, to find your real self. And this differs from some religious movements and even some Zen movements in that they may find for you peace of mind, or some rare talent....

So the objective is rather nebulous, when you speak about it. And they always remind you that it cannot be spoken too well. I think it *is* spoken—we have to talk about it. There's a saying that he who knows doesn't speak, and he who speaks doesn't know—and that's a very clever escape mechanism for those who do not know and would like to make their words equal to those who maybe know something about it.

We use the word "enlightenment." And later on I want to go into the different levels of what psychology might call exaltation, and I want to go into some of the mechanics of how it's brought about.

Also, I believe Zen to be the most perfect psychoanalytic system you can tinker with, if you want to tinker with psychoanalysis. Because it goes directly to definition, not to a survey of statistical behavior-reactions and judging those statistics by what does the herd the best good.

I'll start by telling you a little something about myself, and the reason I'm doing this is that I'm new here. This is the first lecture I've given in this area. And I put myself in your place, or try to, in order to communicate. I feel that the thing I talk about is the most important thing in human existence or experience. So consequently I think you should know something about the fellow who's talking, or that I should talk enough that you get some glimpse into what type of fellow I am. So that—you can't prove what I'm saying, or disprove it perhaps, but you will be able to somehow intuit whether I'm serious or whether I'm here for some other reason.

I began my search when I was a kid. I was born and raised a Catholic. And I had the God-objective. I had a devout feeling that I would find God, by trusting the people who used his name eloquently. So I went away and I studied to be a priest. And I became somewhat disillusioned, or let's say impatient. Because I felt mainly that the people there, those who were in authority and in charge, did not believe that which they taught me.

I left there, and I had nowhere to go, presumably. With that particular disillusionment came a sort of disillusionment in the general Christian faith, so I didn't run and join another Christian church. I went to books. I was too poor to travel at the time—I had no way to go to India or Tibet. I had heard fantastic stories of what was over there, and I'd have liked to look into them, but I had to settle myself with books and traveling around the United States, looking into various movements that existed here. And being about seventeen years old at the time, I had a strong desire to objectify, or to follow an objective path, that is.

My first encounter with the search was one of faith. And I flopped over completely then into an extremely objective approach in which I tried to study the human mind. I'd get books on the brain, and I'd get books on astrology and palmistry, and I'd gravitate into spiritualism.

After many months of hunting for genuine materializing mediums, I finally found one, and I even managed to talk to some spirits—only to be again disillusioned with the results, because they talked mostly nonsense. When I approached them with serious questions, such as: "Where are you? Is Jesus there?" or "Is so-and-so there?" they would give an evasive answer, and mostly reply in the same vein in which I had spoken to them. In other words, what information I gave they echoed.

So I got into yoga. And of course the type of yoga that attracted me at first was the same as attracting a lot of young people today—forms of hatha yoga. Still again, the thing that attracted me to it was the promise—there was always this promise of good health and longevity, that I'd live to be two hundred years old. We had stories such as *Lost Horizon* about the guy who went over and found people with ears that hung down to their shoulders from excessive age. And I thought, "Well, that's pretty good. At least that'll give me two hundred years to find the solution to the problem."

So again I met disillusionment. But each time I would be disillusioned, it seemed that a new bait would drop and I'd pick up something. I got into raja yoga, and I explored at that time many of the sects that are still in existence but somehow tapering off. Some of you are acquainted with Kirpal Singh, I think. I was initiated into the same group that Kirpal Singh belonged to, the Radha Soami sect of India.

I tried to form groups of people that were just simply honest little groups: "Let's sit together and talk, and each of us will go join one of these other groups and come back with the net result. We'll come back with the secrets if they've got secrets—we'll tell each other—and that will save us years of each one joining every group."

So in this manner we were exposed to quite a few. Strangely enough, the group is pretty much defunct now. That is, they're all dead, except one, and [humorously] he's half dead. He's in the room here, tonight—one of my old friends. Incidentally, the only living witness to my experience, or when I came back from it. He was the first man I came back to, and it was here in Cleveland, incidentally. He lived in Cleveland at the time, and I came to his house.

Anyway, from the age of twenty-one to twenty-eight I decided that I would obey all the rules. I decided that if I were going to discover anything, it was simply like the laws of physics: if you want a return, you've got to put in some energy. I believed then and I still believe that results are directly proportional to energy applied, whether you want to apply it in the field of salesmanship, physical energy such as a lump of coal in a steam engine, or whether you want to apply it to spiritual things.

I also discovered that most laws of physics are applicable to, or are almost translatable into, spiritual laws. For instance, the Law of Karma. One of the things I'll try to do in this talk is to keep entirely away from Asiatic terms. I do not believe that the truth is limited to any group, nation or religion. I speak of Zen because Zen is the closest—and the most unaffected by, let's say, bad history. My experience was not as a result of a Zen teacher; my learning of the system was a result of a Zen teacher.

I find that the experiences of John of the Cross and others are equally valid with the *satori* of the Asian peoples, and the place they go, or the state of being that they arrive at, is pretty much the same. There are different levels and different intensities of that sort of thing.

But karma is a word that has been adopted, and it fits in pretty well because it saves us a lot of other words, perhaps. It's one word that describes the Law of Equilibrium, and the Law of Proportional Returns. If you strike an anvil with a hammer, the anvil strikes the hammer with the same force with which it is struck. That's the law of physics. This applies in spiritual matters, too. So we use one short word to describe that law, and that's karma. Now the mechanics of it are something else.

At any rate, I took the synthesis of all these movements I had looked into, looking for a common denominator. I was still trying to be scientific, and I believe you should be. Everybody should try to be as scientific as you can about your search. And I saw that there were certain common denominators. One of them was the conservation of energy, if you want to put it that way. Celibacy. Abstinence from things that destroy your senses—intrusions into your mind of things that will stop you from thinking clearly on a given point.

In other words, you can't concentrate and have all the doors open, all the spigots running. I never was hung up too much on cigarettes or booze, but I did from twenty-one to twenty-eight become totally abstinent. I avoided even tea and coffee. I had read that the yogis didn't like meat, so I quit eating meat: "Try that, too. I'm going out for this thing, and if anything helps, I'm willing to make my body a laboratory."

I realized that even in those days, and especially in those days, you were looked upon as a screwball. And that perhaps some of these people were pointing the finger and saying, "You might be a screwball for doing this"—and they could be right. That maybe I'd wind up nuts. I could lose my mind. I could become a fanatic.

And just by way of a side word here, I think you do get fanatics from people who delve deeply into things. I'm under the impression, though, that it's people who study intensely without having the doors closed. I think this is what causes the fanatics. They try to mix too many things.

But at any rate, I got into every day doing my meditation. In those days we didn't have "Aangh" or "Boing" [humorously referring to TM]. We had Om. So I diligently and faithfully breathed my exercises and went "Om."

Well, after seven years of this I looked into the mirror. My hair was falling out, my teeth were falling out—and I felt like a regular fool. Naturally I'd occasionally get this fond idea of getting married. I'd see something pretty go by and say, "Oh boy, as soon as I get enlightened I'm coming back to that." Then it dawned on me that with a bald head maybe I wouldn't get back to that.

So this is part of the tension that is built up. And incidentally, this tension is a very vital factor in the business of enlightenment.

At twenty-eight I threw it all overboard. I said, "That's it. I'm going out, I'm going to get married, and I'm going to forget about this stuff. I've been kidding myself. This is some sort of a narcissistic dream I've been indulging in all these years."

And I went out and I couldn't get married because nobody would have me—at least the ones that I set my head on at that particular time. And I was too lazy to go look too far. And I also realized that what I was taking was a vacation. I had been really plugging away, and I would get the itch to go back—I'd find myself traveling to California to visit the Vedanta temple or looking in on the Rosicrucians at Oceanside, traveling to my friend's house in Texas to interview a witch-doctor, or something of that sort.

But still it was hot and cold. I would get intense, but I wasn't doing anything consistently. Until I was about thirty-two, I kept this up. When I was thirty-two, an experience occurred. [In earlier talks, Rose said it happened at thirty-two. But later he found a postcard he'd written at the time, and it was dated the spring of 1947, when he was thirty years old.] I don't want to go into it too much now, because it could be a science-fiction story as far as you're concerned. If you're interested, later on it's all right to ask some questions. Unless you have some intuition about that sort of thing, it could be nothing more to you than a science-fiction story.

I was in Seattle, Washington when it happened, and afterwards as I said, I came to this gentleman's house in Cleveland. I was pretty upset. Because the experience going in and coming out is rather traumatic, when you find very little to live for—or at least I found very little to live for.

Then the next thing was, "Well, if you're going to live, why not tell a few people? Why not help some of these kids that, like you—when you were twenty-one, you were looking around blindly for gurus, and the gurus were all phonies, and you couldn't find the authors of the books that sounded so good, and the money angle was prohibitive. Every place you went somebody wanted to tap you. So why not find these people who are sincere and genuine and willing to work, and make yourself available?"

Well, you people are late getting here. [Rose was fifty-seven when he gave this talk.] I wanted to do that when I was thirty-three years old, and nobody was there. Because we had a different era. You didn't dare talk about it. If you went down where you worked and told them you were interested in yoga, they were liable to lay you off. You were maybe a hazard at work, or something. Business associates would shun you. You had to learn to keep your mouth shut. Instead of going out and saying, "Hey, can I help you?" you had to learn to be quiet.

So it wasn't until—it was like I was thinking today: "In the beginning was LSD." In other words, there was no wholesale consciousness of another dimension until a few people stuck their head in the meat grinder, so to speak. Some of them didn't pull their heads back out. But this gave a hint, for the first time, a chemical hint to a

lot of people.

In the group that is established today, we don't have a single soul who takes any form of narcotic. But I attribute perhaps thirty percent of them gained some insight by seeing a flash of another dimension and saying, "Ho, maybe it isn't impossible. Maybe there is something. Maybe there is a dimension after the grave."

Whereas before that, the word just went out, "Well, I'm going where everybody else goes, and nine chances out of ten that's zero because nobody ever came back and said anything."

The search that I got into, starting when I was twenty-one, was one of looking for a change of state of being. Now we have quite a few spiritual movements, but most of the spiritual movements involve an attempt at objective enlargement and mind expansion. And even some people tried to do it with drugs. They thought they could blow their head up so big it would include the cosmos.

This is not what we're talking about in mind-expansion, of course, or in *becoming*. You learn somewhere along the line that you're not going to get anything from wisdom. Wisdom will get you nowhere. Faith will get you nowhere. But it's a combination of both.

There's an old theological axiom which echoed through my head ever since I was a child. I think it came from Thomas Aquinas: "The finite mind shall never perceive the infinite."

And I would think, "There's no use in trying. What he says is true. You're never going there as long as you've got this brain or mind that is dependent upon the synapses, on the DNA molecule, for your final memory. When that goes, you are going. You have a relative mind, and how are you going to perceive an absolute condition?"

The answer was there all the time—and if it's written, I have not read the books in which it is spoken—that the finite mind can become not-so-finite. It is possible for the finite mind not to comprehend but to *become* the infinite.

Now if there is a definition of enlightenment—and I'm avoiding the use of the word satori as you'll notice—that definition would well be it. It's a condition in which, by careful building, as in the case of a teacher or in the case of life—and it's your desire that does it; it creates a tremendous tension—from that tension you will come *between* the relative condition of the mind.

Hubert Benoit [in *The Supreme Doctrine*] speaks of the compensation, the pyramid, the triangle—the positive and the negative and the compensating neutral. Well, it isn't quite the same. It's a "this" and a "that" and a something in-between.

We had a fellow in Pittsburgh, a fellow about two years older than I—we would hold our meetings, and he'd come and he would sometimes hold up one finger. And everybody would laugh. Because he couldn't communicate too well. He was a very brilliant man, but he just didn't have the art of talking. And occasionally he'd get his finger on the desk and he'd say, "There's this [to one side], and there's that [to the other side]." Then he'd look at you and say, "But there's *this* [in the middle]." And everyone laughed because they didn't know what he meant.

But this is the whole secret of the path: what's in-between.

Continued in <forum2005-12.htm#1>>part 2...

Part 2

<http://tatfoundation.org/forum2005-12.htm#1>

Zen, Spiritual Steps & Spiritual Systems

From a 1974 talk in Cleveland, Ohio—Part 2

I wanted to give you something of a chart of the search [Figure 1]. You just get a rough idea here of Faith or Logic, of a condition of Mentally Subjective and Mentally Objective, Change of Being, Mind Expansion on up to a No-Ego System or a No-Mind System.

Fig 1: <http://tatfoundation.org/1974Cleve1.jpg>

And this becomes almost a chart of my life, in that I started out with an extremely subjective approach, which was faith. And we become not wiser, but rebellious. And I said, "That's it. Out!" Then I continued with an extremely objective, logical system. This is when I studied psychology because I considered that to be objective—to take histories of behavior patterns, statistics, and come up with some great new discovery.

By rejecting neither, but not accepting them completely, I believe that I combined what I call common sense with the faith in myself. It doesn't pay to have faith *except in yourself*. And if you don't have that, regardless of how foolish it is—in other words, a person who is trying to be absolutely factual or honest with himself would even deny faith in himself. But this can in turn become a rationalization for laziness. It's no point to be just a heap of clay.

When you get clear up on the top of the ladder, they talk of dropping the egos. And as soon as they see an ego, there's an accusation by some other student of Zen to say, "Oh, you have this ego." Well, I maintain that you can't drop them all, and you shouldn't try to drop them all. The catch in this thing is knowing which ones to drop. Because survival is an ego. Physical survival is an ego, and spiritual survival is an ego. You drop those two, and you'll never reach any exaltation of any sort. You may wind up in a winery, a beer joint, a dope den. Of course there'd be no point in doing that either, but you'd take possibly some path of least resistance.

So we must have faith in ourself, and we must increase that faith in ourself. I always say you have to fatten up the head before you chop it off. This is one of the paradoxes of this thing.

But by going in this direction, then, we move out. And everyone does. I maintain that there's no way up but up. The human race has no place to go but up. I maintain that everyone looks for the truth. I've worked in steel mills, in factories, in all walks of life, and I've found people that would ask you, "What do you think happens to you after you die?" Maybe in-between beers they talk about it. But everybody is curious.

I maintain that all forms of life, even animal life, is looking for the truth. There's an apprehension. The cattle approaching the slaughterhouse—they know there's some question that's going to be answered rather shortly, and they're apprehensive about it.

The amoeba is curious, they claim. I've never talked to an amoeba, but they claim by watching them underneath a microscope that they manifest signs of curiosity. They explore—not for food alone. When fully fed, they continue to explore just to see what's out there.

This is a strange aspect of our makeup. These are implants. We have no choice except to be curious. It's chemically a part of our system; it's implanted. If it were not there, the young calf wouldn't find its first meal, the almost totally instinctive animal would not find food. It has to be curious enough to wander beyond the perimeter perhaps of its parents.

So that all we have to do to become philosophers is to encourage that which is naturally implanted within us. But where does our curiosity generally go? It goes down the drain. We get curious about what's playing at the theater, and is it pornographic or isn't it pornographic—and what can we learn from that?—instead of what's down at the library, or what's down in somebody's head.

We eventually get into a mental path, if we ever rise above the instinctive levels. Of course I put a lot of weight on the life works of Gurdjieff. I think he had some good points—his talk of man number one, two, three, four—instinctive, emotional, intellectual and philosophic man [figure 2]. These are evidently steps that we cannot help but climb. There are some people who remain on certain ones, but most people at least seem in their lifetime to take one step. They at least go from the instinctive up to the emotional—sometimes two or three steps.

Fig 2: <http://tatfoundation.org/1974Cleve2.jpg>

[Break in tape] ... from the mentally subjective, the mentally objective, as we go up this thing we are still hanging onto the objective—because we have to. There's no sense in immediately trying to get totally subjective. And I think that this is one of the things that some people do in the business of meditation—that they think they can assume a certain mental pose without doing anything physically. And then there are people who do it *all* physically. They go into what I call gimmicks and rituals—and this doesn't do.

It's a combination again. For instance, the mentally objective or phenomenal studies. And I went through a tremendous lot of these—for instance, materializations, certain wisdom schools, magic, numerology, and those things.

The mentally subjective part is the introspection, meditation, development of intuition. Because you're starting in a terrain that has no railroad tracks, you have to develop a guide, and the logical mind will not guide you. Confusion follows the logical mind. You have to develop something else, a new faculty. It isn't really new, because a child has it. But we lose it when we cease to be children. That's the reason it's said that Christ said you have to become as a little child to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

We go from there up another step to another category. As I said, when I was twenty-one I came to a conclusion that if I were to find anything, it wouldn't be to find or to learn, it would be to become. And people sooner or later get this idea: "Well, I've studied all these books, and if I could study all the rest of them, and talk to everybody, it would take two hundred years, and we don't have that time. There must be a direct path."

Zen is a direct path. It goes directly to the mind; it goes directly to the self. But—we're still not up to Zen yet.

As I said, we go into mind-expansion systems and change of being systems. And these change of being systems—there are traces of them in all your organized religions, systems of piety, the realization that you have to change yourself to be worthy of God.

The mind expansions as you know are certain disciplines, such as raja yoga, that purport to make you ready for a hierarchy of great minds, where you're going to become first a Master, then a Bodhisattva, a Dhyani Chohan, or something. These are objective hopes, built up by some training that's going to bloom your mind out to where you're recognized by all the cosmic forces as a spiritual leader.

And we go again, up through the subjective aspect of that category, we get to what I call systems that advise no-ego or hint that you will arrive at no-mind. And again, this is not a province of Zen alone. The Zen system is more psychologically describable, let's put it that way. The people who have arrived by it are perhaps not as vocal as the ones who have arrived at some exaltation by Christian mysticism. Another category that is somewhat vocal is the school of Indian mysticism.

I mentioned before that I try to avoid exotic terms. I think the truth can be said very simply. I don't think it can be *said*—I don't believe it can be proven, that is—but if you have something you want to say, you can say it simply. You don't have to use Asian terms. The truth is *here*—the truth is not *there*. It's there, too, but I mean it's not there for us. The truth is where you are; it's in yourself, so to speak.

I have a little book I picked up by accident. I don't know how many of you have seen it. I don't know who the man is. Sometimes you run into a book that's well publicized and it has nothing in it, and you find some little, obscure book that has quite a bit more in it. This man's name was Ramana Maharshi. This is put out by Shambala Press. I found it at a rummage sale.

As I said, just because something happens to you doesn't mean you can describe it. The language—just to be able to speak to people on esoteric terms—is quite a labor because so many new words are coined. There's an abundance of grandiose terms being thrown out on the market, so to speak, as if they're saying, "Here's what we are doing for you."

Well, one of those terms of course permeates Zen literature, and that's the word *satori*. Satori means nothing. But it is exotic, and it sounds different, so why not have that? Enlightenment is an English word, and it's like candy, but satori is like divinity fudge. It gives you a feeling you're in a little better class of people.

As I said, I studied for a while with a Zen teacher from Connecticut, and he used to make the remark that the biggest part of this stuff is baloney. He said they had in some monasteries in Asia—China or Japan—they used to have as many as three thousand people. Richard Bucke, in his book *Cosmic Consciousness*, presumed that only one in a million—the statistics, if such were available—would reach cosmic consciousness, now, not enlightenment.

Now we have all these words thrown at us, and people think they're all synonymous, but they're not. If you look into the history of the things that Bucke describes as cosmic consciousness, they are not quite the same as those which are described by people who reach enlightenment. There are exaltations, and the manner in which you distinguish between them is the connotation they hold of either an absolute condition or a relative experience.

So that when someone talks to you of bliss, he's talking of a relative experience. You do not have a state of no-mind and bliss. Bliss is a describable, relative experience. The words "no-mind" have no meaning; it's just an attempt to tell you it's not describable. Unfortunately, a lot of the students, say in Asia, were running around prattling about arriving at no-mind, and being "closer to no-mind," and this is absurd because they wouldn't know what no-mind was until they reached it—a totally egoless state, or a state in which the mind was dead, the mind was killed.

I found one of the biggest difficulties in talking about Zen was this idea of defining—or meeting somebody else who wanted to argue, for instance, about what he thought enlightenment was, or what he thought was the proper method.

We have methods of finding satori. For instance, there's one school that employs a physical system. Sure, it's a tension-producing system, but the results are, in my estimation, then dependent on that. If you use physical means or formulas to bring about a thing, or even visualize—this is the difficulty in meditation—if you meditate and visualize, your mind may well create that which results.

That which is produced in any genuine experience should be spontaneous. And nearly all of the real experiences [i.e., enlightenment experiences] I have encountered in my lifetime—which are very few; I could count them on one hand—were spontaneous. The experiences came upon them suddenly. They didn't see step by step by step or with each little muscular exertion or drop of sweat or crack on the back that they were closer and closer to satori or enlightenment.

So there are schools that profess to take you to these exalted states by cracking you on the back [see Philip Kapleau's *Three Pillars of Zen* for comments on the technique of *keisaku*]. Also, they

do a land office business in selling rugs, mats, benches to sit on, and other things.

[Break in tape] ... that there is an exaltation that occurs whenever a man graduates from one level to another. He graduates with a burst of joy, so to speak, and a feeling of intense accomplishment.

Anyhow, when you become tired of the instinctive level, you generally are taken away from it, or you graduate from it, by an emotional attachment. And the emotional attachment may be to a person of the opposite sex, in which you fall in love, and in so doing make yourself the equivalent of zero. You pledge your life and your ambitions and your vanities and everything for the benefit of the mate and the children that result. And this becomes an emotional growth.

And when that occurs, they talk of it as a love experience, when a person is in love. The person may in turn become in love with a figure such as Jesus Christ, or the guru. And by making themselves zero, or meaningless, and putting this teacher or Christ up as the most meaningful person, they attach themselves emotionally to them, and the result is an exaltation called salvation or rapture.

After people linger in that for ten or twenty years sometimes, they find that they were again the victim of emotion instead of definite proof of what they are. And they gravitate toward intellectual pursuits to try to answer things—magic, statistics, numerology or fundamentalism—start analyzing scriptures and try to find some meaning in them.

But regardless, there's an exaltation that occurs between the emotional and the intellectual state, and that exaltation is the wow! experience. The thing that when you're studying algebra and you have this sudden illumination that bursts upon you, and you say, "Wow, I've got it!"—the entire thing is manifestly clear to you from that point on. Now this is a microcosmic idea of the exaltation, but it's very similar to what I found described in the satori experiences—where somebody under an extreme period of tension comes up with "wow!"

We were talking before the meeting, and we thought it was amazing, or quite unusual, that there were not a tremendous lot of satori experiences in Hitler's prison camps. Because he created a tremendous lot of tension—people were faced with death, and that sort of thing—and if anything, that would have certainly brought it about.

But I don't think it would have brought them clear to enlightenment because it was strictly that—it would have been an exaltation as a result of relief, relief from intense pressure.

We go from there on up to the philosophic stage, and the exaltation there is cosmic consciousness—the described ecstasy of the mystics; now this is still in the relative world experience—or what is known as *kevala nirvikalpa samadhi* [see "Ramana Maharshi Excerpts" in *Profound Writings, East & West*]

The phrase *sahaja nirvikalpa samadhi* better expresses the aim of Zen than does the word satori. So let me read to you [from *Profound Writings*] the difference of when you branch over, or grow from the relative experience of cosmic consciousness and take the next step. Using sleep as a point of comparison:

1. In sleep, the mind is alive. We still can think sometimes or dream in sleep.
In kevala samadhi, the mind is alive.
In sahaja samadhi, the mind is dead. Now *there* is a clear-cut difference.
2. In [deep] sleep, the mind is sunk in oblivion.
In kevala samadhi, the mind is sunk in Light. This accounts for all these stories of the city of Montreal bursting into rose-colored light [see Bucke's experience in his *Cosmic Consciousness* book] or the cell of St. John of the Cross bursting into light—so much so that he could read a book by it.
In sahaja samadhi, the mind is resolved into the Self. Now that's the capital-s Self, not the mundane self.
3. In kevala samadhi, it [the mind] is like a bucket tied to a rope and left lying in the bottom of a well.
In sahaja samadhi, it is like a river discharged into the ocean and its identity lost. You don't know who you are. The identity that you had previously doesn't matter.
4. In kevala samadhi: it can be drawn back out of the well. You can come back and appraise the incident.
In sahaja samadhi: a river cannot be redirected from the ocean. Once you become a part of that ocean, you are eternally a part of that ocean.

Part 3

<http://tatfoundation.org/forum2006-01.htm#1>

Zen, Spiritual Steps & Spiritual Systems
From a 1974 talk in Cleveland, Ohio—Part 3

I have a few little notes that I will read to you, and if anyone would like to ask some questions, we will make it rather informal then. I'm not saying I will be able to answer every question you ask, but I will try to.

Things that I have found in my search of life:

- Money does not buy a relief from untruth. And I made this from the time I was a child a yardstick in gauging every movement. I never put any money in, and when somebody wanted three or four hundred dollars for an initiation, I walked away. I just refused to believe that it had a price tag.
- Selective diets are not necessary and, above all, not imperative. It is not what you put in your mouth; it's what you say.
- Physical appearances mean nothing. This hair that I grow and the hair that I don't grow have nothing to do with my philosophy. I grew a goatee when I was a kid twenty years old, and I sometimes let it grow in the wintertime because I get ingrown hairs. So there's no great spiritual message in whiskers.
- Poses, vestments, and hairstyles are more apt to distract from interior effort. These are my findings. If we put on too many exterior appearances, we are apt to distract.
- Meditation of the sort that brings tranquility is not going to answer critical unanswered questions. It may bring you peace of mind, but if you're looking for answers, it will not bring you the answers.
- A transcendental movement is at best only a utility if it is followed because it makes you feel good, helps your business, finds conjugal compatibility or peace of mind.
- Concentration on undefined chakras or nerve-centers are objective attempts. And also, quite a few of the Zen techniques are in the same category.
- The juggling of scriptures, numbers, or symbols can be a waste of time that can go on for decades. And I know people who made a fever of it.

- Worshipping a human, worshipping the guru, is asinine. In the long run, our essences are equal. I think you can tie yourself up into what in psychology they call a "transference." Instead of doing something yourself, you just say, "Well, I'll grab that train that's going by."
- A system that has a few good points may be useless because of one bad point. In the analysis of some of these systems—and again, I'm not saying we should be limited to Zen. I consider Zen a good system of psychoanalysis, and there's a whole field of searching—this is basically what Zen is—of finding yourself, your definition, by looking inside. But not objectively haggling with psychoanalytic terms. It goes straight *into*. You look inside. The symbols aren't necessary, such as paranoia, or what little hang-ups you think you have. You just look, and the thing becomes apparent.

Now I have a bit of a quibble when I define psychology and Zen in the same tone. I think a good bit of our modern psychology is an enemy to truth. It has become funded, a mercenary sort of thing, dependent upon public service for its values. That is, if it doesn't put the people back to work, if it doesn't establish marital compatibility, it doesn't get funded. So the big money is in the bedroom, or in the business—not in truth. Not in finding out. I maintain that the original purpose of psychology was as the word said: *psyche* and *logos*—the meaning of the psyche.

I take exception, of course. I find some worthy men: [Hubert] Benoit, for instance, goes way out trying at least to apologize for Zen. Another outstanding author of psychology is Victor Frankl. Frankl came up with the concept that the most important part of us, of mankind, is the will to meaning. Not the will to pleasure. And he states this specifically, that it doesn't matter whether we're compatible or not. What matters is whether we have a reason for sticking around.

Again, Frankl doesn't go all the way. This is true—that if you have a reason, if you go for the meaning of life, you can go through any hardship. He wrote this as a result of discoveries in the prison camps of Germany. And he found that the people who could survive were the ones who had a meaning—they were looking for a meaning in life—not someone who was just looking for instinctive gratification.

So he throws over the use of psychology as a social emollient or a behavioral-adjuster.

- Popularity: I found that most people like to go to a church or to a movement that is the most popular. Everybody is using Tide. Everybody is going to the cathedral. Meaning that where everybody goes there must be wisdom.

We have this hang-up, especially in this country. This is basically the whole core of what I call modern psychology, at least Western psychology—is that we vote on what is sanity. We decide what is sanity by checking out what people do. And when the day comes that ninety percent of the people are murderers, murder will be sane by virtue of the normal curve. We're approaching it I think right now in some respects with some of the wild behavior that is encouraged by modern psychology.

- Of course with the psychology of the will to meaning, Frankl stops in inferring that the meaning must be *life*. I maintain that the meaning must be *death*. I maintain that there is no meaning to life without a proper meaning or explanation of death. Everything can be nothing more than a drama, a rationalization built up into an enormous drama, unless we know beyond a shadow of a doubt what's going to happen after we die.

This is what our social structures are composed of today, an attempt to impose upon our children a fairy-tale heaven and then a compulsory behavior-pattern that fits into that fairy-tale heaven. And that if you do things in such-and-such a manner, you will be accepted into heaven. Don't cause any ripples, suffer a bit, and you'll be accepted into the heaven.

Of course as the years go by, the fairy-tale changes—and this alone should make us stop and think, that the fairy-tale somehow fits the pattern of expediency. Whatever's good for society at the particular time is encouraged. And it seems to work automatically. I don't say there's any grand conspirator, or anything of that

sort.

But we are subject to systems of thinking that have no end result. We were talking about Frankl before the meeting. And I believe that when Frankl was waiting for the gas chamber, he kept alive by the memory of his wife and the fact that he had a manuscript he wanted to print. This was his meaning to life. He went about vainly trying to save the lives of people who gave up. And as I said, possibly these people who gave up were as Benoit said, those who "let go." And how fortunate it is to be able to let go before you die. Before somebody beats your brains in or something, and you don't have time to let go.

So the person who let go and submitted to the gas chamber may have reached a state exceeding the noble state that Frankl thought he was in. I maintain that of all the psychology books I have encountered, Frankl has the best. But still, he's not talking about the ultimate meaning of life and death. And you can't talk about the ultimate meaning of life without talking about the ultimate meaning of death—the precise knowledge of what death is.

That's the reason I said that when I was a kid, I went out and tried to look into materializations and séances and stuff, because I thought that if you want to know what death is, talk to somebody that has died. But strangely enough, you can't understand, you can't interpret anything from their messages. And I mean down through the ages, of all the records, there's very little information that is authentic that comes to you.

The thing is, then, that the final Zen experience is one of dying.

- The enemy of mankind is not ignorance alone, but authority without quality. Just because a man writes a book and says he put in so many years as a biologist, say, that you have to believe everything that man says about cell tissue, for instance.
- The enemy of mankind is also blind faith without question. We call it fanaticism.
- Also, the enemy is the deification of pleasure as the answer to pressure. I'm talking about psychology. I maintain that *tension* is the answer, the necessary factor in finding the answers.
- We should avoid the idea that the contemplation of ultimate survival is something that is childish or the result of some sickness. People who look into esoteric things, the philosophers, at one time were considered to be suffering from some almost predictable malady. Find out what church they go to, what cult they belong to, and some psychologists say they could predict what sickness they have.
- I don't believe there is any excuse just for daily survival to turn your head away from the study of ultimate survival. Daily survival has no meaning if you're a pig in a pigpen. We must be something better than just vegetating animals.

I don't know if I've missed anything. If anybody thinks I have and would like to ask me some questions, I'll be glad to try to answer you.

Q: Is there a book on Zen that you would recommend?

Rose: I think Benoit [Hubert Benoit's *The Supreme Doctrine*] is very good, and Huang Po [*The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, translated] by Blofeld is very good. I think this little book here is very good. I wouldn't say it's Zen—he doesn't mention the word Zen in there—but he says everything there is to say. He's a Hindu. Just judging by what he has written, he strikes me as a man who knows what enlightenment is. It's *The Spiritual Teachings of Ramana Maharshi*. I'm going to send out to Shambhala Press and get a few copies. I'm rather fascinated by it, just because I never saw anything written that plainly and simply.

Q: Does Maharshi advocate a system?

Rose: He advocates using a retreat-system, yes—of avoiding action pretty much. I find it somewhat similar to Huang Po. The main thing is he gives you a clearness of definition in your action—for instance, when he says "Who am I?"—and he tells you who he is not. And this is the best way to answer it. "Of all the attributes, the five senses, the ability to remember, and all these things, I am not."

It's a question-and-answer thing. And the student says, "Well, if none of these, then who am I?"

And he says, "After negating all of the above-mentioned—not this, not this—the awareness which alone remains, *That* I am." You might say it is the awareness of awareness.

Q: By being here, does it mean that the people here are already at the philosophical stage?

Rose: I don't know who is. Some may come to compare, yes. I've had people that came to try to convert me.

Q: Where is there to go beyond that?

Rose: The only thing I can say is that when I was at that stage, I didn't know where to go, either. But I kept struggling. Almost in any direction, beating my head against almost every wall, every door, every book.

Q: [Inaudible] ... no place to go beyond that?

Rose: No, I haven't. You may *call* it no-place. You might call it no-mind. But you can't use those words without saying—whenever you say "nothing," you must immediately say "everything." That which you find is nothing, but simultaneously it is everything. That's the only way you can describe an absolute condition with relative terms, or attempt to. There may be a hint, just a hint, that you can get from using these two terms together.

Part 4

<http://tatfoundation.org/forum2006-02.htm#1>

Zen, Spiritual Steps & Spiritual Systems
From a 1974 talk in Cleveland, Ohio—Conclusion

Q: I've heard that the Zen path begins by joining a group and helping that group. But is it possible that I could get the book and do this on my own?

Rose: You can even do it on your own without the book. I don't put any restrictions. I say that the main requisite for finding the Truth is to search for your God or your being with all of your available energy. Don't kid yourself when you're doing it, and you'll find it.

I think you'll gravitate into certain groups. This more or less explains our particular group and the way we function. I've written a book [richard_rose_books.htm] *The Albigen Papers* and in it I have ten or twenty laws that I have discovered in my lifetime as being expedient or helpful. One of them is the Law of the Ladder. In very simple terms—and this is probably part of the reason I am here now, as I told you—I believe that man must help somebody. This is the only human relationship.

There is always somebody you can help. Some people say, "I don't know anything—who can I help?" That's nonsense. You know something; you've read some book. You can exchange a book with somebody, you can hold a discussion.

And most of our groups are doing this. They hold their own private meditation sessions, they hold their own confrontation sessions, and they plan and work together on three levels. Your whole being must function, not just your head. You must put the body to work, the mind—and of course hope that by putting those two to work something else is kicked into action, which is your essence—or let's say your spiritual quantum.

Q: It seems that the only advantage or whatever of finding this is to satisfy your curiosity?

Rose: No, no. That's the seed—that you can't help. The advantage to finding the Truth is to find out who is curious. There's no point in being curious unless you know who is curious. There's no point in living unless you know who's living. When you say "satisfy your curiosity," who do you mean by "you"? You must first find out who is talking.

Q: And what does that mean, if I find out who I am?

Rose: Then you live serenely and die serenely. You know the answer. There's no more shaking at the guillotine—the daily guillotine that hangs over you. You're no longer standing and shaking every day.

Q: So it's just the elimination of tension?

Rose: Oh well, you can simplify it if you want to....

Q: [Bob Martin, Rose's friend]: You're selling it too short, Dick. There's no words to describe the incredible state of being....

Rose: What good is it to talk about an incredible state if you can't bring it out here in a briefcase and show it to somebody? There's no point in talking about it. The only thing you can do in your life is retreat from error. You cannot approach wisdom, you cannot approach a given aim. You cannot postulate and reach for a postulation. The only thing you can do is try to be less ignorant.

We are a group called ignoramus anonymous. And from this retreat from ignorance by progressive laws, by casting out that which is ridiculous, if nothing else, you will automatically push yourself like a jet away from the mundane. That is the process. What it does for you in the long run, or what it means to you—you have to decide that.

Q: [Inaudible question about the different paths that Rose went through in his life.]

Rose: Well, I was just—[humorously] that was some of the many things I lost.

Q: I mean, you think Zen Buddhism is *it*, right?

Rose: No, no. For a man who can only quench his thirst with wine, maybe wine is better than water. To each his own. There are people on certain levels. What I'm trying to do is to draw you a picture of the steps that certain people must go through—say, meditation: this is the only thing they respond to. It's the only thing they can do or can understand.

And it actually at that time appeals to their intuition. It did to me. I thought, "That's the *only* thing." I was not ready to listen to any Zen teachers. Because that was my maximum—to me the maximum reward. I drew you a picture of my life, so to speak. Whatever conclusions you draw from it, that's all right. I'm not outlawing any of these steps.

Martin: I think he's asking, "Are there not other ways, that you would not call Zen at all, that would take you all the way?"

Rose: Right, right. I said that at the beginning. The only thing is that we cannot talk about them all tonight. And I don't have much expertise in all of them. You have to do something, but not everything. If you do everything, your energy is dissipated. That's what I did when I was in my twenties. I tried to do everything at once.

I propose basically that you take one system and follow it. And I won't say it has to be this. And I say whoever reaches an exaltation, why, this is wonderful. I think one of the worst things you can do is say there's only one system.

Bob and I met a man years ago who had made the remark that there were as many systems as there are paths up the hillside [to the barn]....

Martin: ... And there are eleven million ways to walk the last mile.

Rose: And this is very true. The only thing is, not everybody can show you the eleven million ways. We've got to pick one and work on it. If your intuition leads you in a certain direction, by all means follow it and exhaust it. But *exhaust* it. Give it all you've got.

Q: What about sexual energy? In a system of total growth, you have to include it. This is very important. Most religions either repress it or worship it.

Rose: Are you telling me something or are you asking me something?

Q: What about it?

Rose: What do you want me to say? Do you want me to endorse one or the other? [Laughs.]

Q: I think it's a very important question.

Rose: Well, if your intuition tells you it's important, then by all means follow that path.

Q [someone else]: Are you speaking of *kundalini*?

Rose: That is something else. That is not the worshipping of sex. When somebody tells me they worship sex, I immediately think of some form of *tantric* yoga or Aleister Crowley's manipulations. But I have the highest respect for the intelligent use of *kundalini* yoga.

Q [the previous person]: But you are dividing it. You are saying that sexual energy is separate from spiritual energy.

Rose: Well, you know then—you *know* that they're the same?

Q: I feel they are.

Rose: You feel. Well, your feelings are as good as anyone else's. But if that's what motivates you, that's what I say, then that's your path. It's not debatable. That's your particular choice, that's all.

Q: With the particular system of Zen that you follow or are talking about, you answer questions in your mind about what *That* is or isn't, about where you came from...?

Rose: When you reach that point, which is referred to as *sahaja samadhi*, you know everything. And nothing.

Now I'm not being facetious....

Q: I know.

Rose: In what you were asking for, I would say you know everything. But anything that we struggle for in this search for truth is almost objective. We picture a God with whiskers. You don't find a God with whiskers. You don't find a being motivated by human justice standards.

We picture a God in our own image and likeness. They didn't say it right in Genesis. God didn't create man in his own image and likeness. Man created god in *man's* image and likeness.

So we can't conceive of any treatment by that deity or by that absolute essence which wouldn't be answerable to human standards of justice: "He just wouldn't do that to us."

We're not that important.

Q: [Inaudible] ... were you talking about physical death or psychological death, or what?

Rose: You mean in the part of the experience?

Q. Yes.

Rose: I'm talking about *both*. Because you lose your physical consciousness, and you lose your hope of a spiritual life.

Q: That's part of the ego that's left...?

Rose: That's the final.

Q: But you don't necessarily have to experience the physical death.

Rose: Oh, the body actually doesn't die, no. But to your belief, it's dying. You quite believe it's dying.

Q: Is the spirit of Zen incompatible with a belief in a religion?

Rose: Absolutely not. I call it a psychoanalytic system, that's all. A self-psychoanalytic system.

There's something I wanted to tell you. If you can get a hold of a *Reader's Digest*, October 1974, there's an article in it: [I Died at 10:52](forum2003-12.htm#5). This man [Victor Solow] went through the equivalent of an enlightenment experience. I don't know if he knew it when he submitted the article to Reader's Digest, or how it got in there, but when I read it I realized that this man had met the answer and had come back.

He had a heart attack in an automobile. His wife took him to the hospital, and he was supposedly pronounced dead for something like twenty minutes. And when he came back, strangely enough he had no aftereffects of this delayed heartbeat and everything.

But this will give you I think a very clear episode of what seems to be in the magazine at least an accidental enlightenment experience. We don't know. I don't know what the life history was. He may have been a very religious man.

Q: Can you tell us something about your experience?

Rose: Yes. Incidentally, in the book there's a short description of it ["The Three Books of the Absolute," at the end of *The Albigen Papers* and also in *Profound Writings, East & West*].

It happened when I was in Seattle, Washington. As I said, I believe it was brought about by pulling myself in two different directions. For seven years of my life, I was pulling in strictly one direction. And then I began to be pulled both by the objective world and by an intensely mental struggle. And as a result of this—at least I blame it on that—this experience occurred.

I was away from anyone I knew, in Seattle, in a hotel. And I was doing my yoga exercises—I had kept it up; I was still trying to halfheartedly keep some sort of discipline. I was sitting on a bed. I would get up on the middle of the bed and tuck my legs underneath me, and I'd meditate. And a pain started in the center of my head. I was thirty-two years old, and I didn't think it was possibly a stroke. But it was intense, and I didn't think I would survive it—it was that type of pain.

The pain was so intense that I started weeping from it, and I just couldn't stop myself. But I went out the window. The next thing I was conscious of was that I left the bed and went out the window. Now this was not a dream. I saw the people on the street, which I couldn't have seen from the bed. I saw everyone on the street.

The Cascade Mountains were out the window, also—that's the mountains between Seattle and the sea. I remember going in that direction—up. And the higher I got, the people on the street, the city of Seattle, seemed to be less significant. And I went through what was like a flip-over, and I saw that—no, not even a planet—but I saw humanity. The entire pyramid of humanity—it was in a pyramid form, incidentally, like a maggot pile, struggling spiritually. I could see them all struggling, climbing spiritually.

And by watching it, I could find myself. I could pick myself out in this—I call it the Cavalcade of Life. Then I realized that this tiny man and the Observer were one. And not only that, but the Observer—the final Observer—is the Absolute.

And I even sensed and felt, however you want to express it, the sorrow of everyone that was in that pyramid—this whole pyramid of humanity fighting for the top. So it wasn't a pleasant experience—until, actually, all of that ceased. And I realized that all of this was nothing. It was an illusion. Whichever way you looked at it, it was an illusion—that it was actually nothing but Me. This is the final experience.

Now of course, after—I don't know how many hours it happened, there was no clock—I found myself in the room, and the pain was gone, and the memory of what I had been through, what I had witnessed....

[Break at end of tape.]

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